

The European External Action Service's (EEAS) refusal to give full public access to its annual report on the implementation of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) of the EU in 2020

Case 786/2021/LM - Opened on 29/04/2021 - Decision on 08/07/2021 - Institution concerned European External Action Service (No maladministration found) |

The complainant requested from the European External Action Service (EEAS) public access to its annual report on the implementation of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) of the EU in 2020, which monitors progress towards PESCO's objective of structural integration of the national armed forces of 25 of the 27 EU Member States. The EEAS disclosed only parts of the document. In doing so, it invoked an exception provided for under the EU's rules on public access to documents, arguing that disclosing the remainder of the document could undermine international relations. The Ombudsman's inquiry team inspected the report, which confirmed that it contains highly sensitive information. The Ombudsman concluded that the EEAS was justified in refusing access and closed the inquiry finding no maladministration.