



European Ombudsman

# Annual Management Plan Year 2016

Strasbourg  
18 February 2016

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# 1. Introduction

**The European Ombudsman's mission is to serve democracy by working with the institutions of the European Union to create a more effective, accountable, transparent and ethical 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 enshrines 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.

As well as providing an independent and impartial service to complainants, the Ombudsman promotes good governance and a culture of public service by helping the EU administration to work openly, effectively, and with integrity.

The Annual Management Plan for 2016 (AMP 2016) is the second to be based on the [strategy Towards 2019](#), adopted by the Ombudsman in November 2014.

The AMP 2016 is based on an overall budget of 10 658 951 Euros and 66 posts.

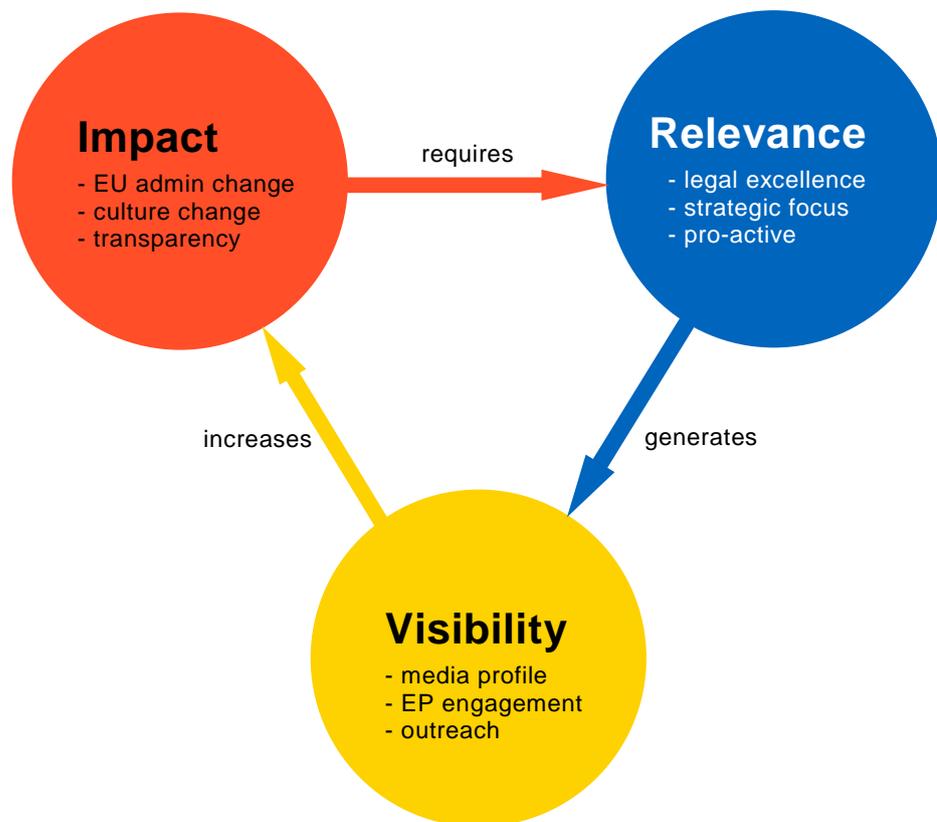


## 2. Multi-Annual perspective

The Ombudsman's multi-year strategy *Towards 2019* combines three **mutually reinforcing** objectives described as follows.

We aim to achieve significant **relevance** within the EU and with our stakeholders; we aim to ensure high **visibility** of the Ombudsman and the office in support of our mission; and we aim to effect a real and positive **impact** on the EU administration.

These objectives are supported by the objective of internal **efficiency**.



For each of the four objectives, Impact, Relevance, Visibility and Efficiency, the strategy document identifies a number of priorities. The AMP 2016 identifies concrete actions with a view to achieving the objectives and priorities of the strategy.



### 3. The organisation of the office

Following the appointment of a new Secretary-General in September 2015, the Ombudsman adopted a new organisational structure, effective from 1 November 2015, with a view to simplifying and flattening the decision-making process while enhancing the middle management role of the Heads of Unit. The two Director positions made way for a re-configuration of posts and the function of Principal Adviser on legal issues was created to provide specialist and overarching legal advice and to connect with key academic and legal circles for the purpose of creating a greater awareness of our work. All Heads of Unit and the Principal Adviser now report directly to the **Secretary-General**. The Secretary-General is responsible for the overall management of the office and for ensuring overall co-ordination and implementation of the Ombudsman's strategy.

