



European Ombudsman

# **Annual Management Plan**

## **Year 2013**

**Strasbourg**  
**29 January 2013**

**EN**



# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Multi-Annual perspective</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. The organisation of the office</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Actions for 2013</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1 Actions under objective 1 - <b>Listen</b>	7
4.2 Actions under objective 2 - <b>Deliver</b>	8
4.3 Actions under objective 3 - <b>Persuade</b>	9
4.4 Actions under objective 4 - <b>Communicate</b>	9
4.5 Actions under objective 5 - <b>Adapt</b>	10
<b>5. Measuring and reporting on our performance</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>6. Resources for the implementation of the 2013 priorities</b>	<b>13</b>
6.1. Human resources	13
6.2. Budgetary resources by operational line	14



## 1. Introduction

The office of the European Ombudsman was created in 1993, as part of the citizenship of the Union. The European Parliament elected the first Ombudsman in 1995.

The Ombudsman carries 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, either on his own initiative or in response to complaints. He is completely independent in the performance of his duties.

The right to complain to the Ombudsman is a fundamental right of European citizenship. Any citizen of the Union and any natural or legal person residing or having its registered office in a Member State may complain to the Ombudsman.

As well as providing an independent and impartial service to complainants, the Ombudsman also works proactively to improve the quality of administration and encourage full respect for citizens' rights.

The Ombudsman's mission statement reads as follows:

*The European Ombudsman seeks fair outcomes to complaints against European Union institutions, encourages transparency and promotes an administrative culture of service. He aims to build trust through dialogue between citizens and the European Union and to foster the highest standards of behaviour in the Union's institutions.*

In pursuit of these goals, the Ombudsman's office carries out the following activities: (i) dealing with complaints and carrying out inquiries, (ii) communication, (iii) support activities and (iv) strategy and governance.

The Annual Management Plan (AMP) for 2013 is based on a multi-annual perspective, i.e., the aspirations, objectives and priorities set out in his Strategy for the mandate (2009-2014). The Strategy is explained in Section 2 below.

Following an explanation of the structure and organisation of the office in Section 3, Section 4 sets out the priorities of the Strategy on which the Ombudsman intends to focus in 2013, in order to make further progress towards attaining the Strategy's aspirations and objectives. It identifies the actions that will be carried out for this purpose and allocates responsibility for them among the different operational Units of the Ombudsman's office, which have been described in Section 3.

The actions are formulated in as concrete a way as possible, in order to facilitate measurement and reporting of our performance (see Section 5 below).

The AMP 2013 is based on an overall budget of 9 731 371 Euro and 76 staff. Section 6 provides detailed information on the human and budgetary resources available to carry out the planned activities.

Following an assessment of three projects carried out as part of the AMP 2012, the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) recognised the Ombudsman as an institution 'Committed to Excellence'. The methodology and lessons learnt in carrying out these actions will, as far as possible, be applied to and guide the projects and actions which will be undertaken in 2013.



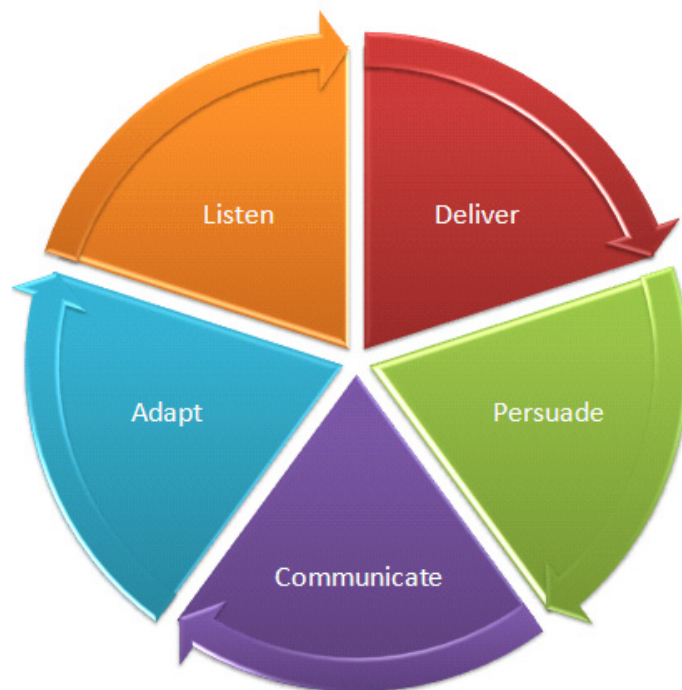
## 2. Multi-Annual perspective

The Annual Management Plan for 2013 is the third AMP to be based on the Ombudsman's Strategy for the mandate (2009-14).

