

## Letter from the European Ombudsman to the Director of the Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations on how it ensures transparency concerning information about European political parties and foundations

Correspondence - 28/07/2020

**Case** 1094/2020/DL - **Opened on** 28/07/2020 - **Decision on** 25/01/2021 - **Institution concerned** Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations ( No further inquiries justified ) |

Mr Michael Adam

Director

Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations

Strasbourg, 28/07/2020

Complaint 1094/2020/DL

**Subject:** The Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations' alleged failure to comply with transparency obligations

Dear Mr Adam,

I have received a complaint from Mr X, on behalf of X, against the Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations (APPF).

The complaint to my Office concerns the APPF's alleged failure to comply with transparency obligations, and in particular disclosure and publication obligations [\[1\] \[Link\]](#). The complainant sets out several concerns which arose as a result of X's work on the European Elections 2019. The complainant's concerns focus on the extent to which the publicly available information about European political parties and foundations is complete, clear and provided in a timely manner.

I have decided to open an inquiry into this complaint. However, I understand that the APPF may



already be working to address the complainant's concerns. [2] [Link] I would therefore appreciate if you could set out what concrete action the APPF has in mind and what the timeline is. In doing so, the following points may be helpful.

Information covering the registration and financial situation of European political parties and foundations should, to the greatest extent possible, be publicly available in a user-friendly, complete and updated manner. At present, it appears that the information can partially be found by consulting two separate websites, the APPF's and Parliament's website and my inquiry team has not found a reference on the APPF website to the relevant information on Parliament's website. This makes it difficult for the public to obtain a clear and complete overview of information relating to European political parties and foundations. Moreover, while some of the required information is publicly available, such as the names of the parties and foundations and unapproved applications, other information does not appear to be available, such as information relating to sanctions imposed by the APPF.

I further note that the APPF website is available only in English, French and German. I would, in this context, like to refer you to my recently published practical recommendations for the EU administration on the use of EU languages when communicating with the public [3] .

I would be grateful to receive the APPF's reply as soon as possible and no later than **5 October 2020**. Please note that I am likely to send your reply and related enclosures to the complainant for comments [4] [Link]. The responsible case-handler is Dorien Laermans.

The complainant has addressed its complaint against the APPF. However, given that the transparency obligations laid down in Article 32(1) of Regulation 1141/2014 refer to both the APPF and the Parliament, I consider it useful to give Parliament the opportunity to provide its views on the case at hand. I have therefore also informed the President of Parliament that I have opened an inquiry into this complaint.

Yours sincerely,

Emily O'Reilly European Ombudsman

[1] [Link] See in particular Article 32(1) of Regulation 1141/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations, available at:  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014R1141> [Link].

[2] [Link] In reply to the complainant's report, the APPF stated that it took note of the points raised and would, to the extent possible, take them into account in the further development of its website.

[3] [Link]<https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/correspondence/en/129519> [Link]. In



accordance with recommendation 6, EU institutions and bodies should make available in all official languages those parts of its websites that are of particular interest to the public. This should include, at least, the homepage and pages giving information about its role and contact details.

[4] [\[Link\]](#) If you wish to submit documents or information that you consider to be confidential, and which should not be disclosed to the complainant, please mark them 'Confidential'. Such documents can be sent through secure channels, such as Ares, CIRCABC or equivalent applications. The case handler can be contacted beforehand, if necessary.