

## The decision of the Council of the European Union not to select a candidate for a paid traineeship

Decision

**Case** 1185/2021/MMO - **Opened on** 19/07/2021 - **Decision on** 19/07/2021 - **Institution concerned** Council of the European Union ( No maladministration found ) |

Strasbourg, 19/07/2021

Complaint 1185/2021/MMO

Decision of the European in the above case concerning the decision of the Council of the European Union not to select a candidate for a paid traineeship

Dear Mr X,

On 1 July 2021, you submitted a complaint to the European Ombudsman. Your complaint is about the fact that the Council of the European Union (the Council) did not consider eligible your application for a traineeship at its General Secretariat. You put forward two points of concern, which we deal with in turn below.

Your **first point of concern** is that the Council found your application for a traineeship ineligible. You do not accept the Council's conclusion, arguing that you have a good command of English and that you also know American and International Sign Language. You further argue that your studies covered EU subjects.

After a careful analysis of all the information submitted to us, our conclusion is that the Council has provided you with a reasonable and appropriate reply to that concern. In particular, the Council said that, as English and French are widely used within the General Secretariat of the Council, a very good level of either English or French, namely **at level C** (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), was required. [1] The language knowledge that you had indicated in your traineeship application did not fully correspond to level C in either of those two languages. Thus, your application did not meet one of the necessary requirements for eligibility.

On the basis of the above, we find **no maladministration** by the Council in finding your traineeship application ineligible. [2]



Your **second point of concern** is that the Council discriminates against candidates of an ethnic origin by taking into account only the country of origin and not the individual challenges candidates may have faced before they are able to apply for a traineeship.

Regarding this aspect of your complaint, please note that the Ombudsman must follow certain rules for dealing with complaints [3] . One of these rules [4] is that the complainant must first have contacted the EU body concerned with a view to resolving the problem, before complaining to the Ombudsman. In this way, the EU body in question will have an opportunity to deal with the problem at an early stage and without the need to involve the Ombudsman.

It appears from the documentation you have sent us that you have not yet raised this point of concern with the Council. Unfortunately, this means that the Ombudsman cannot deal with this part of your complaint at this stage [5] .

If you wish to pursue the matter further, we suggest that you contact the Council and set out your complaint and the solution you are seeking.

If you do not receive a satisfactory response from the Council within a reasonable time, you may make a new complaint to the Ombudsman.

We hope you find these explanations helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Tina Nilsson

Head of the Case-handling Unit

[1] Information about the traineeship including the language requirements is publicly available following this link: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/general-secretariat/jobs/traineeships/> [Link]

[2] Full information on the procedure and rights pertaining to complaints can be found at <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/document/70707>

[3] These are set out in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in the Statute of the European Ombudsman.



[4] Set out in Article 2(4) of the Statute of the European Ombudsman.

[5] Full information on the procedure and rights pertaining to complaints can be found at <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/document/70707> .