

## Brief profile

### Contact details

- **Postal address:** Al. Solidarności 77, 00-090 Warsaw, Poland
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- **Helpline:** +48 800 676 676 **and telephone number:** +48 22 55 17 700
- **Contact person for media enquiries:** Anna Kabulska ([a.kabulska@brpo.gov.pl](mailto:a.kabulska@brpo.gov.pl))

### Overview

The Human Rights Defender is the constitutional authority for legal control and protection. In his/her activities, the Defender is integral and independent from other state authorities and shall safeguard the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens specified in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland and other normative acts, including safeguarding the implementation of the principle of equal treatment. Everyone shall have the right to apply to the Human Rights Defender for assistance in protection of his or her freedoms or rights infringed by organs of public authority.

### Type of equality body

The *Human Rights Defender* is a predominantly promotion-type and legal support body<sup>1</sup>.

## Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields	
	Employment	Beyond employment (education, goods & services, housing, etc.)
Gender	◆	◆
Race and ethnic origin	◆	◆
Age	◆	
Disability	◆	
Sexual orientation	◆	
Religion and belief	◆	
Nationality	◆	◆

<sup>1</sup> According to a [European Commission study on Equality Bodies](#), predominantly promotion-type equality bodies “spend the bulk of their time and resources on a broader mix of activities that include supporting good practice in organisations, raising awareness of rights, developing a knowledge base on equality and non-discrimination, and providing legal advice and assistance to individual victims of discrimination” (page 44).

## Detailed profile

### Brief history

The Defender acts pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Poland and the Human Rights Defender Act of 15 July 1987. The Defender is appointed by the Sejm and approved by the Senate for a 5-year term of office. The Act of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2010 on the implementation of certain provisions of the European Union regarding equal treatment defined the scope and methods of counteracting violations of the equal treatment principle and it also charges the Human Rights Defender with additional tasks in this area. Therefore the Defender also gained the status of an Independent Equality Body.

### Mandate

- **Powers:** the *Human Rights Defender* is a predominantly promotion-type and legal support body;
- **Litigation powers:**
  - Representing in front of courts;
  - Bringing proceedings in own name;
  - Intervening before the court;
  - Formally deciding on complaints (decision or recommendation) – *not legally binding*;

### Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields					
	Employment	Education	Housing	Social protection	Goods and Services	Healthcare
Gender	◆		◆	◆	◆	
Race and ethnic origin	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Age	◆					
Disability	◆					
Sexual orientation	◆					
Religion and belief	◆					
Nationality	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

### Activities

- Promotional activities aimed at duty bearers (by way of trainings, guidance material, etc.);
- Promotional activities aimed at potential victims (trainings, awareness raising, etc.);
- Communication activities;
- Publications and research projects;
- Number of inquiries / complaints lodged and cases handled per year: **56500** (general inquiries) and **2500** (complaints based on violation of equal treatment principle).

## Structure

### 1. Management structure

- Type: single headed equality body (led by a director);

### 2. Institutional structure

- Type: equality body consists of offices of ombudsmen;
- Details:
  - Department of Constitutional and International Law
  - Department of Penal Law
  - Department of Labor Law and Social Insurance
  - Department of Civil Law
  - Department of Administrative Law and Economic Law
  - Department of Preliminary Classification of Requests
  - The National Preventive Mechanism Department
  - Department of Social Issues

### 3. Nomination of senior staff and board:

The Defender is appointed by the Sejm and approved by the Senate for a 5-year term. Senior staff members (Department Heads; CEO) are appointed by the Defender after passing a competition for the position. Other permanent staff members are recruited through open competition.

### 4. Number of staff dealing directly with equality issues: 3

## Operating budget (for the parts of the organization dealing with equality issues)

63.596,49 €

## Accountability (reporting to)

The Defender shall annually inform the Parliament on his/her activities and on the observance of the liberties and rights in Poland. The Defender's information shall be made public.

## Contact details (address, key contact person, website)

### Address:

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### Main contact persons:

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