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**The Defender of
Rights, a unique
institution for
protecting rights
and freedoms**

When it comes to the law, we are all equal.

Défenseur des droits
— RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE —

One institution, five areas of intervention

**“The Defender of Rights ensures that rights
and freedoms are upheld”**

Article 71-1 of the Constitution

The Defender of Rights is an independent institution tasked with defending rights and individual freedoms within five areas of expertise as determined by the law:



**Defending the
rights of public
service users**



**Ensuring the rules
of professional
conduct are
followed by**

security officials
(police, gendarmes,
private security
services, etc.)



**Defending and
promoting the
rights of the child**



**Combating
discrimination
and promoting
equality**



**Guiding and
protecting
whistleblowers**

To accomplish its duties, the Defender of Rights:

- **processes the complaints** it receives by coming up with fitting solutions;
- **works to improve equal access to rights for all** through information and training and by forging partnerships and proposing reforms.



More than

80,000

**complaint files processed
every year**



Protecting your rights

The Defender of Rights processes the individual complaints it receives

Each situation calls for a specifically tailored response depending on the type of case and expectations.

Its teams of legal experts can come up with **amicable settlements** (such as mediation, recommendations or transactions) but also present **observations** before the courts or request **sanctions**.

Underpinning the quality of the Defender of Rights' work are its substantial **expertise and impartial** decision-making.

For example, during its investigations, the Defender of Rights always looks at both the point of view of the complainant and that of the person against whom the complaint has been brought.



More than

130,000

requests for action every year

Promoting equality



The Defender of Rights is committed to promoting equality and access to rights. Its aim is to take **preventive action**, before any instances of inequality actually occur.

It **informs the people concerned** about their rights.

It runs campaigns to **raise awareness** and **train association stakeholders** and **professionals** so as to improve day-to-day practices. It holds regular talks with these stakeholders to find out what their expectations are and to tell them about what it is doing through its joint civil society-Defender of Rights committees and workgroups. It formulates **recommendations** and puts forward **proposals for reforming** legislation.



I wasn't able to sign my daughter up for holiday club because she's disabled



After several requests, I still haven't managed to get my "Carte Vitale" health insurance card



The police station refused to record my complaint

What can the Defender of Rights do?



Investigate



Come up with an amicable settlement



Make recommendations about a situation



Present its observations before the courts



Call for disciplinary proceedings



Put forward proposals for reforming legislation



Teams on hand across France

Almost 300 staff working in Paris

Staff at the Defender of Rights give complainants the benefit of **their skills and expertise**. They process the cases filed with the institution and come up with **fitting solutions**.

The Defender of Rights is shored up by a network of some 500 delegates

There are Defender of Rights delegates available across mainland France and in the French overseas départements and regions. They can be reached in offices at more than **750 reception points**, including in prisons.

Anyone encountering difficulties with benefiting fully from their rights can contact them, and they handle a large number of complaints directly. They are attentive in assisting, advising and guiding people in the processes they have to go through and helping them to exercise their rights. They are also tasked with processing individual complaints, in the form of amicable settlements, and with forwarding the case to the Head Office in Paris should an attempt to reach an amicable settlement fail or prove impossible.

80%

of complaints lodged with the Defender of Rights are received by the delegates at their local offices



See the list of offices:

www.defenseurdesdroits.fr

Think your rights haven't been respected?

Get in touch with the
Defender of Rights for free



Via the delegates, at:

www.defenseurdesdroits.fr /
"Comment obtenir des réponses?"
(How can you get answers?)

or in a reception point.



Via freepost, so no need for a stamp:

Défenseur des droits - Libre réponse 71120 -
75342 Paris Cedex 07 France



Via our online form, at:

www.defenseurdesdroits.fr /
"Saisir le Défenseur des droits"
(Refer a case to the Defender of Rights)



You can also get information

by calling +33 (0)9 69 39 00 00

or during an appointment with a delegate.



Don't forget to provide us with all the documents (copies of administrative documents, letters, emails, eye-witness accounts, etc.) that the Defender of Rights will need to examine your case.

DID YOU KNOW?

You do not have to pay anything to contact the Defender of Rights.

The Defender of Rights cannot call into question a judicial decision.

Its referral does not interrupt or suspend the statutory timeframes for civil, administrative or criminal proceedings or those concerning administrative appeals or appeals to the court.

Find out all our news at:



www.defenseurdesdroits.fr



Défenseur des droits

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE