

PetrOmbudsman Annual Report 2022

APRIL 2023

OMV Petrom SA



PetrOmbudsman

PetrOmbudsman Department is an innovative initiative launched in OMV Petrom Group, as a supplementary channel of communication for all persons working in OMV Petrom Group, irrespective of their position and field of activity.

Different from other existing channels, PetrOmbudsman acts and reacts in a confidential, impartial, independent and informal manner. These four traits are derived from the International Ombuds¹ Association's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, whom PetrOmbudsman operates in accordance with. The International Ombuds Association (IOA) is a professional association committed to supporting organizational ombuds worldwide and dedicated to excellence in Organizational Ombuds practice.

The role of the PetrOmbudsman Department is to help people see all the alternatives and then make informed decisions upon the best ways to address concerns. It supports management and employees navigate through all existing channels, and clarify the nature of their issues, or possible additional aspects that might need to be addressed.

PetrOmbudsman is not entitled to impose decisions, but whenever it requests information, it is mandatory for every manager and employee to fully support the department.

All persons working in OMV Petrom Group have the right to contact and use the services of PetrOmbudsman and cannot be obstructed or penalized in any way for contacting and/or using the services provided by this department.

¹ The term "Ombuds" includes all applicable nomenclature in use for an organizational ombudsperson (ombudsman, ombudsperson, ombud etc).

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Foreword from PetrOmbudsman's Director



PetrOmbudsman Department was created over nine years ago, as a counsellor for OMV Petrom Group's staff, however its mission is far more complex than that. At a more in-depth look, the services provided by PetrOmbudsman can be viewed as a two-level house. At the ground floor, it provides reactive services, like mediation, listening or coaching, in situations when a person has a conflict or a difficult relation to manage. At the first floor, it supplies proactive services. These are called outreach activities and their aim is to

develop people's soft skills and help them avoid entering unpleasant workplace situations. Such activities are mostly done under the form of workshops, but there are also other types of events, which will be detailed in the chapters to come.

In 2022 our team was engaged in a wide range of actions in its efforts to create a more pleasant working environment. As opposed to the pandemic period, when most of our activities were carried out online, 2022 has permitted us, once again, the joy of in person interactions. While we all embrace the benefits of the virtual working style, which allows us to save time and become more efficient, the importance of human contact cannot be denied. This is vital especially in professions like our own, where establishing trust with your partners is the precondition for any sustainable relationship.

I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all my team members for their hard work in completing the projects of 2022. Collaboration with colleagues and managers across the organization and working in inter-departmental teams was a welcomed addition and I greatly appreciated the value of the diverse perspectives! I am grateful for all the team efforts, and I feel really fortunate to have such amazing people beside me, to carry out the mission of this department.

Dr. Eng. Ion Anghel

Director of PetrOmbudsman Department

Our Ambassadors



Christina Verchere – Chief Executive Officer OMV Petrom S.A.

Christina Verchere: *“The last few years have highlighted that one of the few constants in our lives is, in fact, change. I believe that driving that change in the right direction requires trust, taking risks and showing vulnerability. I also believe this can only be achieved when people feel comfortable speaking up, when they feel safe, and when they feel they can open up and express their thoughts and emotions. PetrOmbudsman provides that safe environment for all our*

OMV Petrom colleagues, who can access it without fear of judgement, in full confidentiality and comfort. I encourage them to talk to the Ombuds team if they ever feel the need to discuss, share or ask for advice.”



Alina Popa – Chief Financial Officer OMV Petrom S.A.

Alina Popa: *“Given the pace of work and the commitments required by modern society, no one has time for everything anymore. That is why you have to strategically plan ahead and decide where you will and where you will not spend your time. As CFO, one of the biggest challenges for me is finding the right balance. PetrOmbudsman's mission, among others, is to help staff relieve stress and achieve the right mix of business and personal life. Many of the projects carried out by the Ombuds Team are aimed at improving the quality of the workplace climate, so that people enjoy what they do and make the most of their professional experience.*

This is why I fully support the activity of this department and want to congratulate them for all their great work!”

Our Team

For me, it has been a privilege to act as Ombuds for most of the year covered by this report. It was certainly a year of continuous ups and downs. Flexibility and resilience have proven to be the key to move forward in a healthy way. I feel that keeping an open mind has helped all of us relieve the burden of stress and embrace the opportunities we had to learn and grow.

