

European Ombudsman in Greece to raise awareness of rights linked to European citizenship and the Constitution

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The European Ombudsman, **P. Nikiforos Diamandouros**, will visit Greece from 29 June to 2 July, at the invitation of the Greek Ombudsman, Yorgos Kaminis. During his visit, Mr Diamandouros will meet with Kostis Stephanopoulos, President of the Republic of Greece, Kostas Karamanlis, Prime Minister, Anna Benaki-Psarouda, Speaker of Parliament, Prokopis Pavlopoulos, Interior Minister and Christos Geraris, President of the Council of State. Mr Diamandouros will also meet with former Prime Minister Kostas Simitis and with the leaders of all political parties represented in the European Parliament.

In the run-up to the visit, the Ombudsman said "As the Intergovernmental Conference has now adopted the Constitution for Europe, it is important to inform citizens about what this means for them. I am delighted to have the opportunity to raise awareness in Greece about the rights deriving from citizenship of the Union and the Constitution."

Programme

On Wednesday 30 June, following his meetings with political leaders in Greece, Mr Diamandouros will deliver a public lecture entitled "The European Ombudsman as a mechanism of defending the fundamental rights of European citizens" at an event organised by non-governmental organisations. This will be followed by a meeting between the Ombudsman and the Foreign Press Association of Greece.

On Thursday 1 July, Mr Diamandouros will meet his counterpart, Mr Kaminis, and his staff to explore ways of developing the co-operation between their offices. This will be followed by a Press Conference in the Greek Ombudsman's office. Later that day, in addition to his meeting with the President of the Republic, Mr Diamandouros will deliver a lecture at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy. The lecture is entitled "The European Ombudsman, European Public Administration and European Citizens: A developing relationship".

On Friday 2 July, in addition to his meeting with the Prime Minister of Greece, Mr Diamandouros will meet the Head of the European Parliament's Office, Giorgos Kassimatis and the Head of the European Commission's Representation, Georgios Markopoulitis.

Background

EU citizens who need to complain to the European Ombudsman about maladministration in the



Union's institutions and bodies should be informed of how to do so. The general public should equally be aware that there is a European Ombudsman and of the role he plays in promoting the rule of law, good administration and respect for human rights. Since taking up the post of Ombudsman in April 2003, Mr Diamandouros has pursued a programme of information visits to raise awareness among citizens and has already visited 22 of the 25 Member States.

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