

# Article – Electing the next EU Ombudsman



At the start of each new parliamentary term, MEPs elect an Ombudsman for a five-year term.

The [five candidates](#) in the running were announced during the October plenary session. They are in alphabetical order:

- **Giuseppe Fortunato**, current ombudsman of Italy's Campania region
- **Julia Laffranque**, an Estonian judge at the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg
- Latvia's **Nils Muižnieks**, former Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights
- Current EU Ombudsman and former Irish journalist [Emily O'Reilly](#)
- Former Swedish MEP **Cecilia Wikström**

## **Election**

To qualify for nomination, each candidate had to show they had the [experience needed](#) and required the backing of at least 40 MEPs from a minimum of two EU countries.

There will be a [public hearing](#) by the Parliament's [petitions committee](#) on 3 December, when the candidates will present their priorities.

The Parliament is expected to elect the Ombudsman by secret ballot during December's plenary session in Strasbourg.

### **About the EU Ombudsman**

The European Ombudsman investigates complaints from citizens, EU residents and EU-based [organisations](#) about poor administration by EU institutions or other EU bodies, such as unfair conduct, discrimination, unnecessary delays or incorrect procedures.

The ombudsman's office can also launch investigations on its own initiative. It reports back to the European Parliament each year.