Doriana



Resolve is one of the most important skills for an ombuds activity, because we are always looking for someone to go the extra mile and make sure new solutions are implemented in the organization we belong to. During the previous year, I was determined to be a vector of transformation and support my organization to advance diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging for all employees.

Cristi



Being an Ombuds is a great honor and gives you multiple opportunities. All through 2022, I have felt joy and lots of satisfaction from interacting with people, guiding them, supporting them and helping them to solve their problems. I am proud to be part of PetrOmbudsman team and of the Ombuds world.

Daniela



As I reflect on the year of 2022, I am reminded of how challenging it was. Despite the uncertainty of what would come next, I most valued the in-person contacts with colleagues, as well as meeting new ones and creating meaningful relationships through work. I am grateful for being able to do my work as ombuds, to promote mental health and a deep human connection in the workplace.

Ana

To be an Ombuds is a wonderful experience, as you have so much freedom in doing amazing things, for the people and for the organization itself, to become more inclusive and attractive for the entire staff. In all the years I have worked here, 2022 being the final one, this position has brought me a lot of accomplishments and self-gratitude feelings.

Marian



Type and source of our cases

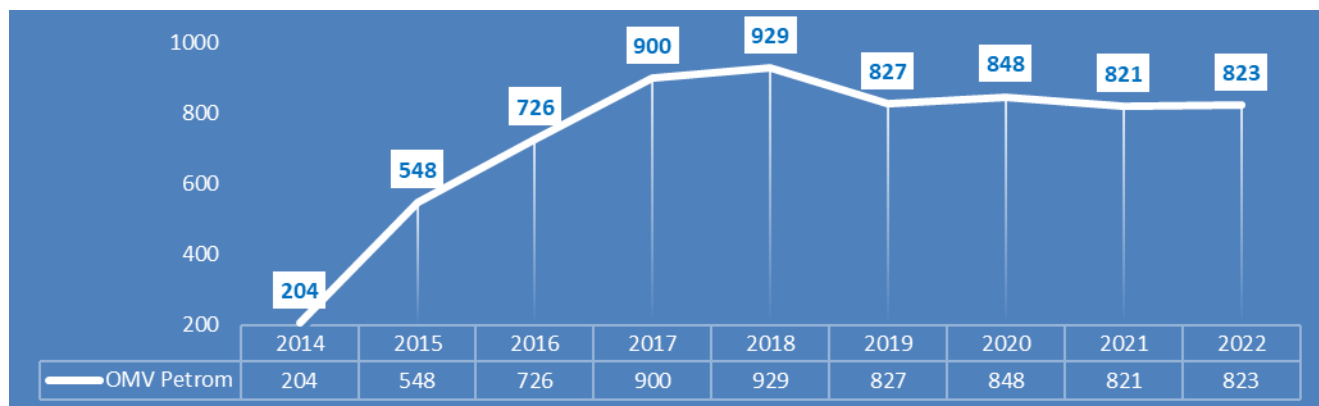


Chart 1 – Case number evolution since PetrOmbudsman’s implementation

As we rapidly approach the ten-year anniversary since PetrOmbudsman department has been in place, our number of cases has stabilized at approx. 800 per year (including in the two pandemic years that preceded 2022, when contact with the workforce was mostly maintained virtually). We expect the overall number of cases to follow this trend in the years to come, with some variations depending on the total number of employees activating in the organization and also to the distribution of responsibilities within the Ombuds team.

IOA Classification of issues	Total
Compensation & Benefits	182 ↗
Organizational, Strategic, and Mission Related	154 ↘
Safety, Health, and Physical Environment	125 ↔
Career Progression and Development	116 ↔
Services/Administrative Issues	90 ↘
Evaluative Relationships	78 ↘
Legal, Regulatory, Financial and Compliance	38 ↗
Peer and Colleague Relationships	29 ↔
Values, Ethics, and Standards	11 ↗
Total	823 ↔

Table 1 - International classification of Ombudsman cases - PetrOmbudsman 2022

In terms of issues raised to the Ombuds office, the top 3 typology of cases remains mostly the same as the previous year.

