

Annual Management Plan

Year 2023

25 January 2023



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1. Introduction

The Ombudsman's mission statement

Our mission is to help to support European citizenship.

We do this by listening to citizens, to our stakeholders, and by working with the institutions of the EU to help to create a more accountable, transparent, ethical and effective administration.

The Treaty on the functioning of the European Union empowers the Ombudsman to carry out inquiries into maladministration in the activities of the Union's institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, with the exception of the Court of Justice in its judicial role. Inquiries may be carried out in response to complaints, or on the Ombudsman's own initiative. The Ombudsman's independence is guaranteed by the Treaties.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights includes the right of EU citizens to complain to the Ombudsman. Companies, associations, and third country nationals resident in the EU also enjoy this right. The Ombudsman can deal with complaints about breaches of Charter rights, as well as other cases of maladministration. The Ombudsman therefore empowers citizens by helping them to realise their fundamental rights.

The Ombudsman promotes good governance and a culture of public service by helping the EU administration to work openly, effectively, and with integrity.

The Ombudsman's Internal Charter of Good Practice sets out the standards and principles that guide the office's activities and interactions with stakeholders. They are:

- Leadership in problem solving
- Independence and neutrality
- Innovative approaches to dispute resolution
- Systemic thinking
- External awareness and curiosity
- Responsiveness
- Empathy
- Openness and engagement

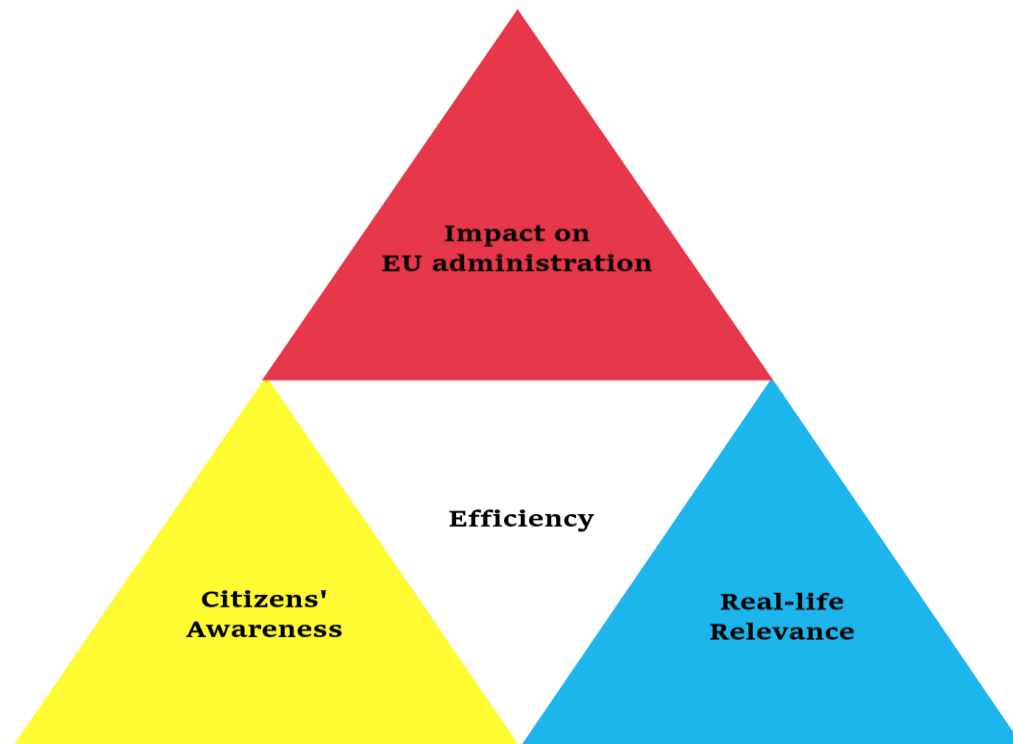
The Annual Management Plan for 2023 (AMP 2023) is the third based on the 'Towards 2024' Strategy adopted by the Ombudsman in December 2020. It is based on an overall budget of EUR 13 212 447 and 75 posts.



