



European Ombudsman

Annual Management Plan Year 2019

**Strasbourg
8 January 2019**

EN



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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 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 2019 (AMP 2019) is the fifth and last one to be based on the [strategy Towards 2019](#).

The AMP 2019 is based on an overall budget of EUR 11 496 261 and 66 posts.

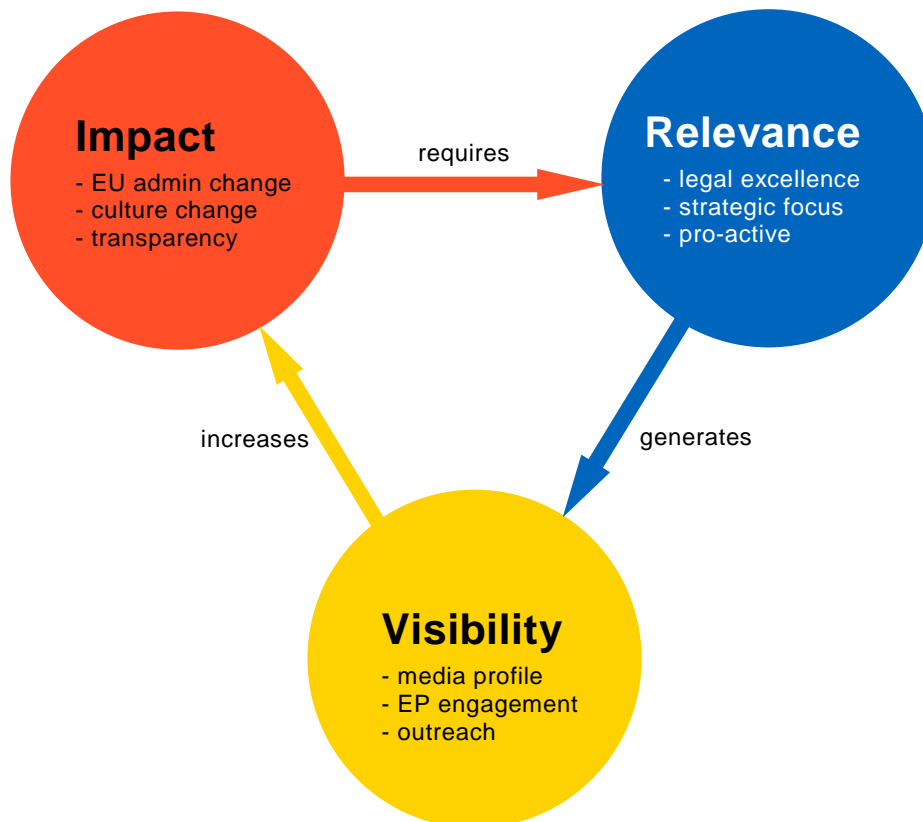


2. Multi-Annual perspective

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, Relevance, Impact, Visibility and Efficiency, the strategy document identifies a number of priorities. The AMP 2019 sets out concrete actions with a view to achieving the objectives and priorities of 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 seven Units.

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 **Secretary-General** is responsible for the overall management of the office and for ensuring co-ordination and implementation of the Ombudsman's strategy. All Heads of Unit report directly to the Secretary-General.

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).

There are five units dealing with inquiries. The following four units also have specific and/or additional responsibilities.

Inquiries Unit 1 (IU1) also deals with the legal aspects of the Ombudsman's **cooperation 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. IU1 furthermore oversees the **ICT Sector** 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) coordinates inquiries in the public interest. It ensures that such inquiries are consistent, convincing and in line with the Ombudsman's strategic objectives and priorities. It is also responsible for developing further the strategy and outreach of the Ombudsman on key issues like transparency and public access to documents. This includes ensuring effective implementation of the **Fast-Track procedure** for dealing with public access cases.

Inquiries Unit 3 (IU3) also has the responsibility of providing legal advice for matters outside the inquiries-handling process and advises and, where necessary, represents the Ombudsman in Court proceedings.