The focus was on the “Compensation & Benefits” category and on questions related to Strategy and organizational issues. Since 2022 was marked by the organization working in a hybrid style, many requests from staff were related to an increase in the number of teleworking days.

Concerns in the category of “Organizational, Strategic and Mission Related” cases were also connected to the return to office initiative, that was carried out in OMV Petrom gradually from the beginning of the year and fully implemented starting June 2022. In addition, an approximately equal number of concerns expressed in this category were related to job stability in the context of OMV Petrom’s 2030 Strategy.

“Safety, Health, and Physical Environment” partially comprised of cases related to work-life balance (especially since some of the colleagues in the company took over responsibilities from retired or restructured personnel) and partially of questions or information related to the medical insurance provided by our company. Some cases were also related to Covid-19 concerns, but significantly lower than in the previous year.

While there was a general decrease in the category “Evaluative Relationships” (showing either lower interest in issues related to vertical relations or an improvement in said relationships), “Legal, Regulatory, Financial and Compliance” category almost doubled in numbers. This did not mean that the company was involved in more legal proceedings, but rather a closer immersion of the PetrOmbudsman Department in the existing situations, so as to facilitate collaboration and allow a more beneficial outcome for all parties.

Most of PetrOmbudsman’s visitors are men, which corresponds to the demographic profile of the company. The percentage of female visitors, as compared to the total number of women employed in the company, is approx. at the same level (28%).

People in management positions represent a share of 16% of our visitors.

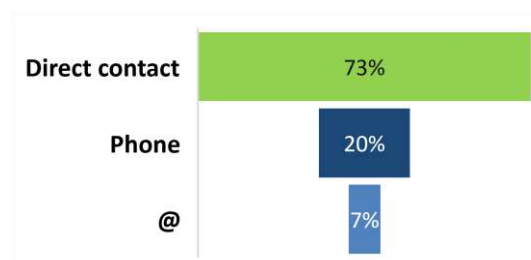
The preferred method of contacting our services is the direct approach of our team in regular field visits (73%), followed by phone (20%) and email (7%).



28% of our visitors were women



16% of our visitors were managers



Filling Stations Insights

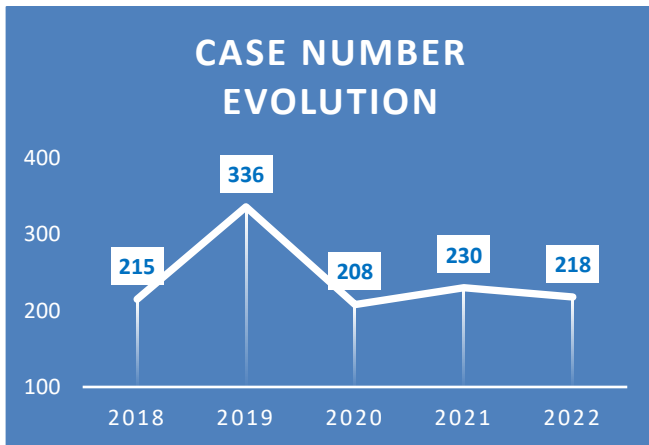


Chart 2 – Case number evolutions in filling stations



Chart 3 – % of cases opened by dealers or by their employees

PetrOmbudsman offers its services to all OMV and Petrom filling stations in Romania, through periodic visits and discussions with OMV Petrom Marketing SRL's business partners (dealers) and their employees.

In 2022, the number of cases in these locations remained almost the same as in the previous two years. Our strategy was to expand the frequency of field visits, given the elimination of pandemic restrictions. In parallel, we used the advantages of virtual meetings to reunite dealers from several geographical areas in a pilot workshop on Assertive Communication, delivered through the MS Teams platform.

Another objective set for 2022 was to help share best practices between filling stations' business partners. We developed a concept of simultaneous visits of the entire PetrOmbudsman team on a quarterly basis, taking travel efficiency criteria into account. Among the topics discussed during these field visits were: success stories to enhance employees' performance, tips and tricks to the good collaboration between MyAuchan and Petrom, plus the key to low staff fluctuation.

Operational aspects encountered in filling stations were resolved at local level, while systemic aspects were gathered and presented in aggregated reports to OMV Petrom Marketing SRL's management.

