

## **Information on further inquiries addressed to the Commission on 28 October 2005 in the context of the Ombudsman's own-initiative inquiry into the integration of persons with disabilities (OI/3/2003)**

Correspondence - 13/07/2009

**Case OI/3/2003/JMA - Opened on 19/11/2003 - Decision on 04/07/2007**

Strasbourg, 28-10-2005

On 19 November 2003, the Ombudsman informed the Commission of his decision to open an inquiry into the subject of the integration of persons with disabilities, in particular as regards the measures adopted by the Commission to ensure that persons with disabilities were not discriminated against in their relations with the institution. At that time, the Ombudsman asked the Commission to report on (a) the actions it had taken or intended to take to ensure that persons with disabilities were not discriminated against in their relations with the institution as well as (b) the timetable for their adoption.

On 3 March 2004, the Commission sent its opinion, which was thereafter posted on the Ombudsman's website. A copy of the Commission's opinion was also sent to all the EU's national ombudsmen on 16 March 2004.

In response to these various actions, the Ombudsman received a total of 56 contributions from the public, non governmental organisations and national ombudsmen.

In order to meet the high expectations raised by this initiative, the Ombudsman considers that the concerns expressed by the public should be put to the Commission through an open and transparent dialogue. The Ombudsman has therefore asked the Commission for additional information as regards the following:

### **1. Employment:**

*\* The criteria or guidelines to be defined by the Commission to assist its services to decide whether or not a measure to promote the integration of people with disabilities is deemed to impose a disproportionate burden, taking into account that Article 1d.6 of the Staff Regulations explicitly states that any limitation on the application of the principle of non-discrimination must*



*be justified on objective and reasonable grounds and must be aimed at legitimate objectives in the general interest.*

*\* Whether or not its services intend to produce any further report on the accessibility of recruitment procedures for candidates with disabilities other than visual impairment.*

*\* Whether or not it may consider establishing periodic reports on the development of its recruitment policy in connection with people with disabilities, and if so when this measure is to be implemented.*

*\* Whether or not its services may consider developing positive measures to promote recruitment of disabled people.*

## **2. Accessibility of the Commission's premises:**

*\* Whether or not the announced new version of the document containing the standards applicable to the Commission premises on accessibility of disabled people has been adopted, and if so, what is the main thrust of its provisions.*

*\* Whether or not any progress has been achieved as regards the availability of parking spaces reserved to people with disabilities either in or near all of its buildings.*

## **3. Information and communication:**

*\* How it intends to improve the accessibility of the information it produces for disabled people, not only for those with visual impairments, but also for other disability groups.*

*\* Whether or not it plans to carry out a regular assessment of the accessibility of its websites for disabled people, and if so, how it intends to carry out this initiative.*

*\* Plans to have EU documents accessible through alternative formats such as large print, audio and electronic formats.*

## **4. The European Schools:**

*\* How the Commission intends to assess the results of the European Schools' new policy for the integration of SEN children and when such assessment will take place.*

## **5. Internal co-ordination:**

*\* Whether the first review of the Commission's revised Code of Good Practice corresponding to*



*the year 2004 has been analysed and, if so, what conclusions the Commission has drawn from it and what action it proposes to take based on those conclusions.*

*\* Whether or not it has established, or intends to establish courses or information campaigns on disability awareness for its staff.*

The Ombudsman has asked the Commission to send him the requested information by 31 January 2006 and will publish the Commission's reply on his website.