

How the European Commission carried out a public consultation concerning the 'Sustainable Corporate Governance initiative'

Case 1956/2021/VB - **Opened on** 08/12/2021 - **Decision on** 12/12/2022 - **Institution concerned** European Commission (No further inquiries justified) |

The complainants, a group of civil society organisations, were concerned with how the European Commission carried out a public consultation on the 'Sustainable Corporate Governance initiative', which aims to encourage companies to better manage sustainability issues in their operations. In particular, the complainants contended that, in the summary report published shortly after the public consultation concluded, the Commission did not properly present the views of citizens who submitted responses through online campaign platforms.

The Ombudsman found it regrettable that the Commission did not adopt a more citizen-friendly approach to how it reported on the consultation, notably by providing more information on the responses received from those who signed the online petitions. This would have been consistent with its internal rules and guidelines on public consultations.

However, as the Commission has since adopted the resulting proposal for a Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence, the Ombudsman considered that no further inquiries into this issue were justified and closed the inquiry. In doing so, the Ombudsman made a suggestion for improvement to the Commission with a view to ensuring that, in its reports on the outcomes of public consultations in the future, it provides better information on the responses received from citizens through campaign platforms. She also suggested that the Commission provide clear information to organisations on how responses they gather through campaigns can best be taken into account in the context of consultations.