

“ It is during these challenging times that high standards of good administration are needed to give as much reassurance as possible to citizens about the measures taken. ”

Emily O'Reilly

## Ombudsman asks EU institutions to ensure transparency of EU COVID-19 response

News - 21/04/2020

The European Ombudsman has written to the Presidents of the [European Commission \[Link\]](#) and the [European Council \[Link\]](#) recognising their extraordinary efforts to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic and making some proposals for how to maintain high transparency standards during the crisis.

The Ombudsman said that all decisions related to the pandemic - including those taken under accelerated or emergency procedures - need to be taken as transparently as possible, while temporary measures should be publicised, explained, and regularly reviewed.

The Ombudsman also urged President von der Leyen and President Michel to ensure high accountability standards for decisions on other important issues, such as those related to the climate emergency or to EU-UK relations. Such standards include effective public access to documents and transparent dealings with lobbyists - including when meetings take place by video.

Referring to disinformation campaigns, citizens' fears and sceptical sentiment, the Ombudsman emphasised the importance of open communication, effective access to institutions by journalists, and allowing civil society to scrutinise decision making.



Such measures will help maintain public trust and will form part of any post-Covid-19 assessment of how the EU administration handled the crisis.