2. Multi-Annual perspective

The Ombudsman's multi-year strategy *Towards 2024* is to combine and achieve four **mutually reinforcing** objectives.

1. We aim to achieve **lasting positive impact** on the EU administration, to the benefit of all European citizens and residents.
2. To help achieve that, our work must continue to be of **real-life relevance** to all of us.
3. To enable this impact, we must continue to increase **citizens' awareness** of our work Europe wide.
4. Given our limited resources, we have become very **efficient** in recent years. However, more can be done.





3. The organisation of the office

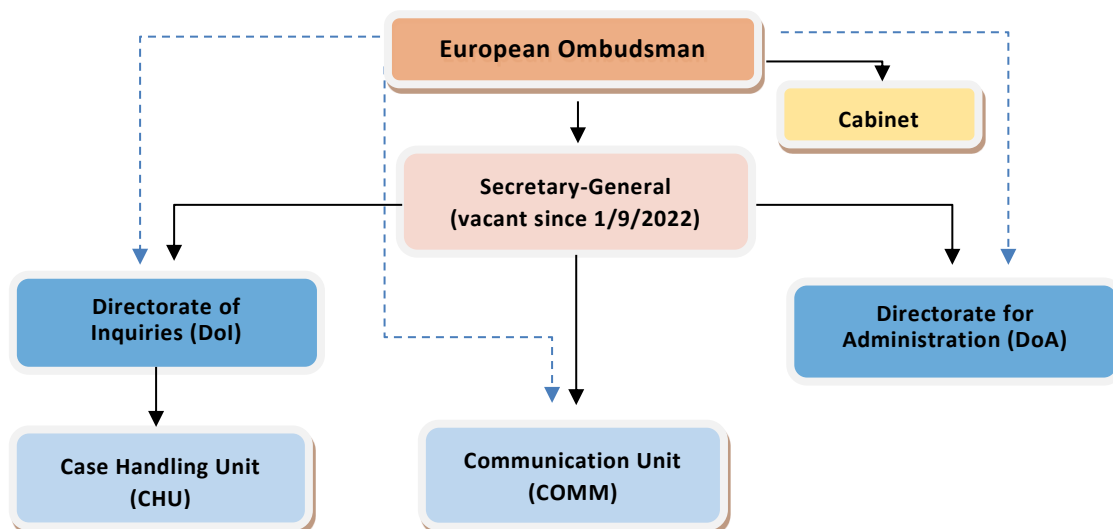
The **Cabinet (CAB)** works under the direct instruction of the Ombudsman. It advises and assists the Ombudsman to help ensure implementation of her vision, strategy and objectives. Cabinet members also liaise and represent the Ombudsman externally and draft speeches and articles on behalf of the Ombudsman.

The **Secretary-General (SG)** is responsible for the overall management of the office and for ensuring coordination and implementation of the Ombudsman's strategy. Since the retirement of the Secretary-General in September 2022, the Directors and the Head of the Communication Unit report directly to the Ombudsman. Coordination is done at the Directorates' level with the support of the Secretariat-General staff and the Ombudsman's Cabinet.

The **Directorate of Inquiries (DoI)**, which includes the **Case-handling Unit (CHU)** implements the Ombudsman's strategy in the area of complaints and inquiries.

The **Directorate for Administration (DoA)**, is responsible for all matters related to human resources (HR), budget and finance (FIN), process management, business continuity and infrastructure (PBI). The Directorate establishes and implements the appropriate internal control mechanisms and prepares information for the various budgetary control authorities.

The **Communication Unit (COMM)** supports the Ombudsman's objective of increasing citizens' awareness of the office and co-ordinates the Ombudsman's relations with the European Network of Ombudsmen.





4. Actions for 2023

The focus of the Annual Management Plan is mainly on new activities or changes that are needed to achieve the Office's high level objectives.

