

European Ombudsman Award for Good Administration 2019 Winners and shortlisted nominations

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Excellence through collaboration

Winner

Project 16: European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) - EFSA's Brussels Liaison Office and EFSA Parma

Raising awareness about the plight of bees

Bees – which pollinate most of our crops – are disappearing at alarming rates. EFSA's Brussels office has been at the forefront of EU cooperation to help save bees and raise awareness about the problem. An EU Bee Partnership, set up in 2018, enables cooperation between academics, scientists, beekeepers, industry and NGOs in order to gather European data on declining bee populations and the reasons behind it.

Category shortlist

Project 22: European Commission – DG International Cooperation and Development – Unit A5 (Civil Society and Foundations)

EU country roadmaps for engagement with civil society

In just five years, DG DEVCO has developed 107 country roadmaps for civil society – strategies for engaging with civil society over a three-year period. Civil society – which is under threat in many countries – strongly shaped the roadmaps. Examples of roadmaps in Ecuador, Colombia



and the Pacific Region have been highlighted in videos.

Project 50: Court of Justice of the European Union – Directorate General for Information Technologies and Directorate for Communication

The EU judicial network

The EU judicial network reinforces cooperation between national and EU judges through a collaborative platform (in all official EU languages) allowing the sharing of jurisprudence; analyses and research. This spreads understanding of the different national legal systems. The ECJ also uses the platform to make available the information national judges need to decide whether an ECJ referral is needed.

Excellence in citizen-focused services delivery

Winner

Project 40: European Commission – DG EAC – Unit B.3 (Youth, volunteer solidarity and traineeships office) and Unit R.4 (IT projects and support)

DiscoverEU – giving young people the chance to explore Europe

Two young Germans had the idea of offering 18-year-olds a free interrail ticket to explore Europe. The idea was taken up by the EP and implemented within three months by DG EAC, which set up a simple application process for the tickets. DiscoverEU was organised twice in 2018, with around 180 000 applying for the 29 500 passes. Funds were also allocated so people with disabilities could take part.

Category shortlist

Project 12: European Commission – DG Health and Food Safety – Unit C1 (Health programme and chronic diseases)



Financing the best solutions to improve EU citizens' health

A special group set up by DG SANTE collects proven best practices for preventing non-communicable diseases and helps countries to implement these practices. The initiative has, for example, provided assistance for cancer screening in Romania and replicated cardiovascular initiatives from Italy. The project shows the benefits of identifying best practices around Europe and then financing their widespread implementation using different EU programmes.

Project 35: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) – Unit C.1 (Europe for Citizens)

Making the 'Europe for Citizens' programme more accessible

The 'Europe for Citizens' programme brings together citizens, civil society organisations and local authorities and small-scale activities (e.g. town twinning projects). The programme has developed a simple application form and pioneered lump-sum payments to avoid cash-flow issues for the organisations. The programme reaches large numbers of citizens (est. several million yearly) who are not otherwise engaged in the European project.

Excellence in open administration

Winner

Project 19: Transparency International with European Commission – DG Regional and Urban Policy – Unit E.1 (Competence Centre Administrative Capacity Building; Solidarity Fund)

Integrity Pacts – reducing corruption in public tenders

DG Regio joined forces with Transparency International to tackle corruption in public procurement. The resulting Integrity Pacts are an agreement between the contracting authority, the company concerned and civil society. Under the agreement, the bidders and public authority pledge to abstain from corrupt practices while the civil society organisation monitors the whole process. The aim is to increase public trust in the process.

Category shortlist



Project 25: European Commission – Secretariat-General (project leader), DG COMM and DG DIGIT

Empowering citizens to participate in the EU decision-making process

A web-portal allows citizens and others to provide feedback on Commission initiatives at different stages of the legislative lifecycle. The public can comment on delegated and implementing acts, legislative proposals and roadmaps. In 2018, the portal was made more user-friendly with the proactive publishing of key upcoming initiatives. Yearly visits reached 900 000 in 2018 while the biggest share of contributions came from citizens (47%).

Project 46: European Commission – The Common Support Centre (CSC) and DGs RTD/BUDG/DIGIT/JRC

One-stop shop for business with the EU

The Funding & Tenders Portal, launched in 2018, brings together all EU funding and procurement opportunities in a single place. It is a pioneering example of an e-government service for citizens who want to do business with the EU. Citizens can apply, sign and manage contracts, and claim the related costs, all electronically. The portal is the result of a concerted and collaborative effort by the Commission services.