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 Cabinet manages the Ombudsman's agenda, correspondence and records.

The **Inquiries Units (IUs)** deal with the complaints submitted to the Ombudsman. They conduct inquiries into alleged cases of maladministration, look for solutions, and draft decisions closing inquiries and special reports to the European Parliament. The IUs also propose and carry out technical inquiries through the Ombudsman's own-initiative power and deal with queries sent by other members of the European Network of Ombudsmen (ENO).

Under the new structure, there are six units dealing with inquiries. The following four units also have specific and/or additional responsibilities.

The role of the **Strategic Inquiries Unit (SIU)** is to prepare, execute and/or co-ordinate an annual programme of own-initiative inquiries (OIIs) linked to the strategic objectives. It also engages with stakeholders to assess areas of EU public administration in need of systemic improvements and proposes measures to secure such improvements. The Unit also represents the Ombudsman in the Article (33)2 framework of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**Inquiries Unit 1 (IU1)** deals additionally with the legal aspects of the Ombudsman's co-operation with the ENO and explores possibilities for synergies with the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights in areas of common interest. IU 1 also includes the **ICT Sector** of the office which is in charge of (i) ICT equipment and support, (ii) development and maintenance of applications, (iii) technical aspects of the Website, and (iv) ICT relations with the EP and other institutions.

**Inquiries Unit 2 (IU2)** is also the **Co-ordination Unit**. Its role is to gather, share and promote best practices and relevant information in relation to the inquiry



process. It is responsible for assigning complaints to the various inquiries units and for co-ordinating their output in order to ensure consistency in case handling.

**Inquiries Unit 5 (PMIU5)** is also the **Process Management Unit**. In addition to dealing with inquiries, its tasks include the following which were previously dealt with by the former 'Registry': (i) dealing with all complaints that are outside the Ombudsman's mandate, (ii) defining, proposing and following-up on all functional aspects of the Office's case management and general records management systems, (iii) helping ensure high quality registration of all documents and data, (iv) handling public access and information requests and (v) managing the switchboard.

The new **Communication Unit (COMM)** combines the former Communication Unit and the Media and External Relations Unit. It supports the Ombudsman's objective of increasing the visibility of the office and co-ordinates the Ombudsman's relations with the European Network of Ombudsmen. The Head of the COMM Unit is the spokesperson for the Ombudsman. The Unit is responsible for social media and media activities and for relations with other external stakeholders, for developing the Ombudsman's policy of reaching out to potential complainants and multipliers, for organising major Ombudsman events and for identifying media messages and key events for Ombudsman participation. It also designs and produces the Ombudsman's publications and promotional material is in charge of the editorial content of the website.

The **Personnel, Administration and Budget Unit (PAB)** is responsible for all administrative matters related to the institution's personnel, human resources, and budget. It deals with recruitment, management of individual rights, internal communication and training, buildings, office space and equipment and co-ordinates translation requests. The Unit prepares the budget estimates and ensures that available resources are used economically and efficiently and in compliance with the applicable financial rules. It also establishes and implements the appropriate internal control mechanisms and prepares information for the various budgetary control authorities.



## 4. Actions for 2016

As in previous years, the focus of the Annual Management Plan is on *changes* in activities that are needed to secure the objectives and priorities of the strategy.

The tables below list the actions to be taken in 2016 under the relevant strategy objective. They identify (i) the strategy priorities addressed, (ii) the key performance indicators(s)(KPI(s)) that will measure the results, where appropriate, and (iii) the owner and others directly involved in carrying out the relevant actions.

The Communication Unit and IU1-ICT sector will produce a separate detailed activity plan that will cover all communication and outreach activities requiring significant financial or human resources.