The Strategy, which was adopted in September 2010, announced that, by the end of the current mandate, we aspire to:

- measurably increase our effectiveness as an alternative means of resolving disputes with the Union institutions;
- be recognised as a driving force to put citizens at the centre of the Union's administrative culture; and
- more fully demonstrate our on-going commitment to identifying and meeting the expectations of complainants and of other stakeholders.

The strategy document translates these aspirations into five objectives, which are reflected in the graphic below:



For each of the five objectives, the strategy document identifies a number of priorities.

In establishing the priorities for 2013, due account was taken of what has been done so far and where progress still needs to be made in order fully to achieve the objectives set out in the strategy.



### 3. The organisation of the office

The Ombudsman's organisational structure consists of the Ombudsman's private office (Cabinet), the Secretariat-General and two Directorates.

A table indicating the allocation of staff is provided in Section 6.1 below.

#### **Cabinet**

The **Cabinet** assists the Ombudsman to manage the workflow connected with complaint-handling, advises the Ombudsman on relations with the other EU institutions and deals with matters of protocol. Cabinet members also draft speeches and articles, represent the Ombudsman at meetings, seminars and workshops, and carry out a range of administrative tasks, including managing the Ombudsman's agenda and correspondence.

#### **Secretariat-General**

The **Secretary-General (SG)** is responsible for providing policy advice to the Ombudsman, for strategic management and direction, and for ensuring overall coordination.

The **Communication Unit (COM)**, which reports to the Ombudsman and the SG, is responsible for informing individuals and organisations throughout the Union of the role and activities of the Ombudsman. The Unit maintains and promotes relations with the media, organises the Ombudsman's information visits and events, and liaises with other EU institutions on outreach initiatives. It drafts and produces the Ombudsman's publications and promotional material, maintains and develops the Ombudsman's websites, implements the institution's visual identity, coordinates the European Network of Ombudsmen and, more generally, is responsible for relations with ombudsman associations in Europe and beyond.

#### **Two Directorates**

The two Directorates consist of three Units each; two Complaints and Inquiries Units and a Unit in charge of support activities.

The two Directors share the tasks of dealing with complaints and inquiries. In addition, each Directorate is also responsible for one Unit in charge of support activities in the Ombudsman's office; that is respectively (1) the Personnel, Administration and Budget Unit and (2) the Registry.

**The Complaints and Inquiries Units (C&I)** deal with the complaints sent to the Ombudsman. They conduct the inquiries needed to clarify possible cases of maladministration, look for solutions, and prepare draft recommendations, decisions closing inquiries and special reports to the European Parliament. The Units also propose and carry out inquiries that are based on the Ombudsman's own-initiative power and deal with Queries sent by other members of the European Network of Ombudsmen.

The **Personnel, Administration and Budget Unit (PAB)** is the internal service provider of the Ombudsman's Office. The Unit is responsible for all administrative matters related to the institution's personnel, human resources, budget and finance and represents the institution in a number of interinstitutional committees.



As regards personnel and human resources, the Unit deals with recruitment, management of individual rights, internal communication and training.

As regards other administrative matters, the Unit deals with buildings, office space and equipment and coordinates translation requests. Furthermore, it is responsible for the institution's IT resources, including in-house development and maintenance of software applications specifically designed for the needs of the Ombudsman's services.

As regards budget and finance, the Unit prepares the budget estimates for presentation to the budgetary authorities and ensures that the Ombudsman's Office complies with the applicable financial rules. It guarantees that available resources are used economically and efficiently, and are protected adequately. Additionally, the Unit establishes and implements the appropriate internal control mechanisms and prepares information for the various budgetary control authorities.

