

2021 Report on public access to documents requests at Eurojust

I. Background

Since the entry into force of the [Eurojust Regulation](#) on 12 December 2019, Eurojust applies [Regulation 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents](#) (Regulation 1049/2001). Building on lessons learned from internal practice, Eurojust reviewed its first policy and adopted a new set of rules on public access to documents: [College Decision 2021-12 of 7 December 2021](#) introduces improved rules in this area, which better fit to the structure of Eurojust, stored information and its decision-making process.

Eurojust publishes annually a report about the preceding year on the requests made for public access to documents, including the number of cases in which the institution refused to grant access to documents.

II. Report

The number of individual requests received from the public increased by over 81%, adding up to 20 in 2021 (11 in 2020). Consultation requests from other EU agencies or European Institutions also experienced a rise in 2021; from 2 to 9 (Figure 1). In this latter context, Eurojust is a third-party author of requested documents in accordance with Article 4(4) of Regulation 1049/2001.

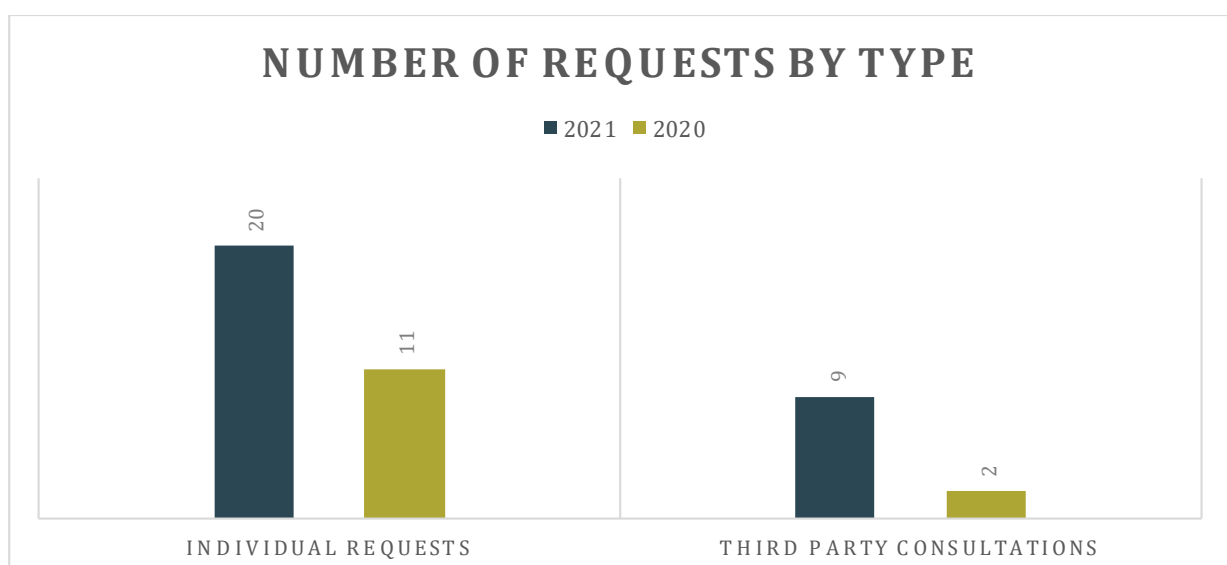


Figure 1

The number of requests received concerning operational documents¹ in 2021 more than tripled compared to a year earlier (Figure 2). While such increase shows a growing interest of the public in the work of Eurojust, the requests received got also more specific in focus, e.g.: Eurojust actions in a specific crime areas (e.g.: trafficking of human beings, illegal immigration).

