

## **The European External Action Service's (EEAS) refusal to grant public access to documents related to EU funding provided to Palestinian civil society organisations**

**Case 29/2022/TM - Opened on 06/01/2022 - Decision on 05/07/2022 - Institution concerned** European External Action Service ( No maladministration found ) |

The complainant asked the European External Action Service (EEAS) to grant him public access to briefings concerning funding for civil society organisations in Palestine, which were drawn up for the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The EEAS denied access, invoking an exception provided for under the EU's rules on public access to documents and arguing that disclosure could undermine the EU's international relations with Palestine and Israel.

The Ombudsman inquiry team inspected the documents at issue and obtained additional, confidential explanations from the EEAS. Based on this and considering the wide margin of discretion that EU institutions enjoy where they consider that international relations are at risk, the Ombudsman found that the EEAS's decision to refuse access was not manifestly wrong, and she closed the case finding no maladministration.