



Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2013/2051(INI)	Procedure completed
Annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman in 2012		
Subject 1.20.04 European Ombudsman		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	PETI Petitions		20/03/2013
		EFD SALAVRAKOS Nikolaos	
		Shadow rapporteur	
		PPE KOLARSKA-BOBIŃSKA Lena	
		S&D GÖNCZ Kinga	
		Verts/ALE AUKEN Margrete	
European Commission	Commission DG Secretariat-General	Commissioner ŠEFČOVIČ Maroš	

Key events			
18/04/2013	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
09/07/2013	Vote in committee		
15/07/2013	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0257/2013	Summary
12/09/2013	Results of vote in Parliament		
12/09/2013	Debate in Parliament		
12/09/2013	Decision by Parliament	T7-0369/2013	Summary
12/09/2013	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2013/2051(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Annual report
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 232-p1-a2
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PETI/7/12214

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE513.107	05/06/2013	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE514.693	25/06/2013	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0257/2013	15/07/2013	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0369/2013	12/09/2013	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2013)816	19/12/2013	EC	

Annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman in 2012

The Committee on Petitions adopted the own initiative report by Nikolaos SALAVRAKOS (EFD, EL) on the annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman 2012. Members approve the annual report for 2012 presented by the European Ombudsman, and note that Mr Diamandouros will retire on 1 October 2013. They express their gratitude for his exemplary work as European Ombudsman over the past ten years to both strengthen and deepen the dialogue with citizens, civil society, the institutions and other stakeholders at all levels.

Complaints in 2012: the report notes that in 2012, the Ombudsman registered 2 442 complaints and that it was a record year in terms of both inquiries opened (465 = +18 % compared with 2011) and inquiries closed (390 = +23 %). It appears that 52.7 % of inquiries opened in 2012 concerned the European Commission, 5.2 % the European Parliament, 3.0 % the European External Action Service, 1.5 % the European Investment Bank and 20.9 % other EU institutions, agencies or bodies. In 82 % of cases the EU institutions comply with the Ombudsmans suggestions.

However, Members note that the number of inquiries opened in 2012 concerning the European Parliament almost doubled compared with 2011. They call on Parliaments Secretariat to cooperate fully with the Ombudsman and ensure compliance and consistency with his recommendations and comments regarding administrative practices.

Helping citizens to know their rights: the report notes that 52 % of European citizens consider that the Ombudsman's most important function is to ensure that EU citizens know their rights and how to use them, and that therefore the Ombudsman needs to improve visibility and communication with Europes citizens and enhance cooperation with the European Network of Ombudsmen.

Members call for the requisite steps to be taken to accelerate the procedures for investigating complaints, conducting enquiries and taking decisions.

Improving administrative transparency: the committee recalls the fact that 42 % of European citizens are not satisfied with the level of transparency in the EU administration, and highlights the need for the Ombudsman to continue his efforts in helping the EU institutions become more open, effective and citizen-friendly, building bridges between the institutions and citizens.

In this context, Members remain concerned about the large number of complaints regarding openness, public access and personal data.

They reiterate that transparency, openness, access to information, respect for the rights of citizens, and high ethical standards are essential for maintaining trust between citizens and the institutions.

Members consider that the decrease in the total number of complaints submitted to the Ombudsman in 2012 is further proof of the success of the interactive guide on his website, which is designed to help ensure that fewer citizens complain to the Ombudsman for the wrong reason. The report recognises the important contribution of the European Network of Ombudsmen. It commends the Ombudsman on his initiative of publishing a set of public-service principles, which should guide the conduct of EU civil servants. It welcomes the fact that in June 2013 the Ombudsman published a new edition of the European Code of Good Administrative Behaviour.

Promoting fundamental rights: Members welcome the Ombudsman's participation, alongside Parliament's Committee on Petitions, the European Disability Forum, the Commission and the Fundamental Rights Agency, in the EU-level Framework, relating to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It also welcomes the Ombudsman's efforts to safeguard the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the EU's institutions.

