

## Inspection request concerning how the European Commission dealt with a request for public access to documents concerning sanctions against Russia

Correspondence - 26/09/2022

**Case** 1288/2022/SF - **Opened on** 11/07/2022 - **Decision on** 11/07/2023 - **Institution concerned** European Commission ( Solution achieved ) |

Secretariat-General

Head of Unit - C2

Ethics, Good Administration &

Relations with the European Ombudsman

European Commission

Dear Mr X,

We are contacting you about the Commission's failure to reply to the complainant's confirmatory application in the above case. The Commission had extended the time limit for its reply to 25 May 2022, but did not provide the complainant with a reply within the extended time limit.

We asked the Commission, on 11 July 2022, to reply to the complainant's confirmatory application and to inform us when it is done.

On 5 September 2022, the Commission informed us that it is not yet in a position to reply to the complainant, as it still had to consult more than 20 external parties.

On 15 September 2022, we asked the Commission to provide us with a list of the documents falling within the scope of the complainant's request. We also noted that we would like to share



this list with the complainant.

The Commission has now shared the requested list with us, and we thank you for that. Following your request, we have not shared the list with the complainant. It is, however, not readily clear to us on what grounds the Commission cannot tell the complainant what documents come within the scope of the request for public access. We would therefore appreciate it if the Commission could explain why the list cannot be shared, if possible by **30 September 2022**.

In our letters of 11 July and 15 September 2022, we informed you that it might be necessary to inspect the relevant documents.

Given the ongoing delay in replying to the complainant's confirmatory application, we now consider it necessary to examine the documents at issue in the complainant's request.

I would therefore be grateful if the Commission could provide the Ombudsman with copies of the requested documents, preferably in electronic format (through encrypted e-mail [1] contact (Ms Silvia Fuller), by **30 September 2022**.

The documents subject to the public access request will be treated confidentially, along with any other material the Commission chooses to share with us that it marks confidential. Documents of this kind will be handled and stored in line with this confidential status and will be deleted from the European Ombudsman's files shortly after the inquiry has ended.

Yours sincerely,

Rosita Hickey Director of Inquiries

Strasbourg, 26/09/2022

[1] Encrypted emails can be sent to our dedicated mailbox.