

## **Ombudsman deals with many e-mails from citizens about the oil-tanker *Prestige***

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The European Ombudsman, **Jacob Söderman**, has received a large number of e-mails from citizens about the sinking of the oil tanker *Prestige* and its catastrophic effects. They mainly refer to the insufficiency of the existing legislation and the failure of the measures undertaken so far. As these issues fall outside the mandate of the European Ombudsman, the concerned citizens have been advised to petition the European Parliament.

Having received over 500 mails from citizens on this subject over the past week, the Ombudsman said "I realize the seriousness of this issue and its resulting negative social impacts. ...Since the problem involves political and legislative initiatives, it is important that the European Parliament addresses these legitimate concerns of citizens."

The European Ombudsman investigates complaints about maladministration by the institutions and bodies of the European Community. He cannot deal with complaints concerning national, regional or local administrations of the Member States. Complaints concerning the merits of Community legislation or the political activities of Community institutions and bodies also fall beyond the scope of his powers.

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