



Ombudsman urges appropriate Brexit transparency

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The European Ombudsman, **Emily O'Reilly**, has asked the European Commission to set out the arrangements that it plans to put in place to ensure transparency and to secure appropriate stakeholder input during the upcoming Brexit negotiations. These should cover the types of information and documents the Commission intends to publish - including the timeline for negotiations and reports on negotiating rounds - and when.

The Ombudsman also suggests that the Commission detail how it intends to receive input from stakeholders throughout the process and to make it clear from the outset that this input will normally be published.

"I am conscious of the concerns of EU citizens and businesses about the potentially far-reaching implications of the outcome of the Brexit negotiations. My office has already received complaints from individuals who are looking for more information about what has happened to date and I expect it will receive more. Businesses especially will need some certainty on how the future relationship will be constructed," said Ms O'Reilly.

"It is clear that the Commission is already reflecting on how to put in place arrangements to ensure transparency and to receive appropriate stakeholder input throughout this process. This reflects its important role in protecting the interests of the Union and its citizens during the upcoming negotiations.



“The EU side indeed can only benefit from more transparency, as the reality of such tough negotiations sets in step by step on the UK side.”

In her letter to President Juncker, the Ombudsman also notes that many questions about EU citizens' rights may come to her office through the European Network of Ombudsmen.

Ms O'Reilly said she will be encouraging her national and regional counterparts to turn to her office which assists Network members by obtaining expert replies on matters of EU law and practice from the Commission and other EU institutions.

“ Citizens' rights, particularly in the area of free movement, have proved to be a contentious topic even before the opening of negotiations. I am encouraging my colleagues in the European Network of Ombudsmen to use my office as a conduit for getting all the information they need about citizens' rights under EU law ,” said Ms O'Reilly.

The Ombudsman has asked the European Commission to reply to her letter by 30 April 2017.

The European Ombudsman's letter to President Juncker is available [here \[Link\]](#).