

## Decision on how the European Commission (Europe Direct) dealt with a question from a citizen concerning harmonisation of criminal records in the EU (case 329/2022/ABZ)

Decision

**Case 329/2022/ABZ - Opened on 07/03/2022 - Decision on 07/03/2022 - Institution concerned** European Commission ( No maladministration found ) |

Dear Mr X,

You recently submitted a complaint to the European Ombudsman against the Europe Direct, which is an information service working under the responsibility of the European Commission.

In your complaint, you say that individuals who have lived in different EU Member States face difficulties in getting access to criminal records from those Member States. You consider that the EU should set up a harmonised system to access such records, and you raised this issue with Europe Direct. You are not satisfied with the answer you received from Europe Direct.

After a careful analysis of all the information provided with your complaint, we have decided to close the inquiry with the conclusion that **there was no maladministration by Europe Direct in this case** [1] .

We consider that Europe Direct provided you with reasonable and appropriate reply. In particular, it informed you that criminal records falls within competence of the Member States and it advised you to contact the relevant national authorities to obtain assistance. In this regard, please note that the role of Europe Direct is to provide answers to questions from the public concerning the EU and that it is unable to comment on EU policies, such as your request that the EU should harmonise the system for access to criminal records.

We would suggest that you contact the relevant national authorities in your Member State, as suggested by Europe Direct. It appears that the Member State authorities may indeed be in a position to assist you in obtaining criminal records also from other EU Member States.

I appreciate this may not be your desired outcome but I hope you find these explanations useful. Thank you for having contacted the European Ombudsman.



Yours sincerely,

Tina Nilsson Head of the Case-handling Unit

Strasbourg, 07/03/2022

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