

Brussels, 20 July 2021
APPF(2021/0040)

For the attention of:

Ms Emily O'Reilly
European Ombudsman
1 avenue du Président Robert Schuman
CS 30403
F - 67001 Strasbourg
France

By email to:

European Ombudsman - Registry
[REDACTED]

By email/electronic sending only

Subject: **Reply to your letter of 25 January 2021**
Complaint 1094/2020/DL

Dear Ms O'Reilly,
Dear Ombudsman,

I would like to thank you again for your letter of 25 January 2021 (the “letter”) by which you communicated your decision regarding the Complaint 1094/2020/DL. Through the letter, you informed me about your conclusion that no further inquiries are justified.

At the same time, you set out three suggestions for the Authority’s consideration. These suggestions aim to improve the Authority’s website. I would like to thank you again for those suggestions, which we have duly taken into account.

In the following, I set out how the Authority followed-up on each suggestion.

1. EO - suggestion Nr. 1:

The APPF should publish on its website any incomplete or missing information on European political parties and foundations it is required to under the applicable legislation.

- Follow-up by the Authority:

As explained in the Authority's reply to Complaint 1094/2020/DL of 5 October 2021, the Authority had at all times published on its website all information it is legally required to publish under the applicable legislation.

Nevertheless, the Authority has taken the occasion to carry out additional measures, going beyond its legal obligations, in order to further improve the visibility of information for citizens.

During the course of the second half of 2020, the Authority's website was migrated to a new IT tool. This new IT tool enables more advanced technical possibilities, a better visualisation of the website and a more contemporary look. Most importantly, with this IT tool the website was expanded in terms of its structure and technical obstacles leading to certain IT limitations were removed.

The removal of these IT limitations has been crucial for the future file uploads, number of tabs and subtabs being hosted, and generally, the amount of information that can be offered to the viewers.

Following the above-mentioned migration to a new IT tool, the Authority has - to a very large extent - enriched its website. The amount of information and documentation on this updated/new website has grown significantly, the website is now complemented by a large number of elements, and offers more clarity regarding the published information and corresponding documentation.

As examples, I would like to mention three elements:

- a) The Authority introduced a standardised format and provided corresponding templates for European political parties to submit information about their Members of the European Parliament in order to ensure consistency and a better possibility of comparison of the information provided;
- b) The Authority prepared a *consolidated list of Members of the European Parliament who are members of European political party* and published it on the its website; and
- c) The Authority introduced a separate and self-standing section on *sanctions*.

2. EO - suggestion Nr. 2:

The APPF should follow up on its commitment to publish on its website references and links to information about European political parties and foundations that is published on the Parliament's website, and include explanations where relevant.

- Follow-up by the Authority:

The above suggestion has been implemented on the Authority's website.

See: <http://www.appf.europa.eu/appf/en/other-information/ep-published-documents>).

3. EO - suggestion Nr. 3:

The APPF should, in the future, make information available on its website in an open data format.

- Follow-up by the Authority:

The Authority is exploring this option with the IT services responsible for the development of its website.

In addition, the Authority's staff is engaged in discussions with the European Parliament Web Accessibility Task Force. This *task force* is in the process of identifying possible technical solutions to make the websites hosted on the European Parliament's IT infrastructure (hosting - among other - the Authority's website) accessible to all citizens.

4. EO - final remark - inquiry (additional):

I note that no details on the Register are available on the APPF's website. Therefore, it is uncertain if the APPF complies with its obligations to establish and manage the Register. While recognizing that the issue does not fall within the scope of this inquiry, I would welcome any improvements from the APPF in this regard.

- Reply Authority:

Detailed information about the Register of European political parties and foundations as foreseen by Article 7 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 and Article 3 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2015/2401, is published on the following sections of the Authority's website:

Register of European political parties:

<http://www.appf.europa.eu/appf/en/parties-and-foundations/registered-parties>

Register of European political foundations:

<http://www.appf.europa.eu/appf/en/parties-and-foundations/registered-foundations>

5. Authority's website: Languages

Lastly, I would like to inform the service of the European Ombudsman that the Authority's website is at this point greatly expanded also from a linguistic point of view. The website now offers the information in all official languages of the European Union. All 24 languages have been added and display the information going far beyond "setting out basic information".

I trust this letter addresses your suggestions in a succinct manner and would like to thank you and your service once again for the constructive suggestions you have put forward.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the Director.

Director