



# Story

## EU Ombudsman Diamandouros clears vote and pledges service culture

European Ombudsman Nikiforos Diamandouros was re-elected by MEPs Wednesday (20 January) on a platform to improve access to EU documents and a culture of good administration. His role will continue to deal with complaints about the European Union's Institutions and its agencies. In 2008 he received 3406 complaints, 802 of which were found to be admissible. High on the list of complaints is a lack of transparency.

MEP re-elected the 67-year old former Greek Ombudsman ahead of Belgian Pierre-Yves Monette by 340 - 289 votes.

Speaking after the poll Mr Diamandouros pledged: "I am determined to make sure that European citizens profit fully from the Treaty of Lisbon. This concerns specifically the right to good administration, the right to access to EU documents and the right to engage in dialogue with the EU institutions."

### "A culture of service" promised

Speaking about his priorities he said that "it is extremely important for me to further strengthen a 'culture of service' in the EU administration. This includes greater transparency and the fair, impartial and timely handling of citizens' affairs". He also plans to step up co-operation with national and regional ombudsmen and communicate more effectively with citizens.

The role of the European Ombudsman, established in 1995, is to investigate citizens' complaints of maladministration by EU institutions and bodies and offer them redress - notably a lack of transparency and refusal to provide information or documents. Cases he has dealt with in his tenure concerned discrimination, unfair delays and administrative irregularities to name a few.

#### European Ombudsman

- Investigates complaints about maladministration in EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies.
- Any EU citizen, resident, enterprise or association can lodge a complaint.
- Can act on own initiative & request information from institutions
- Nikiforos Diamandouros will hold post until 2014