

Citizens know about their right to complain to European Ombudsman, says Eurobarometer

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87% of European citizens correctly believe that they have the right to complain to the European Ombudsman, making this the second best known right of citizenship of the Union. According to the Flash Eurobarometer opinion poll "... the right to complain to the European Ombudsman is indeed a reality for the very great majority of the citizens of the Union, all countries considered." Commenting on the finding, Mr. **Jacob Söderman** said "We have worked hard to inform citizens of their right to complain. This survey confirms that our communication strategy is working. The result is encouraging and we will continue to spread the word."

When asked to answer true or false to the question "Citizens of the European Union have the right to make a complaint to the European Ombudsman": 87% said "true". The score was as high as 96% in Ireland and Finland - no other right of citizenship scored better than 96%, in any country. Only 6% of EU citizens thought that they could not complain to the European Ombudsman, while 7% said they did not know whether they could or not.

% of people who said "True" to the question "Citizens of the European Union have the right to make a complaint to the European Ombudsman"

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Background

This Flash Eurobarometer survey was carried out by EOS Gallup Europe for the European Commission in October 2002 and polled 7,525 citizens across the 15 Member States. The main purpose of the survey was to discover what people know about European citizenship and in particular, what they know about their rights as European citizens.

The right of EU citizens to work in any Member State is the right that citizens know best, while the right to reside in any Member State comes third, after the right to complain to the Ombudsman. Next comes the right to petition the Parliament. Political rights, namely the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in European Parliament and local elections, are not so well known.



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