### Actions under objective 1 - **ensure relevance**

**We want to add value for citizens and other stakeholders by focusing on key systemic issues that are most relevant to their interests and concerns.**

#### Priorities:

- 1.1 Strengthen our role as an acknowledged, trusted and independent authority on issues relevant to the Ombudsman's mandate, providing leadership on transparency, accountability and integrity.
- 1.2 Engage with our stakeholders and seek out their views.
- 1.3 Publicly engage in, and contribute to, relevant EU debates and policy developments wherever the Ombudsman's mandate and expertise provides for added value.
- 1.4 Co-operation with international networks and organisations in order to identify the highest standards and best practices, for example in relation to human/fundamental rights, or governance issues such as whistleblowing and conflicts of interest.
- 1.5 Deepen our capacity to understand the changing dynamics of the European Union and the political, social, economic and legal context in which we operate.

Action	Priority(ies) addressed	KPI	Project Owner	Others directly involved
Improve public consultations in strategic inquiries with a view to enhancing the quality of the responses and engaging with stakeholders in a meaningful way.	1.1 1.2 1.3	1	SIU	SIU, IU1, COMM
Intensify co-operation with relevant international organisations and bodies, such as the OECD, WHO, Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights	1.2 1.4	1	COMM, CAB, IU1	COMM, CAB, IU1




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Intensify outreach to key stakeholder groups, e.g. by organising events and meetings in Brussels and beyond and by participating in their events.	1.2 1.3 1.5	1,5	COMM	COMM
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## Actions under objective 2 - **achieve greater impact**

We want to make a real difference to the quality of the work of the EU institutions by acting as a driver of change in key areas.

### Priorities:

- 2.1 Proactively identify areas of key strategic importance and target appropriate resources on the investigation of systemic problems, in particular through own-initiative inquiries.**
- 2.2 Develop an integrated approach towards strategic investigations, benefiting from the cross-sectoral expertise in the Ombudsman's office.**
- 2.3 Develop instruments to enable a more systematic and thorough follow up of the outcomes of the Ombudsman's recommendations and remarks.**
- 2.4 Strengthen and leverage co-operation and dialogue with the EU institutions and other stakeholders to support the Ombudsman's recommendations.**
- 2.5 Utilise, in an appropriate and prudent manner, the full scope of the powers of the Ombudsman's Statute, using all available tools and options at our disposal depending on the case.**

Action	Priority(ies) addressed	KPI	Project Owner	Others directly involved
Complete, implement, monitor and improve changes to inquiry processes with a view to maximising fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of inquiry processes.	2.2 2.5	7	IU2, PMIU5	IUs,SG, COMM CAB
Improve how we measure compliance so as to assess fully the Ombudsman's impact	2.3	3	SIU	SIU, PMIU5
Develop tools and processes to ensure that we have relevant, up to date knowledge in the key areas of our work and that we effectively share this knowledge with staff and other stakeholders	2.2 2.5	1,3 4,7	IU2, Principal SG, Adviser	IU2, PMIU5
Draw-up guidelines for inspections carried out in the course of inquiries.	2.4	4,7	IU2	IUs, SG, PA



Reach out to professional service providers (i.e. lawyers, advocacy consultants etc.) with a view to increase awareness of the role and mandate of the EO in handling complaints about maladministration	2.1 2.2 2.4	1,2,3	IU3	IU3
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## Actions under objective 3 - maintain high visibility

We want to enhance our ability to influence. Public and institutional awareness of the Ombudsman needs to be stronger and deeper

### Priorities

- 3.1 Use our communication capacity strategically to inform both general public, key target audiences and other stakeholders.
- 3.2 Develop our online tools and channels as more effective instruments of communication.
- 3.3 Engage widely and strategically with the European Parliament and its committees on the broad range of issues of mutual concern, while maintaining our independence.
- 3.4 Co-operate with the European Network of Ombudsmen in communicating with citizens.
- 3.5 Identify and develop articulate and authoritative office representatives capable of representing the Ombudsman at key events and conferences and who can also identify networking and outreach opportunities.

Action	Priority(ies) addressed	KPI	Project Owner	Others directly involved
Implement the new ENO strategy by organising a major Network event in Brussels, by producing a new ENO newsletter, by identifying topics for new parallel inquiries and by enhancing ENO visibility on our website	3.2 3.4 3.5	1,5,6	COMM IU1	COMM IU1
Develop new ways to visualise the EO's work, e.g. through info graphs, videos.	3.1 3.2	1,5,6	COMM	COMM
Overhaul the website to make it more user-friendly, modern and relevant and to focus on our core areas of work and our strategic objectives in these areas.	3.1 3.5	1,5,6	COMM, IU1	COMM, IU1
Develop and begin MEP Assistant Workshops	3.3	1	CAB	



Finalise and implement the update of case-related keywords	3.1 3.2	1	IU2	IU2,IU1 PMIU5, COMM
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## Actions under objective 4 - improve our efficiency

We want to use our resources to achieve the best possible results.