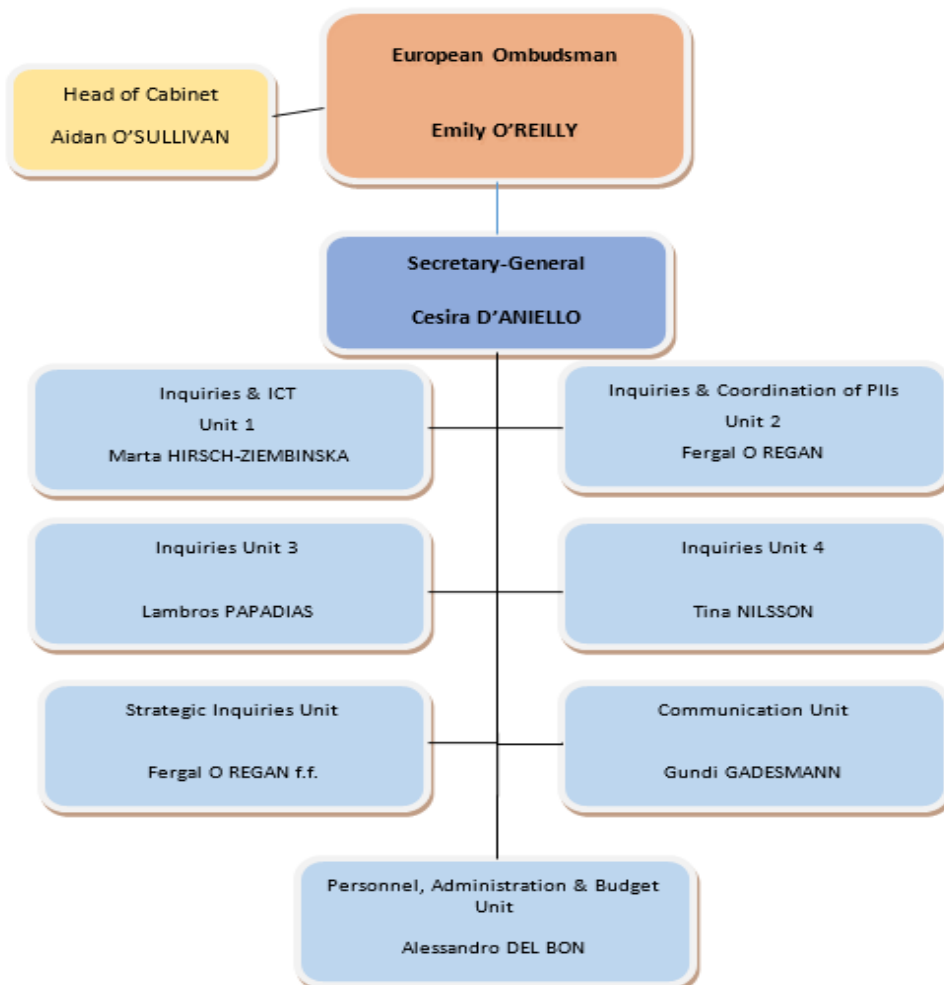
The **Strategic Inquiries Unit (SIU)** oversees and coordinates the Ombudsman's strategic inquiries and initiatives in collaboration with the other IUs. It also engages with stakeholders in order to inform itself of relevant concerns in relation to possible maladministration. The Unit also represents the Ombudsman in the Article (33)2 framework of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The **Communication Unit (COMM)** 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 messages to get across to the media and key events in which the Ombudsman should take part. It also designs and produces the Ombudsman's publications and promotional material and 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 is also in charge of recording data into the case management system and of overseeing the functional management of the general records management system and the related implementation of the office's records management and archiving rules. Finally it is the lead service for dealing with applications for public access to documents and requests for information. Its HR sector deals with the drafting of HR policies, recruitment, management of individual rights, internal communication and training, buildings, office space and equipment and co-ordinates translation requests. Its Budget sector coordinates the preparation of the budget estimates and ensures that available resources are used economically and efficiently and in compliance with the applicable financial rules. The Unit establishes and implements the appropriate internal control mechanisms and prepares information for the various budgetary control authorities.





4. Actions for 2019

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

The tables below list the actions to be taken in 2019 under the relevant strategy objective. They identify (i) the strategy priorities addressed, (ii) where appropriate, the key performance indicators (KPIs) that will measure the results against targets, as outlined in section 5 below, and (iii) the owner and others involved in carrying out the relevant actions.

The Communication Unit, where necessary with input from IU1, will produce a separate detailed activity plan that will cover all communication and outreach activities requiring significant financial or human resources.

This section also includes information on planned actions to improve or develop the internal control standards that will be prioritised in 2019.

Actions under objective 1 - ensure relevance

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

Priorities:

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.
2. Engage with, and learn from, our stakeholders, including relevant influencers such as academics.
3. Increase our awareness of the changing dynamics of the European Union and the political, social, economic and legal context in which we operate, where appropriate, to publicly engage in, and contribute to, relevant debates and policy developments.
4. Cooperate with the European Network of Ombudsmen, other Member States' bodies and international networks and organisations to identify and promote the highest standards and best practices, for example in relation to human/fundamental rights and governance issues.
5. Contribute to developing, promoting and defending the concept of EU citizenship and the rights attached to it.

Action	Priorities addressed	KPI	Project Owner	Others directly involved	Support
Actions to promote ethical conduct					
1. Review and update the European Code of Good Administrative Behaviour.	1.1, 1.5	1,2	Dedicated task force	COMM	ICT
2. Develop practical recommendations (dos and don'ts) in priority areas such as harassment and declarations of interest.	1.1, 2.1, 2.5	1,4,5,6	SIU	COMM/ SG/CAB	



3. Maintain and expand contacts with bodies at EU and national level concerning ethics, transparency and public integrity.	1.1, 1.2 1.4, 2.5	1,4,5,7	SIU
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Actions involving the European Network of Ombudsmen (ENO)

4. Review the ENO Strategy to further increase its relevance and usefulness for citizens.	1.1, 1.4, 1.5	1, 6b	COMM/IU1	CAB
5. Organise the 2019 ENO conference.	1.4	1	COMM	IU1
6. Organise meetings with national ombudsmen offices to identify topics for possible parallel inquiries.	1.4, 2.5	3	IU1	
7. Organise a roundtable in Brussels with academics and institutions to reflect on the involvement of the ENO in whistleblowing-related issues in light of the forthcoming directive.	1.4, 1.2, 3.4		IU1	COMM
8. Complete the ENO extranet (ENONET) review project started in 2018.	1.4, 3.4		IU1/COMM	SG/CAB ICT

Actions concerning other current issues of relevance

9. Draw up a reflection paper on the impact and consequences of Brexit for the EO.	1.3		Dedicated task force
10. Draw up a reflection paper on the interaction between Regulation 1049/2001 (public access) and Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 (data protection).	1.5		Dedicated task force



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 In line with our integrated approach, continue proactively to identify areas of key strategic importance and to target appropriate resources on the investigation of systemic problems.

2.2 Optimise inquiry processes to deal with complaints of key strategic importance promptly and effectively. This is particularly important where the successful outcome of an inquiry is time-sensitive.

2.3 Use the full scope of the Ombudsman's powers to achieve positive outcomes from complaint handling and inquiry processes.

2.4 Continue to develop a more systematic and thorough follow-up of the outcomes of the Ombudsman's recommendations and suggestions to maximise compliance.

2.5 Strengthen and leverage broader co-operation and dialogue with the EU institutions and other stakeholders to ensure the continuous improvement of administrative practice.

Action	Priorities addressed	KPI	Project Owner	Others directly involved	Support
11. Award for Good Administration 2019.	2.5	1,5	COMM		ICT
12. Produce a short video to raise awareness, especially among young people, about the importance of making use of their right to vote in the EU elections.	1.3, 2.5	5b	COMM		
13. Follow developments and organise an information session for staff on the Eurozone reform and recent measures regarding the Banking Union to understand their impact on citizens' rights and their compliance with principles of good administration.	1.1, 1.3, 2.5	2	IU3		
14. Consolidate the Fast-Track procedure for public access cases and produce a report evaluating its implementation.	2.2, 2.5	1,4,5,7	IU2	IUs	ICT
15. Take stock of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Implementing Provisions by reviewing how they are applied and by seeking feedback from other institutions.	2.2	1,4,7	IU2	IUs	



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 Ensure our communications are delivered with maximum clarity.

