

## 2016 Discharge

### Follow-up questions to the European Ombudsman

**Deadline: 18 December 2017**

**The Ombudsman's replies appear under each question**

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#### Staff

1. *How many interim agents were employed by your institution in 2016? How many of these interim agents replaced an official? How many were they in 2015 and 2014?*

The European Ombudsman did not employ interim agents in 2016, 2015 or 2014.

2. *Which are the differences in the working conditions of interim agents and temporary staff?*

N.A.

3. *How many trainees were employed in 2016? How many of the offered traineeships were non-remunerated?*

The Ombudsman granted scholarships to a total of 15 different trainees who either started or finished their traineeship with the European Ombudsman in 2016. In average the budget of the European Ombudsman allows for the payment of monthly scholarships to 9 trainees for a total duration of 12 months each. All trainees in the Ombudsman's office are offered a scholarship. Trainees who already receive a scholarship from another organisation may apply for a partial scholarship from the Ombudsman. The overall amount of scholarships received may never exceed the standard scholarship paid by the European Ombudsman.

#### Harassment

4. *Do you have an organ that is comparable to the network of confidential counsellors in the EESC whose purpose is to offer advice and guidance harassment issues? If not, would you consider introducing such a structure in your institution?*

The European Ombudsman has adopted a Policy for the prevention of, and protection against harassment in the Ombudsman's Office. That policy foresees two major actors, (i) ethics correspondents and (ii) a conciliation committee.

(i) Ethics correspondents listen carefully to any staff member who feels they are a victim of harassment, as well as to any other person involved in a harassment related conflict (alleged harasser, colleagues and witnesses). They help the staff member affected to clarify the facts of, understand and assess his/her situation. The ethics correspondents inform him/her of the existing procedures and provide guidance. They may assist the staff member to approach the alleged harasser or raise the matter with his/her immediate manager, with a view to facilitating dialogue and, if possible, finding an amicable solution.

(ii) The conciliation committee is responsible for leading the conciliation procedure, following a request by a staff member who feels he/she is a victim of harassment. The alleged harasser may also request the intervention of the conciliation committee. The conciliation committee listens carefully to the parties involved and establishes a meaningful dialogue between them; it identifies the causes of the conflict/situation; assists the parties to consider and explore possible conditions for resolution; and, if possible, resolves the matter in a way that is acceptable to those involved.