The tables below are organised under six themes that the Office will focus on in 2023. They list the actions to be taken in 2023 under each theme and indicate the owner and the targeted Strategy objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs).

This section also includes information on planned actions to strengthen or develop the internal control standards that will be prioritised in 2023.

Theme 1 - Enhancing the Ombudsman's impact in key areas

Actions	Owner(s)	Targeted Strategy objectives and KPIs
1 Enhance ethical lobbying across a range of IBOAs, including improved controls, better functioning of the Transparency Register and guidelines on declarations of interest.	DoI	Impact KPIs 2, 4, 5, 6
2 Maintain focus on transparency in EU decision-making, notably regarding the environment, defence and energy.	DoI	Real life relevance Impact KPIs 1, 2, 5, 6
3 Organise an ENO¹ seminar on the transparency of the Recovery and Resilience Facility.	COMM	Real life relevance Impact KPIs 5, 6
4 Organise capacity-building events on disability rights and the UN CRPD².	DoI-CHU	Real life relevance
5 Strengthen follow-up on compliance in inquiries.	DoI/DoA	Impact KPI 3
6 Complete the review of the Fast Track procedure and carry out a stakeholder survey in that context.	DoI/COMM/IT	Impact citizens' awareness Real-life relevance KPIs 4, 7

Theme 2 - Engaging with stakeholders

Actions	Owner(s)	Targeted Strategy objectives and KPIs
7 Organise the annual ENO conference and stakeholder conference.	COMM	Real life relevance Impact KPIs 5, 6
8 Work with other EU institutions to improve the application of the public access to documents rules, including dealing with resource intensive requests.	DoI	Real life relevance Impact KPI 3

¹ European Network of Ombudsmen

² United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



9	Exchange good practices about statistics and performance measurement with other EU complaint handling bodies.	DoI-CHU	Efficiency
10	Reach out to the European Court of Human Rights on areas of common interest, notably freedom of information.	DoI	Real life relevance Impact
11	Become a depositing institution at the Historical Archives of the EU in Florence.	DoA-PBI	Citizens' awareness

Theme 3 - Ensuring dynamic and relevant communications and outreach

Actions	Owner(s)	Targeted Strategy objectives and KPIs
12 Organise the 2023 Award for Good Administration.	COMM	Impact KPI 6
13 Communication campaign on the EO's long-term impact on the EU administration.	COMM	Real life relevance Impact Citizens' awareness KPIs 1,2,6
14 Communication campaign on public access to documents.	COMM/DoI	Real-life relevance Citizens' awareness KPIs 1, 5,6
15 Communication campaign to promote new EO videos.	COMM	Real life relevance KPIs 1, 5, 6
16 Increase the user-friendliness of the EO website.	COMM/IT	Real life relevance Efficiency KPI 5

Theme 4 - Improving the management and the security of documents, information and data

Actions	Owner(s)	Targeted Strategy objectives and KPIs
17 Improve and develop the existing online account for complainants to allow increased interaction through this account.	DoA-PBI	Efficiency, Real life relevance KPI 4
18 Enhance the functionalities of CMS ³ to better support the work of users.	DoA-PBI	Efficiency KPI 7
19 Conclude a Service Level Agreement with the European Parliament in the field of ICT security, adopt an internal ICT security policy and take implementing measures.	DoA-PBI	Efficiency
20 Implement the E-invoicing system to receive and process supplier invoices.	DoA-FIN	Efficiency KPI 8

³ Case Management System



Theme 5 - Strengthening efficiency and resilience

Actions	Owner(s)	Targeted Strategy objectives and KPIs
21 Simplify the handling of failure to reply complaints and explore ways to streamline further the processing of information requests and outside the mandate complaints.	DoA-DoI	Efficiency KPI 7
22 Reflect on priority areas in which we could start deploying artificial intelligence.	SG/DoI/DoA	Efficiency
23 Continue the review of financial policies and charters to ensure they are in line with the Financial Regulation.	DoA/FIN	Efficiency
24 Review our recruitment strategies to attract the right profiles.	DoA-HR/DoI	Efficiency KPI 9
25 Obtain and implement the SYSPER ⁴ module on probation.	DoA-HR	Efficiency
26 Adopt a leave and medical leave policy.	DoA-HR	Efficiency