3.2 Continue to develop and use our online tools and channels and ensure maximum adaptability in a dynamic online environment.

3.3 Strategically engage with the European Parliament and its committees on the broad range of issues of mutual concern, while being conscious always of our independence.

3.4 Co-operate with the European Network of Ombudsmen and other relevant umbrella organisations in informing citizens of their rights and of the Ombudsman's work.

3.5 Ensure that the Ombudsman is represented appropriately at key events and conferences, and encourage office representatives to identify and pursue networking and outreach opportunities

Action	Priorities addressed	KPI	Project Owner	Others directly involved	Support
16. Organise a strategic event for EO stakeholders on a topical issue in autumn 2019.	3.4	5b	COMM		ICT
17. Organise a visit of the EO to Finland to meet her national counterparts and engage with key stakeholders.	3.4	5a	COMM		
18. Conduct a web audit and quality control of the Ombudsman's website to find out how well it responds to users' needs.	3.1	6a	COMM	IU1	
19. Promote the EO's profile as employer by developing and implementing a strategy to enhance the impact of the EO's LinkedIn page.	3.2, 4.5		COMM	PAB	



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 aligned with the strategy.

4.2 Maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of our processes and units, including IT systems. Where appropriate, consider adopting 'corporate' solutions of larger scale EU administrations.

4.3 Prioritise and resolve complaints as rapidly and efficiently as possible by using smart, flexible, tailored and robust working practices.

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 framework and policies are fully implemented and updated as necessary.

Action	Priorities addressed	KPI	Project Owner	Others directly involved	Support
Actions to enhance our complaint-handling procedures					
20. Further develop our knowledge management capacity and tool: review and improve the way it is organised, the type of information it contains and how it should be updated.	4.2		Dedicated task force	IUs	ICT
21. Combine all case-handling procedures into a new dynamic, snappy but comprehensive and user-friendly case handler handbook.	4.2	7	Dedicated task force	IUs/SG	ICT
22. Adopt security rules on the handling of confidential and EU classified information.	4.2		Dedicated task force	IUs/SG	ICT
23. Reinforce the legal representation capacity of the Office by designating staff in various units to follow relevant case law, participate in meetings on EU litigation and in training sessions on the rules of procedures of the EU Courts.	3.3, 4.5		IU3	IUs/PAB	
24. Further develop the interaction between the Website and the case management system: ensure automatic import of information from the website to CMSEO, enable the complainant to add further correspondence to a complaint submitted online and use the online account to interact with the complainant throughout the process.	4.1, 4.2		IU1	SG	



Actions to improve internal communication and optimise HR policies and processes

25. Complete the intranet (SISTEO) review project started in 2018 aimed at facilitating the circulation of information, access to internal processes and tools and to interinstitutional applications and platforms.	4.2, 4.3, 4.5	IU1	All	ICT
26. Explore new options to attract talent including the possibility of organising an EPSO competition specifically for the Ombudsman.	4.5	PAB/SG		
27. Complete the implementation of the 2017 Human Resources Policy Framework by adopting policies on (i) diversity (anti-discrimination and equal treatment), (ii) external activities, and (iii) learning and development.	4.5	PAB	Staff Committee	
28. Explore the possibility of long-term staff exchange programmes (secondments) with other institutions as learning and development opportunities.	4.5	SG/PAB		
29. Assess the possibilities of implementing a corporate tool (SYSPER personal file module) for the management of the staff's personal files.	4.2	PAB		ICT
30. Delegate the management of individual staff entitlements to PMO.	4.2	PAB		



