



European Ombudsman publishes Annual Report 2020

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The European Ombudsman has launched her Annual Report for 2020. As in past years, complaints related to transparency and accountability accounted for the biggest proportion of inquiries (25%).

The Report documents the Ombudsman's proactive monitoring of how key EU institutions responded in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. The Ombudsman [found \[Link\]](#) that the European Centre for Disease Control has insufficient powers to properly carry out its mandate. She also [asked \[Link\]](#) the Council's to improve the transparency of its procedures for decision making during the COVID-19 crisis. In 2021, the Ombudsman opened complaint-based COVID-19 inquiries concerning public access to the vaccine contracts signed by the Commission and details about the Member States taking part in negotiating the vaccine contracts.

"When crisis hits, transparency and accountability are often sacrificed in favour of expediency. It is therefore all the more important to remind public administrations to continue to act in a manner that ensures the greatest public trust," said Ms O'Reilly.

2020 also saw several important inquiries related to environmental decision making, as well inquiries concerning ethics and concerning fundamental rights - such as an inquiry into the effectiveness of Frontex's complaints mechanism.



The 2020 annual report is [here \[Link\]](#).

A web story, highlighting the most relevant cases and statistics, is [here \[Link\]](#).