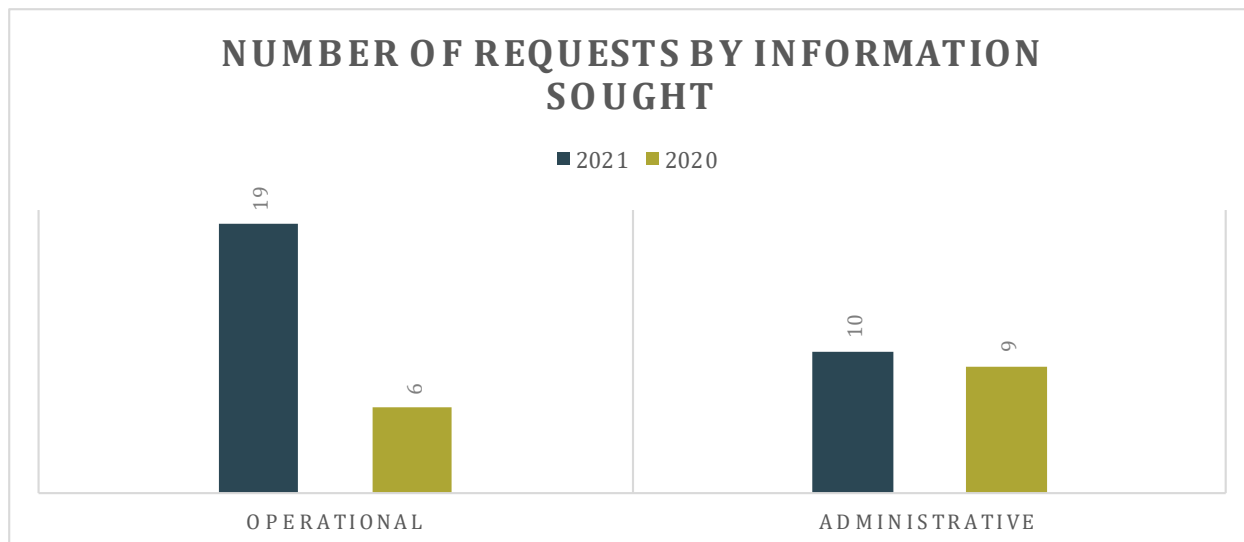


Figure 2

In the context of **all requests received in 2021**, Eurojust granted full and partial access to 50 documents, marking a 42% increase compared to 2020. **In the total number of operational documents requested** (51), Eurojust granted full access to 7 documents and to 30 more with redactions. In the case of 3 initial and 1 confirmatory applications (adding up a total of 14 documents), Eurojust entirely refused access to the requested documents (Figure 3). The statistics on applied exceptions are detailed under Figure 4.

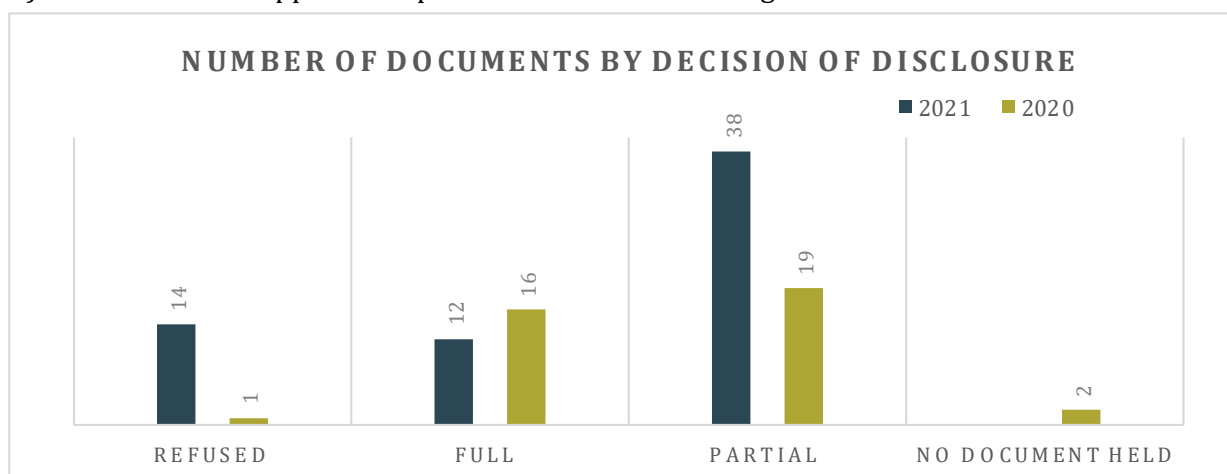


Figure 3

¹ Documents linked to the operational functions of Eurojust and documents related to the administrative functions of Eurojust is explained in College Decision 2021-12 of 7 December 2021 on the adoption of rules for implementing Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 on public access to documents at Eurojust.

III. Exceptions

Eurojust fulfils its statutory obligations under Regulation 1049/2001 by considering various interests and rights that need to be safeguarded during the consideration of disclosure.

The leading interest to be protected concerning operational documents is public security, in particular to ensure the proper fulfilment of Eurojust's mandate to strengthen coordination and cooperation between national investigating and prosecuting authorities (Article 4(1) (a) first indent.) Eurojust ensures protection of the personal data in its documents and thus Article 4(1) (b) on the protection of privacy and integrity of the individual is the most frequently applied exception in administrative documents and the second in operational ones. Many documents at Eurojust are intended for internal use, therefore the exception laid down in Article 4(3) plays an important role in the consideration of disclosure as is the protection of ongoing investigations and court proceedings (Article 4 (2) second and third indent).



Figure 4

IV. Public Register

Eurojust continued to increase the number of documents stored and publicly available in its [Public Register](#). This database makes it easier for citizens to search and find documents held by Eurojust without the need to make a formal request. It also contributes to more transparency and greater availability of information about Eurojust's activities.