Theme 6 - Promoting an ethical, inclusive and sustainable work environment

Actions	Owner(s)	Targeted Strategy objectives and KPIs
27 Consolidate the use of the SYSPER ethics module and further refine the Office's policies on ethics and good conduct.	DoA-HR/All	Efficiency
28 Systematically check and offer improved equipment for home offices.	DoA-PBI	Efficiency
29 Introduce a scheme to promote sustainable mobility.	DoA-PBI	Efficiency
30 Publish a targeted call for expression of interest to recruit a trainee with a disability.	DoA-HR/All	Efficiency
31 Produce a comprehensive welcome dossier for all new recruits.	DoA-HR	Efficiency
32 Carry out a staff satisfaction survey.	DoA-HR/All	Efficiency

⁴ Information system for the management of Human Resources.



Actions to reinforce our internal control standards

Internal Control Standard (ICS)	Effectiveness Requirement Criteria	Planned actions to improve or develop controls	Owner(s)
ICS 2- Ethical and organisational values	Staff must be kept aware of relevant ethical values and of any associated rules and procedures.	Consolidate the use of the SYSPER ethics module and further refine the Office's policies on ethics and good conduct (see also action 27 above).	DoA/ Ethics correspondents
ICS 3 - Staff allocation and mobility	In order to maintain adequate staffing, staff turnover should, as far as possible, be anticipated so that vacancies can be filled quickly with the right talent.	Review our recruitment strategies to attract the right profiles (see also action 24 above).	DoA/DoI
ICS 8 - Processes and procedures	To be effective, all internal financial and control processes must comply with the Financial Regulation and be documented adequately	Continue the review of the financial policies, the charters of financial actors and the exception register to ensure alignment with the Financial Regulation (see also action 23 above).	DoA-FIN
ICS 10- Business continuity	To be effective, business continuity measures need to be constantly adapted to structural and operational changes in an institution.	Further improve our business continuity capabilities by adopting a training plan and conducting tests.	DoA-PBI/All
ICS 11- Document Management	Appropriate processes must be in place to ensure that document management is secure and efficient	Continue to raise awareness on document management requirements.	DoA-PBI
ICS 13- Accounting and financial reporting	The Office must ensure business continuity in the area of accounting	Evaluate the feasibility of outsourcing the accounting activities.	DoA-FIN



5. Measuring and reporting on our performance

Progress in achieving our objectives is measured using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). They are set out below, together with targets for 2023. The KPIs and relevant targets are reviewed and, if necessary, revised on an annual basis.

