

Decision of the European Ombudsman on complaint 1591/2000/GG against the European Commission

Decision

Case 1591/2000/GG - Opened on 06/12/2000 - Decision on 07/05/2001

Strasbourg, 7 May 2001

Dear Mrs R.,

On 1 December 2000, you lodged, acting on behalf of the Verein Autonome Österreichische Frauenhäuser (AÖF), a complaint with the European Ombudsman against the European Commission concerning the latter's failure to pay an amount of ATS 350 000 due for work carried out in the context of a campaign to attract the attention of the public to the problem of violence against women in the family.

On 6 December 2000, I forwarded this complaint to the Commission for its comments.

The Commission sent its opinion on your complaint on 29 March 2001. I forwarded this opinion to you on 30 March 2001 with an invitation to make observations, if you so wished, by 30 April 2001 at the latest. No such observations were received by me. However, after my services had contacted you on 2 May 2001, you informed me, on 3 May 2001, that you had made no observations since you had already received the outstanding payment.

I am now writing to you to let you know the results of the inquiries that have been made.

THE COMPLAINT

In 1999 and 2000, the European Commission conducted a European campaign to raise awareness of the issue of "Violence against women". On 2 December 1999, the Commission concluded an agreement with the complainant, an association of homes for women, pursuant to which the latter should take part in the above-mentioned campaign whilst the Commission agreed to contribute up to € 50 871 of the costs. The complainant claimed that the Commission had failed to make a final payment of ATS 350 000.

THE INQUIRY



The complaint was sent to the Commission for its comments.

The opinion of the Commission

In its opinion, the Commission stated that a first instalment of ₣ 25 436 had been paid on 25 May 2000. The final report and the final financial statement of the operation, together with the request for the final payment of ₣ 25 435, had been received by the Commission on 17 July 2000 and approved by the latter on 29 September 2000. The Commission claimed that due to internal problems the payment could not be carried out at that time. It added, however, that the payment of ₣ 25 435 had been made on 6 February 2001.

The complainant's observations

No observations from the complainant were received by the Ombudsman. However, the complainant informed the Ombudsman that she had already received the outstanding payment and thanked the Ombudsman for his effort.

THE DECISION

1 Failure to pay final instalment

1.1 The complainant claimed that the Commission had failed to pay the final instalment of ATS 350 000 due under its contract with the Commission concluded in December 1999.

1.2 In its opinion, the Commission explained that the final report and the final financial statement of the operation, together with the request for the final payment of ₣ 25 435, had been received by it on 17 July 2000 and approved by it on 29 September 2000. The Commission claimed that due to internal problems the payment could not be carried out at that time. It added, however, that the payment of ₣ 25 435 had been made on 6 February 2001.

1.3 It appears that the Commission has taken steps to settle the matter and has thereby satisfied the complainant.

2 Conclusion

On the basis of the Ombudsman's inquiries into the present complaint, it appears that the Commission has taken steps to settle the matter and has thereby satisfied the complainant. The Ombudsman therefore closes the case.

The President of the European Commission will also be informed of this decision.

Yours sincerely,

Jacob SÖDERMAN