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Ombudsman commends Commission for publishing documents on Greece's entry into the Euro zone

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The European Ombudsman investigates complaints about maladministration in the EU institutions and bodies. Any EU citizen, resident, or an enterprise or association in a Member State, can lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman offers a fast, flexible and free means of solving problems with the EU administration.

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The European Ombudsman, Emily O'Reilly, has commended the European Commission for publishing 140 documents concerning Greece's entry into the Eurozone in 2001. This follows a complaint from a German journalist who had previously only been given access to some of the documents.

Emily O'Reilly explained: "Especially in times of crisis, it is vital that the European public understand how important decisions affecting their lives came about. Europe is still tangibly affected by these decisions and the role of the different players needs to be clear to be able to learn lessons for the future."

140 documents on Greece's conversion reports and other correspondence

In November 2011, a German journalist asked the Commission for access to documents drafted between January 1999 and June 2000 concerning Greece's entry into the Eurozone. He wanted to see all documents on the Greek conversion reports, as well as preparatory documents, letters, and e-mails between different Commission services, the Greek authorities, and the authorities of other EU member states. The Commission services in question included the Cabinet of the then Commission President Prodi, other Commissioners' cabinets, and Directorates-General, as well as the Secretariat-General. As he got only very limited access to some of the requested documents and did not obtain any further feedback, the journalist turned to the Ombudsman in April 2012.

The Commission explained that its delay was due to the complexity of the request and stressed that some of the relevant documents dated back to a period when electronic registering did not yet exist.

After the Ombudsman had opened her investigation and inspected the relevant files, the Secretariat-General of the Commission launched an action plan to speed up the access request. In the end, it identified 140 documents and released all of them to the journalist.

The Ombudsman's decision is available at:
<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/cases/decision.faces/en/53398/html.bookmark>