

Media release

Swiss Banking Ombudsman: Change and uncertainty.

- **Fraud cases have once again increased sharply.**
- **1'921 closed cases in 2021, 10% less than in the previous year.**
- **Marco Franchetti will leave the Swiss Banking Ombudsman Foundation at the end of 2022.**

Zurich, 29 June 2022 --- "*Change and uncertainty*" were the opening words of the Swiss Banking Ombudsman, Marco Franchetti, at his annual media conference. The instability of the financial markets, the strong growth of online transactions, the pandemic, the war on our doorstep, as well as the flood of easily accessible and sometimes biased information, all influences that do not make it easy for clients to orientate themselves.

"*The fronts have hardened everywhere,*" the Ombudsman also notes in his daily work. In such an environment, his task is more important than ever. He must maintain his serenity and keep his course. In the vast majority of cases, the clients represent the weaker party. They often lack resources and knowledge, which leads to a more fragile position vis-à-vis the financial businesses. "*It is appropriate to restore the balance,*" the Ombudsman underlined.

In 2021, the Ombudsman and his team dealt with a total of **1'921 cases**. 1'172 were oral cases, 749 written cases. This corresponds to a decrease of about 10% compared to the previous year. The surprisingly fast recovery of the economic situation in 2021 and the fact that 2021 was therefore a positive year for the majority of investors probably contributed to this. However, the Ombudsman was again confronted with an increasing number of fraud cases. He therefore appeals again: "*Be careful and beware of fraudsters*". The most important cause of problems, however, was again a wide variety of settlement issues. In 2021, a total of **90%** of the resolution proposals of the Banking Ombudsman were accepted by the financial businesses.

In 2021, a total of **441** new requests were received in the area of "Search for dormant assets or assets without contact". The beneficiaries of **47** contactless client relationships were able to access values of **5.4 million** Swiss francs and the contents of **6** safe deposit boxes.

The Swiss Banking Ombudsman, Marco Franchetti, pointed out that this was his last media conference. He will hand over his office at the end of the year after 10 years of service. "*The Foundation Board must be congratulated for having found an extremely competent successor in Andreas Barfuss to take over the function of the Swiss Banking Ombudsman.*"

Franchetti took the opportunity to thank all those, his team and external partners, who have accompanied him in his great human adventure as Ombudsman. Finally, he thanked the media representatives and highlighted their importance in disseminating and commenting on information that is often crucial for clients.

The annual report can be downloaded at www.bankingombudsman.ch/en/annual-reports/.

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The Swiss Banking Ombudsman

The Swiss Banking Ombudsman acts as an information and mediation body without jurisdiction for clients of member institutions of the Swiss Bankers Association and of other institutions affiliated with the Swiss Bankers Association for this purpose (banks and financial service providers). It deals with their specific questions and complaints concerning banking and financial services transactions conducted by these institutions. The institution began its activities in April 1993. Its sponsor is the "Swiss Banking Ombudsman Foundation", which was founded by the Swiss Bankers Association. How to submit a problem to the Banking Ombudsman is described here <https://bankingombudsman.ch/en/complaint/>.

The Swiss Banking Ombudsman also serves as a central point of contact for persons seeking dormant assets in Swiss banks.