



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, that actions of governments become more transparent and their administrations more accountable.

Many Ombudsman institutions take on 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 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 more than 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

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CONNECTING
OMBUDSMAN
GLOBALLY

INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTE

The International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) was established in 1978. It is the only global organisation representing more than 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 it does so in a variety of ways. It raises awareness and encourages the creation of Ombudsman institutions where they do not exist. It promotes information exchange and helps members build capacity by way of shared learning and training. The IOI funds research and projects that are of importance to its members and it supports Ombudsman institutions who come under threat or operate under difficult circumstances.

In its ongoing cooperation with international partner organizations, the IOI considers policy areas that are of importance to its members.



Mr. Chris Field, IOI President and Ombudsman of Western Australia
Ms. Gaby Schwarz, IOI Secretary General and Ombudsperson of Austria

TRAINING

The IOI has become highly aware of the need for training programmes for its members and strives to offer training on topics that are of specific concern to its members.

The IOI was able to forge close ties with renowned partner institutions, namely the Scottish Queen Margaret University (QMU), the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), the Vienna-based International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), and members such as the Ontario Ombudsman (Canada) or the New South Wales Ombudsman (Australia).

The positive feedback from member institutions shows a strong demand for training. This encourages the IOI to further widen its range of training content.

Training is offered to IOI members free of charge at the IOI headquarters in Vienna, as well as in the regions. Usually, a certain amount of scholarships is made available to facilitate participation of staff from member institutions with limited financial resources.

With a view to strengthening its members' capability and fostering the exchange of expertise among its members, the IOI always strives to broaden the range of topics offered in the IOI's 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.

A series of comparative research studies offers comprehensive data on Ombudsman institutions in the IOI Regions. The IOI's Best Practice Papers were introduced to develop guidance material on matters that are of interest to the wider Ombudsman community. They are developed by member institutions and draw on their experience.

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 within the IOI's regional subsidies programme shows the increasing need for direct financial aid.

Many promising projects received funding so far. These include – among others – an awareness-raising programme for women's rights in Pakistan, training on good governance in Tanzania, the development of a starter kit for Ombudsman institutions, or guidance on how to measure the impact of Ombudsman investigations.