European Ombudsman. Annual report 1996

1997/2023(COS) - 15/07/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Nikolaos PAPAKYRIAZIS (PSE, G), the European Parliament expressed the view that it was necessary to have a clear definition of the term 'maladministration', since it is the task of the European Ombudsman to examine complaints concerning maladministration in the activities of the Community Institutions or bodies (with the exception of the Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance acting in their judicial role). Parliament particularly drew attention to the fact that around 65% of the complaints received by the Ombudsman fell outside his mandate. It therefore said that the public information strategy should be intensified and extended (e.g. through the "Citizens First Initiative") so that citizens: - had a clear idea of the functioning and powers of the Community institutions, - were aware of their right to petition the Ombudsman and/or the European Parliament, depending on the case and the type of complaint, - were more precisely informed as to the respective competences of these two institutions. Parliament also took the view that mutual exchanges of information between the Ombudsman and the Institutions of the Union were called for. The Ombudsman should give the Institutions a general account of the complaints he received so that they could help him in his monitoring capacity. The Community institutions and bodies should supply full and accurate information to the Ombudsman concerning their administration. Parliament called for complaints to be forwarded rapidly to the competent body, and dealt with and replied to with the same despatch. Parliament believed that, to this end, existing electronic data-processing systems should be extended or coordinated, and that consideration should be given to the extent to which computerized data could be made available on the Intranet and/or Internet to the Institutions and the citizens of the European Union