The **Registry (REG)** deals with the registration, distribution and transmission of all complaint-related documents received or sent by the office. It is also responsible for dealing with the complaints that fall outside the Ombudsman's mandate. Additionally, the Registry is in charge of the Ombudsman's archives and library and the development and implementation of a public register of documents. Finally, the Registry also coordinates the development and implementation of an integrated workflow for the office.



## 4. Actions for 2013

This section sets out the priorities on which the Ombudsman will focus in 2013 and the actions that will be taken to help deliver on these priorities. The priorities are presented in the order, and under the objective and numbering, in which they appear in the Strategy.

The tables below list, under each priority, the actions to be taken in 2013 and indicate the organisational units responsible for carrying them out.

- Where an action requires co-operation between organisational units, the lead unit is, where applicable, indicated in **bold**.
- In cases where co-operation between Complaints and Inquiries Units is required, the table indicates "C&I". The two Directors will jointly ensure the implementation of these actions.
- The tables also indicate where the Ombudsman's Cabinet and/or the SG should be directly involved in the implementation of an action.

### 4.1 Actions under objective 1 - Listen

#### **Priority 1.1 - Obtain regular feedback from complainants on their experiences and their views about the quality of service we provide.**

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| • Produce regular statistics from the complainant feedback survey.   | COM          |
| • Analyse the above statistics and propose actions to make use of the results.                               | SG/Directors |
| • Review and publish the procedure(s) through which the Ombudsman responds to complaints about his services. | SG/Directors |

#### **Priority 1.2 - Further develop contacts with EU institutions at all levels to understand better how we can help them nurture and promote a culture of service.**

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| • Organise meetings between members of our staff and the services of selected institutions, in order to improve our understanding of the administrative procedures and practices of those institutions. Such meetings should take place outside the framework of inquiries.   | Directors/C&I |
| • Consult on our future actions to monitor and promote the implementation, by the EU institutions, of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (The other members of the EU Article 33 (2) framework should be consulted first. The outcome should be used to assess, among other things, the possible need for broader consultation). | SG/Directors  |



**Priority 1.4 - Look outward to examine how others achieve their performance levels and understand the processes which engender them.**

• Seek to identify good practices of other organisations - regional, national and EU/international - with an eye to reconciling openness with respect for EU data protection rules in the management of information.	REG/COM (for the European Network of Ombudsmen)
• Survey the members of the European Network of Ombudsmen regarding (i) innovations that they have implemented in their own institutions, and (ii) innovations in other ombudsman institutions that they consider represent promising practices.	COM
• Intensify cooperation with the European Parliament in order to develop and implement the Ombudsman's historical archiving policy.	REG
• Invite staff from other institutions and bodies that deal with matters related to the work of the European Ombudsman (such as members of the legal services or of services dealing with complaints or requests for access to documents) to meet and exchange views with our LOs at the two LO meetings scheduled in 2013.	Directors/C&I

## 4.2 Actions under objective 2 - Deliver

**Priority 2.1 - Strengthen the capacity of the office to handle complaints even more effectively and efficiently.**

• Implement the Integrated Workflow Project (also constitutes an action under 5.3).	REG/PAB
• Evaluate the experience with clarificatory inquiries, with a view to further enhancing our procedures.	Directors/C&I
• Examine the feasibility of enhancing the resources dedicated to C&I units.	PAB/Directors

**Priority 2.2 - Reduce the time needed to close inquiries by better monitoring deadlines and, where possible, setting shorter deadlines.**

• Use more systematically (i) inspections of documents and (ii) simplified inquiry procedures.	C&I
• Review the deadlines set for the parties in an inquiry, with a view to ascertaining whether and where shorter deadlines are possible.	Directors/C&I
• Examine the need for, and feasibility of, a fast-track procedure for urgent cases.	Directors/C&I





### 4.3 Actions under objective 3 - **Persuade**

#### **Priority 3.1 - Explore ways to make the Ombudsman's proposals for friendly solutions, draft recommendations and remarks more persuasive.**

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| • Use positive wording for friendly solution proposals, whenever appropriate.  | C&I |
| • Examine the usefulness and the likely costs and benefits of organising meetings with the institution concerned during selected own-initiative inquiries. | C&I |

#### **Priority 3.4 - Focus more on systemic questions, by identifying areas of malfunctioning in the EU administration and opportunities for improvement and by using the Ombudsman's power to open own-initiative inquiries.**

