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Strengthening the institution of Ombudsman in Europe

Motion for a recommendation

tabled by Mr Jordi XUCLÀ and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Ombudsmen, serving as intermediaries between individuals and administration, can play an important role in ensuring the protection of human rights and the promotion of the rule of law. In the last few years this role has increased, in parallel with the emergence of the “right to good administration”, which is now also incorporated in the legal order of the European Union (Article 41 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights).

Ombudsmen must be provided with the resources required to accomplish their tasks in full independence and have access to relevant information. Regrettably, some regressive trends have been observed recently in some member states of the Council of Europe: the suppression of “diffensore civico” at the local level in Italy; pressure put on the Slovenian Ombudsman following his interventions in favour of Roma or, as in France, the proliferation of similar bodies, which tends to weaken the ombudsman’s stature. In Spain, the very existence of the ombudsman institution is threatened by lack of financial resources. In times of crisis, when governments need to reduce public expenses, this is a worrying trend.

The Parliamentary Assembly, which has already stressed the importance of ombudsmen in its [Recommendation 1615 \(2003\)](#), is concerned with the threats to this institution. It therefore resolves to examine possible improvements to the functioning of this institution and its role in promoting good administrative practices. Taking stock of the work of Ombudsmen in Europe, including examples of best practice, could strengthen their status throughout Europe.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group