



THE OMBUDSMAN CONCEPT

Parliamentary control bodies such as the Ombudsman institution form an integral part of constitutional reality. They play an important role in the promotion and protection of the rule of law, good governance and human rights.

The Ombudsman concept has proven extraordinarily adaptable and innovative, while remaining true to its core principles of independence, impartiality and fairness and aspiring to meet universal standards such as the Venice Principles.

Ombudsman institutions consider individual complaints and correct injustices caused by maladministration. They improve public services by ensuring that systemic failings are identified and that actions of governments become more transparent and accountable. They mediate between citizens and authorities and help reinforce the trust in effective and accountable institutions.

Many Ombudsman institutions are entrusted with mandates beyond the traditional complaint handling function. They play an increasingly important role in the protection and promotion of human rights and the prevention of torture, and extend their work to areas such as anti-corruption, anti-discrimination, equality issues and freedom of information.

In fulfilling this diverse mandate, Ombudsman institutions contribute significantly to every person's right to access to justice and the development and maintenance of transparent and accountable democracies.

WHAT THE IOI STANDS FOR

- **Global representation** through around 200 member institutions in 100 countries worldwide
- **Cooperation** with international partner organizations
- **Capacity building** via training, conferences, exchange of expertise and shared learning
- Direct funding of Ombudsman-related projects through **regional subsidies** programme
- Supporting **Ombudsman under threat** and colleagues operating under difficult circumstances
- Access to IOI **publications** and research material through the IOI website
- **Expertise** in the field of good governance and the rule of law

CONTACT

IOI General Secretariat
Singerstrasse 17
1015 Vienna, Austria
Phone: +43 / 1 / 512 93 88
Email: ioi@volksanwaltschaft.gv.at
Web: www.theioi.org



CONNECTING
OMBUDSMAN
GLOBALLY



INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTE

The International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) was established in 1978. It is the only global organisation representing around 200 independent Ombudsman institutions across the world and is organized in six regional chapters: Africa, Asia, Australasia & Pacific, Europe, Caribbean & Latin America, and North America.

The IOI is committed to promoting the Ombudsman concept and to fostering strong and independent institutions and it does so in a variety of ways:

- It raises awareness and encourages the creation of Ombudsman institutions where they do not exist;
- It unites Ombudsman to collaborate and exchange expertise and best practices;
- It helps members build capacity by way of training and shared learning;
- It funds research and projects that are of importance to its members;
- It supports Ombudsman institutions that come under threat or operate under difficult circumstances.

In its ongoing cooperation with international partners, the IOI strives to raise visibility and awareness about internationally recognized standards, such as the Venice Principles and the UN Resolution on the role of Ombudsman and mediator institutions, with a view to strengthening independent Ombudsman institutions worldwide.

TRAINING

The IOI acknowledges the importance of training and shared learning as one of its key priorities and strives to offer training content that is of specific concern to its members.

The IOI forged close ties with renowned partner institutions, such as the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), the Scottish Queen Margaret University (QMU), and the Vienna-based International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA).

The positive feedback from member institutions shows a strong demand for training. This encourages the IOI to further widen the range of its training programme and to continue identifying new training initiatives and offering training in all the three official languages of the IOI.

Training is offered to IOI members free of charge and is hosted at the IOI headquarters in Vienna, as well as in the regions. To facilitate the participation for member institutions with limited financial resources, the IOI strives to make a certain number of scholarships available for each training workshop or seminar.

With a view to strengthening Ombudsman institutions and fostering the exchange of expertise among them, the IOI always seeks to broaden its training programme and to develop new cooperation with renowned training providers.

RESEARCH

The IOI aims at implementing research projects with a view to providing a basis for an intensified exchange of best practices among the international Ombudsman community.

The comparative studies offer comprehensive data on Ombudsman institutions in the IOI Regions and analyse the different mandates, organizational structures and legal foundations. The Best Practice Papers provide guidance material on matters that are of interest to the wider Ombudsman community. They are developed by Ombudsman for Ombudsman and draw on the different experiences and practices.

By offering members free web-access to these publications, the IOI makes the Ombudsman concept widely known.

REGIONAL SUBSIDIES

The IOI offers funding for Ombudsman-related projects in the regions on a regular basis. The high number of applications and projects funded within this programme shows the need for direct financial aid.

Among the promising projects that received funding are an awareness-raising programme for women's rights, training on good governance, the development of a starter kit for Ombudsman institutions, or guidance on how to measure the impact of Ombudsman investigations.