Lastly, the committee reiterates the call made in its [resolution of 15 January 2013](#) on the Commission to adopt common binding rules and principles on administrative procedure in the EUs administration and to present a draft regulation to this end on the basis of Article 298 TFEU. It considers that this would be the best way to ensure lasting change in the administrative culture of the EU institutions.

Annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman in 2012

The European Parliament adopted by 562 votes to 7, with 60 abstentions, a resolution on the annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman 2012.

Members approve the annual report for 2012 presented by the European Ombudsman, and note that Mr Diamandouros will retire on 1 October 2013. They express their gratitude for his exemplary work as European Ombudsman over the past ten years to both strengthen and deepen the dialogue with citizens, civil society, the institutions and other stakeholders at all levels.

Complaints in 2012: Parliament notes that in 2012, the Ombudsman registered 2 442 complaints and that it was a record year in terms of both inquiries opened (465 = +18 % compared with 2011) and inquiries closed (390 = +23 %):

- 52.7 % of inquiries opened in 2012 concerned the European Commission, 5.2 % the European Parliament, 3.0 % the European External Action Service, 1.5 % the European Investment Bank and 20.9 % other EU institutions, agencies or bodies;

- the main types of alleged maladministration investigated in 2012 concerned lawfulness (27.7 %), requests for information (12.5 %), fairness (10.3 %), time limits for decisions (8 %) and requests for access to documents (6.7 %);
- the Ombudsman found no maladministration in 76 cases closed (19 %) and maladministration in 56 cases (14 %).

In 82 % of cases, the EU institutions comply with the Ombudsmans suggestions.

However, Members note that the number of inquiries opened in 2012 concerning the European Parliament almost doubled compared with 2011. They call on Parliaments Secretariat to cooperate fully with the Ombudsman and ensure compliance and consistency with his recommendations and comments regarding administrative practices.

Helping citizens to know their rights: Parliament notes that 52 % of European citizens consider that the Ombudsman's most important function is to ensure that EU citizens know their rights and how to use them, and that therefore the Ombudsman needs to improve visibility and communication with Europes citizens and enhance cooperation with the European Network of Ombudsmen.

Members call for the requisite steps to be taken to accelerate the procedures for investigating complaints, conducting enquiries and taking decisions.

Improving administrative transparency: Parliament recalls the fact that 42 % of European citizens are not satisfied with the level of transparency in the EU administration, and highlights the need for the Ombudsman to continue his efforts in helping the EU institutions become more open, effective and citizen-friendly, building bridges between the institutions and citizens.

In this context, it remains concerned about the large number of complaints regarding openness, public access and personal data. It reiterates that transparency, openness, access to information, respect for the rights of citizens, and high ethical standards are essential for maintaining trust between citizens and the institutions.

Members consider that the decrease in the total number of complaints submitted to the Ombudsman in 2012 is further proof of the success of the interactive guide on his website, which is designed to help ensure that fewer citizens complain to the Ombudsman for the wrong reason. The resolution recognises the important contribution of the European Network of Ombudsmen.

Public-service principles: Parliament commends the Ombudsman on his initiative of publishing a set of public-service principles, which should guide the conduct of EU civil servants. It welcomes the publication of a new edition of the European Code of Good Administrative Behaviour.

Parliament reiterates the call made in its [resolution of 15 January 2013](#) on the Commission to adopt common binding rules and principles on administrative procedure in the EUs administration and to present a draft regulation to this end on the basis of Article 298 TFEU. It considers that this would be the best way to ensure lasting change in the administrative culture of the EU institutions.

Promoting fundamental rights: lastly, Parliament welcomes the Ombudsman's participation, alongside Parliament's Committee on Petitions, the European Disability Forum, the Commission and the Fundamental Rights Agency, in the EU-level Framework, relating to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It also welcomes the Ombudsman's efforts to safeguard the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the EU's institutions.