### Priorities

- 4.1 Ensure the Ombudsman's budgetary resources are used in line with the strategy.
- 4.2 Ensure all our internal processes and units, including IT systems, work as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- 4.3 Develop smart, flexible and robust working practices, so as to prioritise and resolve complaints as rapidly and efficiently as possible.
- 4.4 Encourage an internal culture of transparency, ethics, innovation and service to citizens.
- 4.5 Further develop the office as an attractive, dynamic and important place to work for motivated, talented and ambitious people, by ensuring that our human resources policies are central to our strategy, well developed and well-resourced.

Action	Priority(ies) addressed	KPI	Project Owner	Others directly involved
Develop a comprehensive human resources strategy, including a policy on diversity	4.4 4.5		PAB	PAB, IUs,
Create the role of training officer to (i) help establish individual training plans, identify appropriate training opportunities in relevant areas and follow-up on training to evaluate relevance and (ii) coordinate training opportunities for all staff, such as brown bag lunches.	4.5		PAB	PAB, SG, HoUs
Migrate to Sysper 2(HR database)	4.1 4.2		PAB	PAB IU1
Evaluate the feasibility and usefulness of using Commission tools and/or outsourcing HR activities such as missions, publications of vacancies and individual entitlements	4.1 4.2		PAB	PAB
Put in place evaluation of work allocation among staff.	4.1 4.4 4.5		PAB	PAB HoUs



Make use of ABAC (asset and contract management database contracts to optimise the EO's participation in interinstitutional tender procedures and enable use of framework contracts whenever possible.	4.1 4.2		PAB	PAB IU1
Introduce the European Commission's central document management system, 'Ares' and develop a records management policy.	4.2		PMIU5	PMIU5 IU1
Finalise business continuity arrangement.	4.2		SG PAB	SG PAB All
Consolidate CMS (case management System) data to optimize SharePoint full text search function in the CMS.	4.2		PMIU5	PMIU5 IU1
Identify the weaknesses of SISTEO (EO intranet) with a view to modernising it and enhancing its effectiveness as an internal communication tool.	4.2 4.4		IU1 COMM	IU1 All
Implement a set of measures to improve ICT services including video telephones, laptops/tablets for heads of unit, e-faxes and replacement of EO helpdesk mailbox by a ticketing system web tool.	4.2		IU1 IU1	
Plan and prepare for the office's move to new EP premises in Strasbourg scheduled in late 2016, including management of physical archives.	4.2 4.3 4.4		PAB	PAB IU1 PMIU5 All
Produce an internal newsletter for EO staff	4.4		COMM	COMM All staff
Putting in place a data protection policy for the handling of personal data of third parties in inquiries.	4.4		IU4	IU4
Implement additional rationalisation measures for handling outside mandate complaints, (a) by introducing standardised decision letters and (b) introducing modified management processes.	4.2	2	PMIU5	PMIU5



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Define and as far as possible introduce the necessary administrative measures to implement the Ombudsman's 2016 decision on access to documents and confidentiality	4.4	1	PMIU5	PMIU5 SG IU2
Introduce a secure e-exchange system for information and documents that are confidential within the meaning of article 5 of the Office's Implementing provisions	4.4	7	PMIU5	PMIU5 IU1 CAB

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## 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 2016.

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

### Key Performance Indicators, measurement and targets for 2016

	Strategy objective	Measurement	Targets for 2016
KPI 1	Relevance	Perception of our external stakeholders	70% (rate of positive evaluation)
KPI 2	Relevance	Numbers of complaints within the mandate	350
KPI 3	Impact	Number of inquiries opened in public interest cases (complaints & OIIs)	20
KPI 4	Impact	Compliance (composite indicator) 4a - Overall compliance 4b- Compliance in public interest cases	90% 90%
KPI 5	Visibility	Media and social media activities (composite indicator) 5a- Number of media articles 5b - Engagement on Twitter	3 300 20 000
KPI 6	Visibility	Web activities (composite indicator) 6a- Visitors to the website 6b - Advice given through the interactive guide to contact a member of the ENO	450 000 10 000
KPI 7	Efficiency	Handling of complaints and inquiries (composite indicator) 7a- Proportion of cases in which the admissibility decision is taken in one month 7b- Proportion of inquiries closed within 6 months 7c- Proportion of inquiries closed within 18 months	90% 50% 80%
KPI 8	Efficiency	Budget implementation (composite indicator) 8a- Rate of budget implementation 8b- Number of payments beyond 30 days	93% 0

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



## 6. Resources for the implementation of the 2016 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 which each of these entities is predominantly involved with.

