



## **News from the Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman**

### **2019 Annual Report of Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman now available in English**

The English-language version of the 2019 Annual Report of the Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman has now been published.

01 July 2020

In the preface, Ombudsman Niels Fenger stresses that a guiding principle for him is to apply the institution's resources where they can be of the greatest possible use in protecting citizens' legal rights. Niels Fenger, who took up the position of Parliamentary Ombudsman on 1 December 2019, points out the value of uncovering recurring errors in order to help many citizens at the same time. In addition, he emphasises that he will not only focus on whether errors have been made in the individual cases but will also take a forward-looking approach by seeking to guide the authorities so they know what to do better next time:

*By helping an authority to avoid future errors, we will also ensure that citizens do not suffer injustice in future cases.*

In addition to the preface, the Annual Report contains statistics on the cases processed in 2019, examples of specific cases and the following articles:

#### **Confusion about the roles of public authorities affects citizens**

An authority may have a wide variety of responsibilities and therefore act in different roles at different times. In addition to making decisions within the meaning of the law, authorities give guidance and enter into private law agreements, for example. It can be difficult to keep the roles separate, and this may affect citizens' legal rights.

## **How do we introduce e-government without harming our legal rights?**

The digitisation of the public administration offers great potential. But a number of examples show that insufficiently thought-out IT systems can harm citizens' legal rights. The Ombudsman will step up his efforts within this field.

## **Is using the term 'environmental information' a magic formula?**

Members of the public have a particularly wide entitlement to obtain environmental information held by public authorities, and a number of cases with the Ombudsman show that the term is to be interpreted widely. But journalists and others should also be aware that using the term 'environmental information' does not always result in access to documents or information.

[View 2019 Annual Report in full \(PDF\)](#)

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## **FACTS**

The Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman is required by the Ombudsman Act to publish an Annual Report on the institution's activities. The Annual Report is submitted to the Danish Parliament and sent to a wide range of public authorities, among others.

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