Key Performance Indicators, measurement and targets for 2023

KPI	Measurement	Targets	Strategy objectives
KPI 1	Percentage of complaints within the mandate	35%	Real-life relevance Citizens' awareness
KPI 2	Number of inquiries opened in cases of public importance (complaints, strategic inquiries and strategic initiatives)	50	Impact on EU administration Real-life relevance
KPI 3	Acceptance rate (previous year's results – composite indicator) Rate of positive follow-up to solution proposals, recommendations and suggestions		Impact on EU administration Real-life relevance
	3a - Overall acceptance rate	80%	
	3b - Acceptance rate in cases of public importance	80%	
	3c - Acceptance rate in Covid-19 related cases (for as long as relevant)	80%	
KPI 4	Perception of our key stakeholders (satisfaction score based on complainant feedback survey)	> 3 out of 5	Impact on EU administration Real-life relevance
KPI 5	Web activities (composite indicator)		Citizens' awareness Real-life relevance
	5a - Visitors to the website	600 000	
	5b - Advice given through the interactive guide to contact a member of the European Network of Ombudsmen	10 000	
KPI 6	Social media activities (composite indicator)		Citizens' awareness Real-life relevance
	6a - Increase of followers on social media	+5%	
	Twitter	+15%	
	LinkedIn	+25%	
	Instagram		
	6b - Number of visits to the website through links posted on our social media channels	3 500	
KPI 7	Handling of complaints and inquiries (composite indicator)		Efficiency
	7a - Proportion of cases in which the admissibility decision is taken in one month	95%	
	7b - Average duration of inquiries	150 days	
	7c - Clearance rate (cases closed compared to new cases registered in the reference period)	100%	
KPI 8	Budget implementation (composite indicator)		Efficiency
	8a - Rate of budget implementation	93%	
	8b - Proportion of payments made within 30 days	100%	
KPI 9	Management of Human Resources (composite indicator)		Efficiency
	9a - Occupation rate of establishment plan posts	95%	
	9b - Percentage of workforce dedicated to core activities	65%	
	9c - Average number of training days per staff member	5	



6. Resources for the implementation of the 2023 priorities

6.1. Human resources

The table below shows the allocation of human resources in the various operational entities and the categories of processes of the Operating Framework each of these entities is predominantly involved with.

	Allocation of resources	Management processes	Core processes	Supporting processes
Ombudsman Cabinet	Head of Cabinet: 1 AD: 2 AST: 1	X	X	
Secretariat-General (Management & Coordination)	AD: 1 AST: 1	X		
Directorate of Inquiries (including Complaint Handling Unit)	Director: 1 Head of Unit: 1 AD: 27 AST: 1 AST SC: 1 Contract agents: 3 Trainees: 7	X	X	
Directorate for Administration	Director: 1 AST:1	X		X
HR	AD: 2 AST: 6			X
Finance	AD: 1 AST: 1 AST-SC: 2			X
Process & documents management, business continuity and infrastructure	AD: 3 AST: 8 AST-SC: 2 Contract agent: 2 Trainee: 1		X	X
Communication Unit	Head of Unit: 1 AD: 2 AST: 3 AST-SC: 1 Contract agent: 2 Trainee: 1	X	X	



6.2. Budgetary resources by operational line

Budget Lines	Resources (EUR)
A-1 6 1 2 Further training	90 000
A-2 0 0 0 Rent	942 000
A-2 0 0 2 Cleaning, maintenance and energy consumption	195 000
A-2 0 0 3 Security and surveillance of buildings	292 000
A-2 1 0 0 Purchase, servicing and maintenance of IT	310 000
A-2 1 2 Furniture	3 000
A-2 1 6 Vehicles	12 000
A-2 3 0 0 Stationery, office supplies and miscellaneous	5 500
A-2 3 0 1 Postage on correspondence and delivery charges	3 000
A-2 3 0 2 Telecommunications	5 000
A-2 3 0 3 Financial charges	700
A-2 3 0 4 Other expenditures	3 500
A-2 3 0 5 Legal costs and damages	1 000
A-2 3 1 Translation and interpretation	315 000
A-2 3 2 Support for activities	177 000
A-3 0 0 Staff mission expenses	100 000
A-3 0 2 Reception and representation expenses	2 000
A-3 0 3 Meetings in general	124 000
A-3 0 4 Internal meetings	25 000
A-3 2 0 0 Documentation and library	4 000
A-3 2 0 1 Archive resources	3 000
A-3 2 1 0 Communication & publications	25 000
A-3 3 0 0 Studies	10 000
A-3 4 0 0 Miscellaneous expenses	2 400

Emily O'Reilly



Annex: Visual representation of the key management documents of the Ombudsman's Office

Key management documents and how they relate to one another

We produce a number of documents that help us to guide and manage our activities in line with the mission statement.

They also contribute to the external accountability of the office and are publicly available. Some are required by law. others are produced voluntarily by the Office.

These documents aim at answering different questions, as shown in the visual representation below.





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