2022 at a glance

January

Planning ahead, we set our objectives and main targets.

February

Reshuffling of activities between team members is complete. New areas of responsibility are set.

March

Our Annual Report is published internally, available for the first time online to all employees.

April

We launch our "Empathy Guide for Managers", a tool meant to inspire leaders on how to build sustainable relationships.

May

"Managing conflict in the workplace" - a series of workshops dedicated to the organization's Retail division.

June

"Wellcome back to the office", we perform a pulse check on employees' official return to the office in a hybrid working style.

July

Meetings with Contractors' management, to help smooth over transition for the organization's outsourced staff.

August

#PowerOfWords, a new project is launched, to make people aware on the impact of words on the quality of organizational life.

September

PetrOmbudsman starts working on a "Disabilities initiative". An inter-departmental taskforce is formed.

October

A month dedicated to Community Outreach: workshops for highschool students, a visit to OMV Bulgaria colleagues and celebrating International Ombuds Day with staff.

November

Full roll-out of our "Empathy workshop" for employees. The results exceed our expectations. Additional sessions need to be planned.

December

Meeting with our fellow European Ombuds. An opportunity to share and reflect.

Our main activities: in-depth view

Improving the Workplace environment

Employee Experience Talks – This project was launched in 2021 and continued during 2022. It consists of a series of meetings aimed to gather feedback on the organization from people employed for less than two years in OMV Petrom. The insights we gained from our newly joined colleagues were centralized and submitted to management in a summary report.



Main conclusions were related to the need for more flexibility of schedules, more job opportunities, the need for better company knowledge and also the preference of more autonomy on performing job related tasks.

Talks 4 Teams – These are sessions dedicated to teams’ needs from different departments of our company. Main topics of discussion were focused last year on developing accountability and communication skills (both at team level and within the company). This type of discussions revealed many issues that are rarely openly addressed in groups and thus allow people to ventilate and search for solutions in a constructive manner.



Global Solutions Management Talks – This project consisted of informal meetings with Team Leaders and Department managers from OMV Petrom Global Solutions SRL, aimed to identify pain points and improvement areas. Discussions were developed freely, without a formal format, which allowed people to present their point of view in a spontaneous manner, that enticed them speak up and provide valuable ideas for improvement. These were also presented in a top management report, as a diagnosis for the CFO division.



Consulting on contractors' activity – The Ombuds team regularly discussed over the year with former OMV Petrom employees, now hired by contractors, regarding their working conditions. Feedback was also gathered from OMV Petrom management & employees regarding their cooperation with the contractors. Periodical meetings with contractors' management were organized to discuss based on this aggregated feedback, to find solutions to improve their workplace climate.



Pulse check of employees on return to office – In June 2022, all OMV Petrom employees officially returned to the office in a hybrid working style, after over two years since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared. With this occasion, PetrOmbudsman department had specific discussions with employees in Petrom City and other local headquarters. Our feedback was conveyed to top management, to assist in implementing the return to office process.



In short, employees were almost equally divided in their preferences of returning to the offices.

Almost half were keen on the benefits of socializing and outlining a more obvious boundary between personal / professional life while working from the office, whereas the other half would have preferred to continue to work from home (due to commuting efforts and the noise in open spaces). Almost all employees expressed their desire to benefit from more teleworking days.

#PowerOfWords – This was a new idea launched by PetrOmbudsman, which aimed to make people aware that using the right words can help create a better working environment within teams and between teams. During a series of articles on the company’s internal blog, we encouraged people to share their experience with us and give examples of words or experiences that have helped them in special moments of their life. The project received a record number of comments and appreciations. The main contributors were awarded a small gift package consisting of promotional items.



Book club – In our efforts to create a more pleasant working environment, we also handled the organization of a monthly Book Club, which encourages reading and sharing ideas. This was a very popular initiative, that slowly but steadily grew with the passage of each month. In each meeting, a specific book is read and discussed by the members of the club, which then share their experience via a blog article, so that all company employees can benefit, if only partially, of the session’s findings. The book club was renamed “People and books” towards the end of 2022 and continues to develop.