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| • Study the Commission's guidelines on whistleblowing, with a view to assessing their adequacy and examine whether an own-initiative inquiry by the Ombudsman to encourage other institutions to adopt guidelines would be useful. | C&I                   |
| • Organise training for LOs on systemic maladministration, possibly including contributions from non-law disciplines, such as public administration and management.  | Directors/PAB         |
| • Organise training for LOs on how to follow and report on the activity of the EU agencies.  | Directors/C&I/<br>PAB |

### 4.4 Actions under objective 4 - **Communicate**

#### **Priority 4.2 - Find new and improved ways to inform citizens about how the European Ombudsman and the European Network of Ombudsmen can help them enjoy their rights.**

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| • Establish a policy statement, guidelines and performance indicators for our social media activities. | COM/SG |
|--|--------|

#### **Priority 4.4 - Ensure that our information policy covers our initiatives to improve the quality of administration, as well as our work with complaints, and encourages full respect for citizens' rights.**

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| • Establish and implement a policy for the content of the website. | COM |
|--|-----|



## 4.5 Actions under objective 5 - **Adapt**

### **Priority 5.1 - Enhance management and control mechanisms to ensure optimal use of human and financial resources and the highest standards of administration internally.**

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| • Enhance risk management by (i) developing a new tool for risk analysis that involves Heads of Unit and (ii) identifying sensitive posts in the establishment plan.                                 | SG/PAB        |
| • Complete the second phase of the internal competitions (AST1 and AD5).   | PAB           |
| • Ensure effective deployment and immediate and long-term functioning of (i) the financial and accounting tools (ABAC) and (ii) the new IT system for the management of human resources (Sysper II). | PAB           |
| • Identify precise actions to improve our environmental performance.   | PAB/All Units |

### **Priority 5.2 - Consistently monitor and increase the quality of our work.**

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| • Monitor forthcoming amendments of the Staff Regulations; revise internal rules and develop a policy to inform staff accordingly.                 | PAB           |
| • Review and, if needed, update the notifications to the Data Protection Officer concerning the main procedures for which the unit is responsible. | PAB           |
| • Review the notification to the Data Protection Officer concerning complaint handling and prepare a plan for updating the notification in stages. | Directors/REG |
| • Improve internal communication by proposing a new version of the institution's intranet (Sisteco).   | PAB           |

### **Priority 5.3 - Put in place an effective, integrated IT system to manage the office's overall workflow.**

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| • Implement the Integrated Workflow Project (also constitutes an action under 2.1). | REG/PAB |
|---|---------|

### **Priority 5.4 - Develop an effective and ongoing human resources policy to attract and maintain a highly qualified and motivated staff.**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • Finalise and implement the staff-training policy. | PAB |
|---|-----|



## 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 and reference figures for 2013.

The KPIs and the relevant targets are reviewed and, if necessary, revised on an annual basis.

### Key Performance Indicators, measurement and targets for 2013

	Subject matter	Measurement / evaluation criteria	Results achieved in 2012	Targets or reference figures for 2013
<b>KPI 1</b>	Strategy and Governance	Assessment by the European Ombudsman's staff and external stakeholders.	76% <sup>1</sup> (satisfaction rate)	Reference figure: 76%
<b>KPI 2</b>	Complaints and inquiries	Number of inquiries closed in relation to the number of ongoing inquiries at the end of the previous exercise.	1.2 <sup>2</sup>	1.1
		Proportion of cases in which the admissibility decision is taken within one month.	Average: 85% <sup>3</sup>	90%
<b>KPI 3</b>	Complaints and inquiries	Proportion of inquiries closed within (i) 12 and (ii) 18 months.	12-m: 69% 18-m: 79%	12-m: 70% 18-m: 90%
<b>KPI 4</b>	Complaints and inquiries	Relation between (i) the number of friendly solutions and draft recommendations and (ii) the number of decisions in which maladministration is found.	1.2 <sup>4</sup>	2.5
<b>KPI 5</b>	Complaints and inquiries	Number of systemic own-initiative inquiries launched.	12	6

<sup>1</sup> KPI 1 was calculated on the basis of (i) the results of a survey on strategy and governance for external stakeholders carried out in November 2012, and (ii) the replies to questions related to strategy and governance contained in a general staff survey conducted in December 2012.

