

Appendix: Statistical information about concluded cases in the Children’s Division in 2015 and 2016

Tables 1-3 below contain statistical information about concluded cases regarding children in the Children’s Division in 2015 and 2016 (1 January – 1 October 2016).

Please note that in the statistics system of the Ombudsman institution the outcomes of the cases are classified under the following three major headings:

- Investigations
- Other forms of processing and assistance to citizens
- Rejections for formal reasons

The overall category ‘Investigations’ comprises cases in which the Ombudsman made various investigations and assessments, including cases where the Ombudsman carried out an in-depth investigation after obtaining statements from the authorities involved.

In the category “Other forms of processing and assistance to citizens”, the processing of the case may consist of:

- Sending the complaint on to the right authority
- Helping the citizen get more detailed grounds for a decision
- Getting the authority to consider whether a deadline can be waived
- Accentuating the most important arguments in the complaints in connection with sending the complaint on to the relevant authority
- Contacting the authority to ascertain where the complainant’s case is in the ‘system’, what the case is waiting for, or when the authority expects to make a decision in the case
- Guiding the citizen on any other available assistance in the case
- Giving the citizen the opportunity to discuss the case on the telephone with one of the Ombudsman’s legal staff

Cases are rejected for formal reasons if, for instance, the authority to which a complaint relates is outside the Ombudsman’s jurisdiction, if a citizen has exceeded the one-year deadline for lodging a complaint with the Ombudsman or if an appeal option has not been used and can no longer be used.

Table 1: Concluded cases in 2015

2015	Rejected cases for formal reasons	Other forms of processing and assistance to citizens	Investigations	Criticism etc. in investigated cases	Total number of cases
Number of cases regarding children	130	470	132	19	732
%	17,8	64,2	18,0	14,4	
Number of cases regarding children with a complaint from a child or a young person *	8	38	4	0	50
%	16	76	8	0	

Table 2: Concluded cases in the period of 1 January – 1 October 2016

2016	Rejected cases for formal reasons	Other forms of processing and assistance to citizens	Investigations	Criticism etc. in investigated cases	Total number of cases
Number of cases regarding children	84	351	83	9	518
%	16,2	67,8	16,0	10,8	
Number of cases regarding children with a complaint from a child or a young person *	6	30	0	0	36
%	16,7	83,3	0	0	

Table 3: Distribution of concluded cases regarding children between complaint cases, cases opened by the Ombudsman on his own initiative and monitoring cases in 2015 and 2016 (1 January- 1 October 2016)

	Complaint cases	Complaint cases with a complaint from a child or a young person *	Cases opened on own initiative	Monitoring cases	Total
2015	701	50	20	11	732
2016	499	36	7	12	518

* Experience has shown that the biggest tasks for the Ombudsman's Children's Division are monitoring visits, own initiative cases, and complaints from adults about child cases. These are also the very activities which have provided a basis for uncovering general, significant and fundamental problem areas regarding the rights of children.

Complaints from children and young persons constitute a smaller part of the work in the Children's Division. These cases typically concern very concrete and urgent assistance. When children and young persons complain, their complaints are a top priority. No child or young person has complained to the Ombudsman without having their complaint considered, and if the Ombudsman does not start an actual investigation of a complaint, the Children's Division always tries to help the child in another way.

The Children's Division of the Ombudsman is and must be open and accessible to children. But it is not decisive whether a case before the Ombudsman is raised on the basis of complaints from children, complaints from adults, on his own initiative or in connection with monitoring visits. The crucial factor must be that the Children's Division actually helps as many children as possible and thereby ensures the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It is important in this context to emphasise the significance of Children's Welfare (the Children's Telephone) as the central "systems portal" for children (see the supplementary report, para. 7), and that Children's Welfare is, i.a., very focused on referring relevant cases on to the Children's Division. This ensures both that children do not have to keep track of too many authorities and agencies and that the relevant cases find their way to the Children's Division.