## Basic information

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|---|---|
| **1998/2230(COS)**<br>COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) | Procedure completed |
| European Ombudsman. Annual report 1998<br>**Subject**<br>1.20.04 European Ombudsman | |

## Key players

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|---|---|---|---|
| European Parliament | **Committee responsible** | **Rapporteur** | **Appointed** |
| | PETI Petitions | DE ESTEBAN MARTIN Laura (PPE) | 23/11/1998 |
| Council of the European Union | | | |

## Key events

| Date | Event | Reference | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| 31/12/1998 | Non-legislative basic document published | N4-0138/1999 | Summary |
| 16/03/1999 | Vote in committee | | |
| 16/03/1999 | Committee report tabled for plenary | A4-0119/1999 | |
| 22/03/1999 | Committee referral announced in Parliament | | |
| 15/04/1999 | Debate in Parliament | | |
| 15/04/1999 | End of procedure in Parliament | | |
| 30/07/1999 | Final act published in Official Journal | | |

## Technical information

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| **Procedure reference** | 1998/2230(COS) |
| **Procedure type** | COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) |
| **Procedure subtype** | Commission strategy paper |
| **Legal basis** | Rules of Procedure EP 148 |
| **Stage reached in procedure** | Procedure completed |
| **Committee dossier** | PETI/4/10600 |

## Documentation gateway

**European Parliament**

| Document type | Committee | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading | | A4-0119/1999<br>OJ C 219 30.07.1999, p. 0004 | 16/03/1999 | |
| Text adopted by Parliament, single reading | | T4-0338/1999<br>OJ C 219 30.07.1999, p. 0371-0456 | 15/04/1999 | Summary |

**Other institutions and bodies**

| Institution/body | Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MED | Non-legislative basic document | N4-0138/1999 | 31/12/1998 | Summary |

# European Ombudsman. Annual report 1998

1998/2230(COS) - 15/04/1999 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The Parliament adopted its resolution, drafted by Ms. Laura DE ESTEBAN MARTIN (EPP, Spain), concerning the annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman in 1998. It expresses its satisfaction at the irreproachable and creative co-operation between the European Ombudsman and the Committee on Petitions and the European Parliament. It stresses the urgent need to draw up a code of good administrative behaviour to be applied by all the Community institutions and bodies and that this code should be accessible to all European citizens, and be published in the Official Journal. It welcomes the efforts of the European Ombudsman to establish a creative and fruitful relationship with the national and regional ombudsmen and similar institutions, and urges them to devote greater attention to problems concerning the free movement of persons, which is a sine qua non of full citizenship. It calls on the European Ombudsman to regularise the status of the agents and officials who assist him.

# European Ombudsman. Annual report 1998

1998/2230(COS) - 31/12/1998 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : Presentation of the Annual Report of the European Ombudsman - 1998 CONTENT : in 1998, the Ombudsman's office handled a total of 1617 cases. Of these, 1372 were new complaints received in 1998. One own-initiative enquiry was launched during the year, and 185 inquiries were closed with a reasoned decision. In 45% of these cases, either the institution settled the matter, a friendly solution was found, or the case was closed with a critical remark (in 1997 and 1996, the equivalent figures were 40% and 35% respectively). During 1998, in 52% of cases, no mal-administration was found. The main aim during the next year should be that the time taken to deal with a case be shortened during the next year. The target of one month to decide on admissibility and one year to close a case after an inquiry has not yet been fully reached, but should become a reality during the years to come. The high number of complaints which do not fall within the Ombudsman's mandate (70% of the total) demonstrates the fact that European citizens do not understand that the competence of the Ombudsman is limited to the actions of the European institutions. Many of these complaints relate to Community law, and, in particular, the free movement of persons in the Union. In this context, it would be appropriate, in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, to encourage the national ombudsmen and similar institutions to examine complaints concerning Community law. The Ombudsman does not wish, at this stage, to propose any changes to his mandate, such as it is defined in the Treaty. However, he considers that European citizens should be able to find in the Treaty a clear and complete listing of remedies that are open to them under Community law, so that they are correctly informed of their rights in this respect. It is important in addition that the Treaty mentions the right of citizens to refer to the national ombudsmen or to present petitions to parliaments in cases of conflicts with the administration involving Community law. Likewise, the Treaty should specify the right of European citizens to appeal to the Commission in the case of possible breaches by a Member State of Community law. The Report congratulates the European Parliament on its initiative seeking to modify the financial regulation in order to allocate to the Ombudsman an independent budget. He insists that it be explicitly mentioned in the Treaty the right of the Ombudsman to have full access, for the purposes of his enquiries, to the files and documents held by the Community institutions and bodies, and the duty of officials coming before him to testify without concealing or distorting the truth.