Disabilities initiative – PetrOmbudsman led a cross-functional team of experts in OMV Petrom (PetrOmbudsman, People & Culture, HSSE, Petromed) that aimed to develop a coherent approach for all employees to be aware and feel more empowered and included at the workplace by creating an inclusive mindset with regard to disabilities. During the second part of the year, the team started to develop a brochure for employees with disabilities and a toolkit for leaders and teams to aid at creating a working environment free of discrimination and harassment. The initiative will continue in 2023.



Helping people develop their soft skills

Conflict Management and Assertive Communication workshops

– In 2022 we continued to provide on demand sessions for these two topics, both virtually and in person. It did not come as a surprise, that many people were excited to meet again in person, after such a long time of Teleworking. Each session consisted of both theoretical and practical knowledge development, to help participants learn by experiencing how to handle different situations. Also, a pilot session on Assertive Communication was provided for dealers in filling stations.



Empathy, the bridge between people – The degree of interest regarding this topic exceeded our expectations. Following the development of an Empathy Guide, that provides a toolkit for building the empathy “muscle”, the launching of PetrOmbudsman’s Empathy Workshops for staff resulted in an overflow of requests. The number of sessions provided by the end of 2022 was increased accordingly, to accommodate demand, with a special workshop also held for our colleagues in OMV Vienna. In general, participants agreed that it was a great opportunity to debate on this topic and that organizational focus should shift to supporting a new leadership model, where strength comes from vulnerability and building human connection.

Empathy Guide

Empathy is the bridge between people



OMV Petrom
The energy for a better life

PetrOmbudsman

OMV Bulgaria Wellbeing program – Upon being included in OMV Bulgaria’s Wellbeing Program in 2021, we continued our cooperation last year, as special guest, to talk about civility and respect in the workplace. Colleagues in the OMV Bulgaria subsidiary were very interested to participate in the debate and actively expressed their ideas on the topic.



Community outreach – In collaboration with the Sustainability & Communication Department, local management, educational units and NGOs we managed to carry out a project dedicated to developing the communication skills of high school students and teachers in local communities. It was a pleasure to interact with young people in Arges and Giurgiu counties via this occasion and be inspired by their energy and enthusiasm.



Collaboration with other departments

HSSE Roadshow – PetrOmbudsman was present in all HSSE Roadshow events organized by our colleagues in HSSE team, both in Petrom City and other locations within the country, as part of their “Panel” team. We were invited in these events to share from our experience and answer questions coming from the participants. It was a great opportunity for our team to meet with numerous employees from the company. During these meetings, we noticed there was a high interest in clarifying many complementary aspects beside the dedicated HSSE topics, showing employees’ eagerness to be an active part of the organizational life.



HSSE, be more careful with your health – Our team collaborated with HSSE and Petromed colleagues in their project, aimed to raising awareness on health related topics. Together with local management, sessions were organized to talk with employees and encourage them to use the private insurance provided by the company and also the screening programs available through Petromed’s medical facilities.



OMV Petrom 2030 Strategy – Our team continued over the year to support the organization in a complete and thorough acceptance of its 2030 Strategy, by providing employees with a better understanding of the new direction. This component was integrated in all our meetings & discussions (via regular field trips, Management Walk Arouns, meetings at Ploiești Training Center and other events).



The Project Management Community – During 2022, a productive cooperation with colleagues leading the OMV Group Project Management Community was cultivated. Our team participated to several of the community’s events, either as part of their “Panel” speakers or as special guests, to deliver a customized version of our “Empathy” training. Also, we participated in a dedicated training event on IT project management, to broaden our knowledge on the topic.



Fresh Graduates – We provided regular feedback to the company’s Fresh Graduates Project Team, regarding concerns and ideas gathered from our interaction with young people working in OMV Petrom via this program. It was an honor to be invited to their events, as guest speakers, and to share their joy in celebrating accomplishments and milestones in their activity.



Communication activities and cooperation with external stakeholders

International Ombuds Day – The first time after the pandemic began, the PetrOmbudsman Team celebrated International Ombuds Day in person, with our colleagues in Petrom City. The theme of last year was "Resilience, Respect and Resolve"! These 3Rs are closely related to the values we promote



and were discussed extensively (together with other aspects regarding our activities) with the 30+ employees from Petrom City that participated in our coffee talk.

