



(07/11)

Information to members I

The European Ombudsman Institute decided to revive the regular sending of information to members of the European Ombudsman-Institute. Therefore, this information from July 2011 should start again with number I. This information to all members should be sent in the future approximately every six months via the mailing-list eoilists.digitalis.at. To be not excluded from the flow of information we are requesting to always communicate any change with regard to your e-mail-address immediately.

Ac President at the Congress of Municipalities and Regions

The ac President, Dr. Burgi Volgger, explained at the Congress of Municipalities and Regions of the Council of Europe at Strasbourg the role of the regional Ombudsman in Europa and stressed on this occasion the importance of European minimum standards. In front of the Chamber of Regions, that sees itself as the „guard of local democracy“, Dr. Volgger underlined the role of the regional Ombudspersons in Europe as a connecting link between citizen and administration. On this occasion the ac President emphasized, that also in times, when expenditures are curtailed, the regional Ombudsman remains for the citizen a relevant institution, that serves the proximity to the citizen, deregulation and democratization. At the same time Dr. Burgi Volgger made use of the occasion for a constructive exchange of ideas with the European Ombudsman, Nikiforos Diamandouros, the Vice-president of the IOI, Tom Frawley, as well as with the head of the National Human Rights Structures (NHRSS), Markus Jaeger.

Some recent activities of the Secretary General

The Secretary General made corresponding efforts, that the networking with the the European Ombudsman, Nikiforos Diamandouros, is working well now and he is also making attempts to create corresponding synergies with the Secretary General of the IOI, Dr. Peter Kostelka.

Also with regard to the EOI website the work of the General Secretary has been fruitful; it has been internationally updated und is fully workable and also in network with the European Ombudsman, so that important messages can be communicated directly. All languages can be called up, too. The system was evaluated and now the error rate regarding translations is below 5 per cent, what should, considering the cost budget, be acceptable.

From 16 to 18 June the Secretary General took part in the IX Annual International Conference of Ombudsmen on the "Cultural rights of national minorities and migrants: the legal aspects and implementation" at Baku and presented the EOI in connection with the future of regional

Ombudspersons. The presentation was a keynote speech of the Secretary General on the basis of human rights conventions and application of public international law by the states and the high importance of regional Ombudspersons in, if possible, all states of Europe. At the same time he took the chance to establish and intensify conversations with Ombudspersons from Asia.

Topics dealt with at the board meeting of 14 May 2011

1. Volgger – Resolution of the Chamber of Regions at the Council of Europe concerning the recommendation of Regional Ombudspersons in Europe

The ac President presents at the board meeting the draft resolution „The office of Ombudsman and local and regional authorities“.

The following points concerning the status of the regional Ombudsman should, according to her mind, be integrated:

The regional Ombudsman

- should only be responsible to the respective parliament
- should be financially independent and have a budget of his/her own
- should be able to act ex officio
- the obligation of the authorities to react to the recommendations of the regional Ombudsman is indispensable and if the recommendation is not realized a statement of reasons has to be submitted.

With the assistance of the board a general position of the EOI to this resolution shall be drawn up. Ac President, Dr. Volgger, shall then submit the position to the corresponding bodies.

2. Motion by Mrs. Wille (Ombudsman of Schleswig Holstein/Germany) – Ombudsman-hospitations in Ombuds-Institutions or coordination by the EOI (mentoring and exchange of experience in practice in the Ombudsman area)

The motion by Mrs. Wille is perceived as a good idea for the intensification of the Ombudsman-network and shall also apply to staff and experts. Concrete offers of Ombuds-Institutions for possibilities of hospitations or applications in this regard shall be published on the EOI Website. This does not exclude bilateral agreements. The costs have to be borne directly or by means of a regulation of its own between the person having applied for hospitation and the respective Ombuds-Institution. The EOI will in this issue be at disposal for interested persons and institutions with regard to the coordination.

3. Present state „Causa Belarus“ - further procedure

The situation in Belarus is explained by informed board members. It happens, that experts meet with great difficulties when travelling to Belarus (e.g. observations of elections). Arrests do not seem to be seldom in this respect.

After deliberating about different opinions, the board decided, if the situation will not change, to raise objections and e.g. make the president and the parliament the proposal to create an ombuds-institution.

EOI events in the near future:

2011 (23.9.; Novi Sad/Serbia)

Joint Meeting of executive board and enlarged board

2011 (23.9.; Novi Sad/Serbia)

Conference – Exchange of experience and practical work of Ombudspersons in the various countries, solutions and development or usage of common synergies

Speakers: Vittorio Gasparini / Peter Kostelka / Simon Matthijssen / Tatyana Merzljakova / Guido Schuermans / Burgi Volgger

2011 (24.9.; Novi Sad/Serbia)

General Assembly

The framework programme and the information as to hotel reservation was already sent to you via the mailing-list eoilists@digitalis.at on 30 June 2011. The final invitation with agenda will be sent to you approximately at the end of July.

2012

Organization of a **Workshop**

(Date and topic still to be determined at the next board meeting).

2013

This General Assembly with a **ceremonial act** on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the European Ombudsman Institute shall take place in Innsbruck (Date still to be determined).

Reports of Ombudspersons

It is requested, that all Ombudspersons submit their **annual reports** and their **special reports** AUTOMATICALLY as **PDF-Word-Doc.File** to the EOI, so that they can be inserted into the website of the EOI and are accessible to the public. The reports should be sent to the following e-mail-addresses:

jos.siegele@tirol.gv.at and eoilists@digitalis.at .

EOI library

The EOI library has been integrated into the Public Library of the State of Tyrol, the literature holdings remain within the ownership of the EOI. The State of Tyrol will take care of the literature holdings for a special price of € 1.300,00 per year (this covers the personnel costs, constant updating and taking care of the literature). All literature objects are marked with transponderchips, so that the respective literature cannot get lost and the EOI library is durably secured. At the same time direct access to the EOI library is provided for universities.

EOI member cards

The member cards 2011 were sent to the members, who had paid their membership fees.

Contact data of EOI members

It is requested to inform the EOI about changes with regard to postal address, e-mail-address, telephone number, etc., so that the contact data can be steadily updated. Only this way the EOI can ensure and guarantee the flow of information to each member.

For the EOI:

The Secretary General

Dr. Josef Siegele, m.p.