

European Ombudsman in Spain to tell citizens about his work

Press release no. 15/2003 - 17/09/2003

The European Ombudsman, **P. Nikiforos Diamandouros**, will visit Barcelona tomorrow as part of his efforts to make the institution better known among European citizens. During his visit, the Ombudsman will meet with the regional ombudsman of Catalunya and deliver a public lecture at the VIth Spanish Congress of Political Science.

Commenting on the upcoming visit, Mr. Diamandouros said: "Spanish citizens are among the best informed about the European Ombudsman. Over half of the population are aware of the European Ombudsman and over 60% believe that his work is important. It is hardly surprising then that Spain produced the greatest number of complaints to the Ombudsman in 2002, at 16% of the total. There is still work to be done, however, and I look forward to exploring ways of further improving the situation of awareness with my colleague, Mr. Cañellas."

Programme

On Thursday 18 September, the European Ombudsman will deliver the opening address at the VIth Spanish Congress of Political Science in the University of Barcelona. This follows an invitation from the Spanish Association of Political Science and Public Administration. In his speech, Mr. Diamandouros will outline the crucial role ombudsmen play in modern democracies in holding public authorities to account.

Earlier that day, Mr Diamandouros will meet with the regional ombudsman of Catalunya, Mr Cañellas, to discuss ways of increasing co-operation between their offices and how best to serve the citizen. The European Ombudsman actively co-operates with ombudsmen and similar bodies at the national and regional level throughout Europe in order to ensure that citizens' rights are protected.

For further information, please call José Martínez Aragón, Principal Legal Advisor, tel. +33 3 88 17 24 01.