

Ombudsman informs EU citizens of their rights

Press release no. 20/2001 - 30/10/2001

The European Ombudsman, Jacob Söderman, today published the European Code of Good Administrative Behaviour on his website. The European Parliament approved this Code in its plenary on 6 September 2001.

The Code promotes the fundamental right to good administration that is enshrined in Article 41 of the Nice Charter of Fundamental Rights. "In its resolution of 6 September, the Parliament instructed me to apply the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour in my work in combating possible maladministration in the EU institutions and bodies. I think that it is only fair to publish it for the guidance and advice of both citizens and EU officials."

"My hope now is that the Parliament will take a legal initiative and ask the Commission to draft a proposal for a regulation on good administrative behaviour based on this Code," says Söderman. "A law would be a big step towards true citizenship and would benefit the European Union at large."

The Code is available in all 11 official languages of the EU. It is based on the jurisprudence of the Community Courts and the best administrative laws in the Member states. "I am happy to say that you can now find sound examples of laws on good administration in every corner of the Union, with the most recent laws adopted in Spain, Portugal and France. It seems that all Europeans expect the public administration to be there to serve the citizens and not the other way around," Söderman concluded.

The Code is available at the following address:
<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/code/en/default.htm>

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