Actions to reinforce our internal control standards

Internal control standard (ICS)	Effectiveness requirement/criteria	Planned actions to improve or develop controls	Owner(s)	Support
ICS 4 - Staff appraisal and development	The Ombudsman's output (decisions, recommendations, etc.) should be drafted in a style that is understandable and easily accessible to the widest possible audience.	Identify and plan training on clear writing for case handlers, if possible, tailored to the specific needs of the EO.	PAB	SG/CAB
ICS 4 - Staff appraisal and development	Some roles and responsibilities in the office have evolved over time following new organisational arrangements and/or to adapt to changing practices and requirements. There is a need to evaluate whether measures should be taken to ensure consistency between certain functions and posts.	Map all the functions and posts of the office and, where relevant, make recommendations to seek consistency between the nature of tasks and the types of post or contract under which they are performed.	SG/PAB	
ICS 8 - Processes and procedures	The complaint-handling procedures are constantly under review and adapted to match current priorities and approaches. These procedures should be available to case handlers in an easily accessible and dynamic format.	Combine all case-handling procedures into a new dynamic, snappy but comprehensive and user-friendly case handler handbook (also appears as action 21 above).	Dedicated ICT task force	
ICS 11 - Document management	The Ombudsman's activity entails a significant amount of document handling, including documents of a confidential nature.	Adopt security rules on the handling of confidential and classified information (also appears as action 22 above).	Dedicated ICT task force	
ICS 11 - Document management	The Ombudsman's office needs to take measures to ensure adequate historical archiving.	Establish cooperation with the Historical Archives of the EU.	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 for 2019.

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

Key Performance Indicators, measurement and targets for 2019

	Strategy objective	Measurement	Targets for 2019
KPI 1	Relevance	Perception of our external stakeholders (rate of positive evaluation)	70%
KPI 2	Relevance	Percentage of complaints within the mandate	33%
KPI 3	Impact	Number of inquiries opened in public interest cases (complaints & strategic inquiries & strategic initiatives)	50
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	3 000 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	400 000 8 000
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 2019 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.

	Allocation of resources	Management processes	Core processes	Supporting processes
Ombudsman Cabinet	AD: 3 AST: 1 Contract agent: 1		X	
Secretariat-General (Management and coordination)	AD: 3 AST: 1	X	X	
Complaints, inquiries and related processes	AD: 23 AST: 10 Contract agents: 5 Trainees: 8		X	
Communication	AD: 3 AST: 5 AST/SC: 1 Contract agents: 2		X	
Personnel, Administration and Budget	AD: 4 AST: 7 Contract agents: 3			X
ICT	AD: 1 AST: 2 Contract agent: 1 Trainee: 1			X



6.2. Budgetary resources by operational line

Budget Lines	Resources (EUR)
A-1 6 1 2 Further training	130 000
A-1 6 3 1 Mobility	7 000
A-1 6 3 2 Social contacts between members of staff	6 650
A-1 6 5 0 European Schools	217 000
A-1 6 5 1 Crèches and childcare facilities	10 000
A-2 0 0 0 Rent	1 040 697
A-2 1 0 0 Purchase, servicing and maintenance of IT	247 000
A-2 1 2 Furniture	15 000
A-2 1 6 Vehicles	20 000
A-2 3 0 0 Stationery, office supplies and miscellaneous	8 000
A-2 3 0 1 Postage on correspondence and delivery charges	3 000
A-2 3 0 2 Telecommunications	8 000
A-2 3 0 3 Financial charges	700
A-2 3 0 4 Other expenditures	4 000
A-2 3 0 5 Legal costs and damages	5 000
A-2 3 1 Translation and interpretation	215 000
A-2 3 2 Support for activities	158 500
A-3 0 0 Staff mission expenses	165 000
A-3 0 2 Entertainment and representation expenses	3 000
A-3 0 3 Meetings in general	88 000
A-3 0 4 Internal meetings	29 000
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	140 000
A-3 3 0 0 Studies	15 000
A-3 4 0 0 Miscellaneous expenses	2 100

Emily O'Reilly

Annexes: 2:

- Explanation and visual representation of the key management documents
- 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 office 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)



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
eo@ombudsman.europa.eu

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