



Ombudsman welcomes Eurogroup proactive transparency proposals

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The European Ombudsman, **Emily O'Reilly**, welcomes the initiative of the Eurogroup President, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, to table a number of proactive transparency measures at today's Eurogroup meeting. These measures involve publishing (i) a complete draft annotated agenda of the Eurogroup, (ii) the Eurogroup summing-up letter (which reflects the President's understanding of what has been discussed in the meeting), and (iii) programme-country related documents ahead of decisions, as well as notes presented to the Eurogroup after the meetings.

The President of the Eurogroup addressed a letter with these proposals to all Eurogroup members on 17 December 2015.

Emily O'Reilly said *"The Eurogroup is one of the most powerful groups in the EU, and yet has been lacking in terms of basic levels of transparency. The measures discussed today are of significance for all Europeans. Given the far-reaching decisions of the Eurogroup, this group of Finance Ministers must be more accountable. I welcome this initiative of President Dijsselbloem and trust that it will be adopted and implemented in full. I will also continue to monitor the issue over the coming months."*

Background

In summer 2015, the Ombudsman received a complaint alleging lack of transparency of Eurogroup meetings, specifically as regards the negotiations on a programme of financial support to Greece. The Ombudsman has also, in the meantime, been monitoring how



requests for public access to Eurogroup documents are handled, notably by the Council. Given that access to summing-up letters has been denied in the past, the intention to publish these letters proactively in future is welcome.

The European Ombudsman investigates complaints about maladministration in the EU institutions, agencies and bodies. Any EU citizen, resident, or an enterprise or association in a Member State, can lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman offers a fast, flexible, and free means of solving problems with the EU administration. For more information: <http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu>

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