

The European External Action Service (EEAS)'s refusal of public access to the European Peace Facility's Integrated Methodological Framework (ref. 2021/066)

Case 124/2022/NH - Opened on 20/01/2022 - Decision on 28/06/2022 - Institution concerned European External Action Service (No maladministration found) |

The complainant asked the European External Action Service (EEAS) to grant public access to the 'Integrated Methodological Framework' for assistance measures under the European Peace Facility, which is the funding programme for external actions that have military or defence implications. The Framework sets out guiding principles and possible concerns to be addressed when assisting partners in the military and defence areas in the context of these actions. The EEAS refused access, invoking an exception provided for under the EU's rules on public access to documents and arguing that disclosing the documents could undermine the protection of the public interest as regards defence and military matters, as well as international relations.

After inspecting the documents, and obtaining additional clarifications from the EEAS, the Ombudsman found that the decision by the EEAS to refuse public access was reasonable and that it had provided the complainant with a sufficient explanation. She thus closed the inquiry finding no maladministration.