<sup>2</sup> To obtain this figure, the number of inquiries closed is divided by the number of ongoing inquiries at the end of the previous exercise.

<sup>3</sup> The breakdown is as follows: (1) cases outside the mandate: 92%, (2) cases within the mandate but inadmissible: 83%, (3) no grounds cases: 63%, and (4) cases leading to an inquiry: 70%.

<sup>4</sup> To obtain this figure, the sum of cases in which the Ombudsman made a proposal for a friendly solution or a draft recommendation is divided by the number of cases closed with a critical remark in which the Ombudsman did not first make a proposal for a friendly solution or a draft recommendation.



	Subject matter	Measurement / evaluation criteria	Results achieved in 2012	Targets or reference figures for 2013
<b>KPI 6</b>	Provide our external stakeholders with timely, useful and easily accessible information	External stakeholders contacted (frequency and significance).	Press releases: 18 Press cuttings: 1 698 Events involving multipliers: 135 Advice given through the Interactive Guide to contact a member of the European Network of Ombudsmen: 11 868 Unique visitors to the website: 311 586 Queries: 3 Contributions to discussions on the European Network of Ombudsmen Extranet: 122	20 1 750 150 12 500 325 000 5 150
<b>KPI 7</b>	Support Services (HR)	Staffing levels, measured as a proportion of maximum full time equivalents (FTEs).	87.2% (based on 78 FTEs)	88.2% (based on 78 FTEs)
<b>KPI 8</b>	Support Services (HR)	Average professional training days per person.	3.6 days	4 days
<b>KPI 9</b>	Support Services	Degree of satisfaction of the European Ombudsman's staff.	87% <sup>5</sup>	Reference figure: 87%
<b>KPI 10</b>	Support Services (finance)	Implementation of the budget (composite indicator).	Budget implementation: 88.7% Carried-over appropriations paid: 95.4% Number of payments beyond 30 days: 4	89.7% 96.4% 0

Scoreboards to monitor and report on our performance against the above targets and on the basis of the KPIs will be updated periodically.

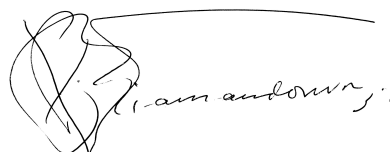
<sup>5</sup> KPI 9 was calculated on the basis of the score obtained in reply to a question related to overall job satisfaction in a general staff survey carried out in 2012.





## 6.2. Budgetary resources by operational line

Budget Lines	Resources in Euro
A-1 6 1 2 Further training	55 000
A-1 6 3 2 Social contacts between members of staff	6 000
A-2 0 0 0 Rent	693 000
A-2 1 0 0 Purchase, servicing and maintenance of IT	63 000
A-2 1 2 Furniture	18 000
A-2 1 6 Vehicles	19 000
A-2 3 0 0 Stationery, office supplies and miscellaneous	20 000
A-2 3 0 1 Postage on correspondence and delivery charges	13 000
A-2 3 0 2 Telecommunications	8 500
A-2 3 0 3 Financial charges	2 000
A-2 3 0 4 Other expenditures	4 000
A-2 3 1 Translation and interpretation	650 000
A-2 3 2 Support for activities	84 000
A-3 0 0 Staff mission expenses	142 000
A-3 0 2 Entertainment and representation expenses	15 000
A-3 0 3 Meetings in general	30 000
A-3 0 4 Internal meetings	35 000
A-3 2 0 0 Documentation and library	12 000
A-3 2 0 1 Archive resources	15 000
A-3 2 1 0 Communication & publications	320 000
A-3 3 0 1 Studies	3 000
A-3 4 0 0 Miscellaneous expenses	1 500



P. Nikiforos Diamandouros



**European Ombudsman**

1 avenue du Président Robert Schuman  
CS 30403  
F - 67001 Strasbourg Cedex

T. + 33 (0)3 88 17 23 13  
F. + 33 (0)3 88 17 90 62  
[www.ombudsman.europa.eu](http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu)  
[eo@ombudsman.europa.eu](mailto:eo@ombudsman.europa.eu)

© European Union, 2013  
Reproduction for educational and  
non-commercial purposes is authorised,  
provided the source is acknowledged.