

## **Alleged failure of the European Commission to treat the European Science and Technology Network on Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction as an expert group and to ensure its balanced composition**

Case opened

**Case 1100/2015/NF - Opened on 18/08/2015 - Decision on 16/03/2017 - Institutions concerned** European Commission ( No maladministration found ) | European Commission ( No further inquiries justified ) |

### **Allegation(s)**

The Commission has

- 1) failed to recognise that the European Science and Technology Network on Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction constitutes an expert group;
- 2) failed adequately to respond to the complainants' concern that the composition of the European Science and Technology Network on Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction is unbalanced;
- 3) wrongly allowed members associated with the shale gas industry to act as chairmen of the European Science and Technology Network on Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction.

### **Claim(s)**

- 1) The Commission should (i) recognise that the European Science and Technology Network on Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction is an expert group; (ii) enter the Network on the expert groups' register; and (iii) apply all relevant rules applicable to Commission expert groups to the Network, including the rules on conflicts of interest.
- 2) Alternatively, in the event that the Commission refuses to accept that the European Science and Technology Network on Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction is an expert group it should recognise that it is an entity similar to an expert group and should therefore, by analogy, apply to it the rules governing its expert groups, in particular as regards a balanced composition,



conflicts of interest and transparency.

3) In the second alternative, the Commission should abolish the European Science and Technology Network on Unconventional Hydrocarbon Extraction.

The Ombudsman invites the Commission to submit an opinion by 30 November 2015.