

Legislative Initiatives of the Ombudsman 2019

The Ombudsman uses the powers to influence the regulatory framework in the interest of the citizens when referred to with complaints and alerts, some accompanied by collections of signatures. The Ombudsman also takes steps *ex officio* when, in the course of support for citizen actions, it is established that there is a legislative gap or that the provisions create prerequisites for violations of the citizens' rights.

In 2019, the institution received 46 requests for referrals to the Constitutional Court, 679 requests for legislative amendments and 9 requests for interpretative judgments.

The legislative initiative is an important part of the Ombudsman's mandate to ensure effective protection of the citizens' rights. Many legislative amendments proposals made in 2019 are based on prominent public issues. They include:

Bill on the Insolvency of Natural Persons – One of the main priorities of the institution, giving overindebted citizens a "second chance".

Civil Procedure Code – A bill to restrict the super privileges of banks, monopolies and ensure protection against inequitable clauses.

Election Code – Protection of election rights which have already been gained and exercised.

Commercial Register and Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities Act – In relation to appealing unlawful refusals of registration officials at the Registry Agency and reimbursement of costs incurred/damages sustained.

Bill on the Professional Organisations of Medical Specialists

The Ombudsman and medical specialists put forward to the National Assembly a Bill on Professional Organisations which offers a possibility to set up professional organisations of regulated medical professions in healthcare which will protect the rights and interests of their members to the fullest extent possible.

The Ombudsman sent **opinions and recommendations** on the: Bill to Amend the Civil Registration Act; Condominium Property Management Act; need for legislative amendments to ensure timely introduction of elements of obligatory mediation; amount of the lawful interest for delay due in the event of delay in the payment of an obligation, etc.

An opinion was also sent about the bill on social services in view of every person's right to access to quality social services and the Ombudsman's role as a Public Advocate for the citizens' rights and freedoms.

The Ombudsman recommended to the responsible institutions to adopt legislative amendments and measures **against excessive building and to ensure the completion of land restitution.**