

JULIA LAFFRANQUE'S ACTION PLAN FOR THE OFFICE OF EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN

"The European Ombudsman will provide real service to complainants, combining high-level legal expertise and a human approach. By using persuasion, legal argumentation and genuine cooperation with the EU administration, solutions will be found that satisfy complainants.

The Office will cooperate with national ombudsmen and similar bodies, including the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament to ensure that every complainant receives real assistance."

OFFICE

- *Leadership with engagement and empathy.*
- *Legal sector reinforced and administrative work streamlined.*
- *Composition of staff such that complaints in all EU languages can be handled internally.*

BE CLOSE TO CITIZENS

- *Reception of complaints by all traditional and electronic means available.*
- *All citizens treated equally whatever their background or language.*
- *Each day, story of a new complaint on the website.*
- *Weekly live chat with the Ombudsman online.*
- *Meetings with stakeholders and potential complainants in Member States.*
- *Set up of a Public Register.*

EFFECTIVE COMPLAINT HANDLING

- *Early Resolution Officers to provide a frontline service to help complainants without the need for a formal investigation, when possible.*
- *Thorough and sound investigation measures.*
- *Outside-mandate complaints handled in cooperation with the Committee on Petitions and national ombudsmen.*
- *Matters relating to the implementation of EU law in the Member States followed-up in the framework of the European Network of Ombudsmen.*
- *Online account for complainants to provide them with up-to-date information on their case.*

OWN-INITIATIVE INQUIRIES

- *A complement to inquiries into complaints to prevent and put right maladministration.*
- *Topics chosen carefully and after consultations.*
- *Focus on digital rights: adequate use of technologies at the service of people.*
- *Focus on fundamental rights: participation of persons with disabilities in the Commission's public consultations and human rights compliance in EU-funded external actions.*
- *Focus on transparency.*

FUTURE

- *Possible new role for the EO (i) if the EU accepts the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and (ii) if the EU accedes to the ECHR.*

COOPERATION WITH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL OMBUDSMEN

- *Visit all Offices within the first six months of the mandate; meet there with citizens, civil society and universities/research institutes to understand their issues with the EU administration.*
- *Reflect together about our common voice in the EU (e.g. participation in public consultations on EU law relevant for citizens, assistance to citizens in infringement complaints to the Commission).*
- *Secondments of national ombudsmen staff to the European Ombudsman.*

COOPERATION WITH PARLIAMENT AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

- *Meet with all institutions to establish a relationship of trust and enhance the credibility of the Office.*
- *Permanent channels of cooperation about complaints with the Committee on Petitions.*
- *Participate in public consultations on the Commission's legislative initiatives and in Parliament's work on the codification of EU administrative law, with the aim of ensuring good administration by design.*
- *Through cooperation with the EDPS, seek synergies towards an appropriate balance between the fundamental rights to good administration and to privacy and protection of personal data.*
- *Visit all EU Agencies that have a direct impact on citizens' lives. Citizens informed on the website.*



People must be centre stage!