	<b>Allocation of resources</b>	<b>Management processes</b>	<b>Core processes</b>	<b>Supporting processes</b>
<b>Ombudsman Cabinet</b>	AD: 3 AST: 2		X	
<b>Secretariat-General</b>	AD: 3 AST: 1	X	X	
<b>Complaints and inquiries</b>	AD: 22 AST: 5 Contract agent: 3 Trainees: 8 SNO: 1		X	
<b>Communication</b>	AD: 2 AST: 5 Contract agent: 2		X	
<b>Process Management</b>	AD: 1 AST: 6 AST/SC : 1 Contract agent: 1		X	X
<b>Personnel, Administration and Budget</b>	AD: 3 AST: 7 Contract agents: 3		X	X
<b>ICT</b>	AD: 1 AST: 2 Contract agent: 1 Trainee: 1			X



## 6.2. Budgetary resources by operational line

<b>Budget Lines</b>	<b>Resources (EUR)</b>
A-1 6 1 2 Further training	95 000
A-1 6 3 2 Social contacts between members of staff	6 000
A-1 6 5 0 European Schools	275 000
A-2 0 0 0 Rent	860 000
A-2 1 0 0 Purchase, servicing and maintenance of IT	200 000
A-2 1 2 Furniture	15 000
A-2 1 6 Vehicles	19 000
A-2 3 0 0 Stationery, office supplies and miscellaneous	12 000
A-2 3 0 1 Postage on correspondence and delivery charges	7 000
A-2 3 0 2 Telecommunications	6 000
A-2 3 0 3 Financial charges	500
A-2 3 0 4 Other expenditures	3 500
A-2 3 0 5 Legal costs and damages	5 000
A-2 3 1 Translation and interpretation	315 000
A-2 3 2 Support for activities	95 000
A-3 0 0 Staff mission expenses	157 000
A-3 0 2 Entertainment and representation expenses	7 000
A-3 0 3 Meetings in general	47 000
A-3 0 4 Internal meetings	27 000
A-3 2 0 0 Documentation and library	8 000
A-3 2 0 1 Archive resources	15 000
A-3 2 1 0 Communication & publications	219 000
A-3 3 0 0 Studies	17 800
A-3 4 0 0 Miscellaneous expenses	1 500

Emily O'Reilly

### Annexes: 2

- Explanation and visual representation of the key management documents of the Ombudsman's office.
- The Ombudsman's Operating Framework



## Annexes

### Annex 1 - Explanation and 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 serve an important internal function: they help us to guide and manage our activities in line with the mission statement, which explains the value that we add for the EU and its citizens.

They also contribute to the external accountability of the office and are all publicly available. Some are required by law. Others the Ombudsman himself decided to produce.

The various documents can be understood as answering different questions, as shown below. (The italicised questions in parentheses are simplified versions used in the visual representation that follows).

1 The **Strategy "Towards 2019"**. What are our objectives and priorities for the period covered by the strategy? How do we measure them through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)? (*What impacts do we aim to achieve?*)

2 The **Operating Framework**. What are our key activities and processes for delivering the strategy? (*How do we make things happen?*)

3 The **Organisational Structure** (Organigramme). How is the office organised so as to be as effective and efficient as possible? (*How is the office organised?*)

4 The **Annual Management Plan (AMP)**. How are our resources allocated among different activities and processes this year? What are the targets for the KPIs this year? And what specific actions should have priority? (*What are we doing this year?*)

5 The **Annual Activity Report**. How well did we do in achieving the priorities and KPI targets set in the AMP? (*What did we achieve last year?*)

A visual representation of how the various documents relate to one another can be found on the next page.





## Annex 2 - The Ombudsman's Operating Framework

(PowerPoint presentation)



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