European Ombuds Meetings – We kept our tradition of bi-annual meetings with fellow European colleagues, to share knowledge on various topics. In 2022, discussions were focused on working in the post pandemic world, tools provided by organizations to help people cope with stress, the effects of the war in Ukraine and the development of organizational policies regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Our meeting of December was a great opportunity to reflect on the year and plan ahead.



ROmbudsman LinkedIn account – We launched a LinkedIn page to facilitate informal contact with the Romanian Ombuds community and other related professionals (e.g. Ethics and Compliance, HR, Legal, Professional Counselors, Consultants, Coaches etc). We hope to develop this page into a professional discussion forum, where we can further grow the Ombuds profession in Romania and also keep in contact with international counterparts.



The list of our communication activities was completed by a lengthy number of articles on the company’s blog, articles for our company’s internal magazine and external blogs posted on the International Ombuds Association’s page. Also, a mirror interview was conducted by our Director, together with the Compliance Department Director in OMV Petrom, to underline the particularities of the Ombuds activity and how we can help people via our tools.

Team Development

In order to allow our department to operate at the highest standards, the continuous development of its team members is a mandatory requirement. During the year of 2022, a reshuffle of activities was put into place. This meant rotating our staff in handling certain geographical areas of the Exploration & Production division to exchange experience. Two offsite visits were further organized to develop team cohesion and skills. Sharing personal growth stories for each team member was encouraged during these offsite visits and also in our monthly Psychology Talks. The latter were facilitated by one of our team colleagues, currently training to be certified as a psychologist. An external classroom training, on the topic of “Process Communication Models” completed our staff development initiatives.



Objectives for 2023

Our Big Rocks

Build a more respectful and inclusive working environment to nurture staff wellbeing. Our aim is to develop a series of innovative projects that underline the importance of respectful behavior in the company and, at the same time, boost employee morale. The end purpose is to add to all the other organizational initiatives that are



directed to making the workplace a more pleasant and inclusive environment, where employees return everyday with passion and excitement. Nevertheless, we plan to continue some of last year's Ombuds projects, that helped us gain more insight and improve the organizational climate.

Assist in developing soft skills for the workplace of the future.

While hard skills are teachable abilities which are easier to quantify, soft skills, on the other hand, are more subjective and much harder to quantify. Soft skills relate to the way we engage and interact with other people, and they are just as important as technical abilities, because they help us build connections. We, as Ombuds, believe that soft skills can be improved through training just like any other muscle of the body. That is why we have developed for 2023 a rich curriculum of workshops, that will help people working in OMV Petrom Group develop the necessary abilities to perform in the workplace of the future.

Consolidate our Ombuds internal and external position.

While we are proud of our journey so far and the position that we have gained both within the organization and at international level, there is always room to improve. We plan to achieve this through intense communication efforts and, at the same time, by analysing our internal development needs and continuing to build our professional skillset.

Our Mid-term Strategy

The PetrOmbudsman 2025 strategy focuses on three pillars: **People, Pioneering and Conflict Prevention.**



People



Pioneering



Conflict Prevention

In this respect, PetrOmbudsman department intends to:

Continue to serve as a catalyst for engaging the workforce to have a trustworthy environment where issues are addressed with fairness and respect.

Assist in developing solutions to resolving conflicts in the best interest of all involved parties, based on the values of the company.

Serve as a means to identify systemic issues and trends, by providing data, feedback and recommendations to the organization.

Provide educational programs and opportunities to improve the quality of interactions.

Promote partnerships with stakeholders to facilitate innovative solutions.



We are passionate about finding win-win solutions and building trust by providing a safe space for all.



PetrOmbudsman operates in accordance with the International Ombuds Association's (IOA) Code of Ethics, and Standards of Practice:

Impartiality: The Ombudsman is neutral, impartial, and unaligned. Strives for impartiality, fairness and objectivity in treatment of people and consideration of issues.

Independence: The Ombudsman exercises sole discretion over whether or how to act regarding an individual's concern, a trend, or concerns of multiple individuals over time.

Confidentiality: Holds all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence. Does not reveal, and must not be required to reveal, the identity of any individual contacting the Ombuds Office.

Informality: It is an alternative communication channel which does not replace any of the existing channels of the company. The Ombudsman functions on an informal basis by such means as: listening, providing and receiving information, identifying and reframing issues etc.