Excellence in innovation/transformation

Winner

Project 52: European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) – European Cybercrime Centre (team Twins) and Corporate Communications

Using crowd-intelligence to rescue sexually exploited children

Europol's campaign Stop Child Abuse – Trace an Object is a key example of creating awareness and promoting the work of Europol to citizens. Trace an object uses crowd-intelligence to reach its main goal: to save sexually abused children and identify their



offenders. Clues such as a t-shirt or a shampoo bottle can sometimes help crack a difficult case. Eight children have been identified and one offender has been prosecuted.

Category shortlist

Project 7: Council of the European Union – General Secretariat of the Council’s Equal Opportunities Office together with the Translation Service

Inclusive communication in 24 languages – a world first

A guide, produced by the General Secretariat of the Council, is a world first in inclusive communication, offering advice on how to produce language and visuals that avoid stereotypes and discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, ethnic origin, nationality, or religious or other beliefs. The guide has been sent to national bodies, international organisations and NGOs, and is on the Council’s website.

Project 34: European Parliament’s Preparatory Action, implemented by the European Commission – DG DIGIT – Unit B.3 (Reusable solutions), with several EU institutions participating

Making open source software secure – an innovative approach

The EU-FOSSA 2 pilot project is about improving the security of widely used open source software. After a public vote on what should be audited first, bug bounty programmes were set up so developers could look for security vulnerabilities. EU-FOSSA 2 is also organizing three Hackathons for software developers from the EU institutions to collaborate with other open source software developers. The project is run as openly as possible, and results communicated widely.

Excellence in communications

Joint winners

Project 43: European Commission – DG JUST – Unit D.1 (Non-Discrimination and Roma coordination) –



Anti-discrimination team

Tailored toolkits for raising awareness about LGBTI rights

DG JUST prepared 37 #EU4LGBTI toolkits for EU Representations, so they could organise events, meet stakeholders, participate in Prides and raise awareness about LGBTI rights. The toolkits included country-specific information, as well as a rainbow flag, relevant policy materials, and a social media toolkit. The feedback from representations – some of whom proactively held LGBTI-related events – was very positive.

Project 49: European Parliamentary Research Service

What Europe does for me

Against a backdrop of fake news and low awareness of what the EU does, the European Parliamentary Research Service put together a multi-lingual website containing hundreds of easily digestible information notes exploring EU actions from the citizens' point of view. Easy to navigate and written in clear language, the site enables visitors to search by region (1 400 regions and cities are covered) to find projects the EU has helped bring to fruition. It also lets people explore the EU's impact on their daily life.

Category shortlist

Project 1: European Data Protection Supervisor – Information and Communication sector

Digital ethics: An introduction by comic book

An entertaining and informative guide to data protection, privacy and ethical challenges in the digital era. The comic book is in its third reprint after having proved popular with citizens, MEPS and officials.

Project 20: European Commission – Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection – Communication Unit

Raising awareness about sexual violence in conflict zones



With just a small budget, the communications unit in DG ECHO produced a highly successful video on combatting sexual violence in conflict zones. The video, produced in five languages, has had over 2m views on YouTube – its success largely due to a combination of treating the subject in a respectful and thoughtful way and testing the message beforehand.

Special Award

Project 21: Cross-party coalition of employees of the European Parliament working in the political or administrative field

MeToo EP: Zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace

MeTooEP, a cross-party coalition of workers in the European Parliament, draws attention to the right of all staff to a safe workplace. It organised an internal protest in the EP aimed at making sure a recently-agreed resolution on combatting sexual harassment was fully implemented. It also launched a blog with anonymous testimonies of victims of sexual harassment in the EP.

Overall Winner

Project 44: European Commission – DG ENV Directorate B (Circular Economy & Green Growth) and DG GROW Unit D.2 (Chemicals)

A comprehensive strategy for reducing plastics pollution

The first ever European Strategy for Plastics provides solutions to reduce plastics pollution, while investing in a competitive and sustainable plastics industry. It addresses marine litter and includes a directive on single-use plastics. The strategy targets citizens as primary agents for change, for example by encouraging sustainable consumption through the #Readytochange campaign. The Commission itself is phasing out single-use plastic cups in its buildings.

and

Project 47: European Commission – DG ENV – Unit A.2 (Communication)



Awareness-raising campaign about single-use plastics

DG Environment developed a communication campaign to get young European adults to think about their use of single use plastics (SUPs). The results of the campaign, implemented in seven Member States, showed the reach of the #PlasticsStrategy hashtag increasing from 4 million in early January 2018 to 150 million in October 2018 while there were over 10 million views of the animations; exceeding the target 8 times.