Basic information

2008/2158(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Annual report on the European Ombudsman's activities in 2007 **Subject** 1.20.04 European Ombudsman	

Key players

European Parliament	**Committee responsible**	**Rapporteur**	**Appointed**
	PETI Petitions	ZDRAVKOVA Dushana (PPE-DE)	27/05/2008
European Commission	**Commission DG**	**Commissioner**	
	Secretariat-General	WALLSTRÖM Margot	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
19/06/2008	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
09/09/2008	Vote in committee		Summary
18/09/2008	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0358/2008	
23/10/2008	Decision by Parliament	T6-0524/2008	Summary
23/10/2008	Results of vote in Parliament		
23/10/2008	Debate in Parliament		
23/10/2008	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2008/2158(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 238-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PETI/6/64175

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE407.934	10/07/2008	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE409.738	28/08/2008	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0358/2008	18/09/2008	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0524/2008	23/10/2008	Summary

Annual report on the European Ombudsman's activities in 2007

2008/2158(INI) - 23/10/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 465 votes to 1 with 7 abstentions, a resolution on the annual report on the European Ombudsman's activities in 2007.

The own-initiative report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Dushana **ZDRAVKOVA** (EPP-ED, BG) on behalf of the Committee on Petitions.

The European Parliament approves the annual report for 2007 and calls on the Ombudsman to pursue his efforts and to promote his activities effectively, transparently and flexibly so that, in the eyes of citizens, he represents the custodian of sound administration and a genuine culture of service in EU institutions. MEPs consider that the term 'maladministration' should be broadly interpreted so as to include not only administrative acts which infringe rules or principles laid down by the Treaties or by secondary legislation but also, for example, cases where the administrative authorities themselves have assumed certain obligations through, for instance, the adoption of a code of good administrative behaviour or where approved policies or declarations of a political nature have given rise to legitimate and reasonable expectations among citizens.

Recognising the increase in the absolute number of admissible complaints, MEPs consider that the figure in respect of admissible complaints – 16% – remains unsatisfactory, they recommend that an enhanced information campaign be conducted amongst European citizens designed to raise their awareness of the functions and competence of the European Ombudsman.

In order to reduce the number of inadmissible complaints filed with the European Ombudsman, MEPs suggest that a common web site of the European institutions be put in place to help citizens and refer them directly to the institution competent to handle their complaint. MEPs propose that the Ombudsman take measures to reduce the number of complaints in such cases where no action is possible.

With a view to the provision of a better and more efficient service to citizens, MEPs propose that the Ombudsman bring to their knowledge the internal procedures and deadlines for handling complaints, as well as the criteria used to make decisions at the different stages of the examination of a complaint.

The Ombudsman is called upon to ensure that the Commission makes proper use of its discretionary powers to initiate infringement proceedings under Article 226 of the EC Treaty or to propose penalties under Article 228 of the EC Treaty, while taking scrupulous care to avoid delays or unjustifiable failure to take prompt action, which are incompatible with the Commission's powers to oversee the application of EU law. MEPs consider that, if an institution refuses to follow a recommendation contained in a special report by the Ombudsman despite Parliament having approved that recommendation, Parliament could legitimately use its powers to bring an action before the Court of Justice in respect of the act or omission which was the subject of the Ombudsman's recommendation.

Parliament calls for all EU institutions and bodies to be given the necessary budgetary and human resources to ensure that citizens receive prompt and substantive responses to their enquiries, complaints and petitions. It repeats its call, expressed in previous resolutions, for all EU institutions and bodies to adopt a common approach with regard to the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour. It also welcomes the generally constructive cooperation between the Ombudsman and the EU institutions and bodies and endorses him in his role of external control mechanism and, in addition, as a valuable source of ongoing improvement to European administration.

MEPs recognise the useful contribution made by the European Network of Ombudsmen, in line with the subsidiarity principle, in securing extra-judicial remedies. They welcome the collaboration between the European Ombudsman and ombudsmen and similar bodies at national, regional and local levels in the Member States and urge further strengthening of the exchange of best practice, thereby allowing for the harmonisation of best practices between Member States.