

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2017/2222(INI)	Procedure completed
Report on the deliberations of the Committee on Petitions during the year 2016		
Subject 1.20.03 Right of petition 8.40.01.06 Committees, interparliamentary delegations		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Petitions	 MARIAS Notis	10/05/2017
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 PREDA Cristian Dan	
		 KIRTON-DARLING	
		Jude	
		 TOOM Jana	
		 AUKEN Margrete	
		 EVI Eleonora	
European Commission	Commission DG Secretariat-General	Commissioner TIMMERMANS Frans	

Key events			
26/10/2017	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/11/2017	Vote in committee		
30/11/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0387/2017	Summary
14/12/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
14/12/2017	Debate in Parliament		
14/12/2017	Decision by Parliament	T8-0502/2017	Summary

14/12/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		
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Technical information

Procedure reference	2017/2222(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Annual report
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 227-p7
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PETI/8/09607

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report	PE610.643	24/10/2017	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee	PE612.241	31/10/2017	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A8-0387/2017	30/11/2017	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T8-0502/2017	14/12/2017	EP	Summary

Report on the deliberations of the Committee on Petitions during the year 2016

The Committee on Petitions adopted the own-initiative report by Notis MARIAS (ECR, EL) on the deliberations of the Committee on Petitions during 2016.

The aim of the report is to summarise the work of the committee in the year 2016.

Members stressed the wide range of subjects raised in the petitions filed, from the internal market, justice, energy and transport to fundamental rights, health, environmental law, disability and animal welfare, and on the various implications of Brexit on citizens.

In terms of statistics, they underlined the increase by 10 % in the number of petitions received in 2016 (1 569). 1 110 petitions (70.8 %) were considered admissible. There were 6 132 users of Parliaments Petitions Web Portal who supported one or several petitions in 2016, as compared to 902 in 2015. There was an increase in the proportion of petitions originated from Italy by 4.8%. Another significant increase concerns the proportion of petitions originated from the United Kingdom: in 2015, 3.0 % of the petitions were received from the UK, and in 2016 the figure was 7.4 %.

Main areas concerned: contrary to recent years, the main area of petitioners concern in 2016 were internal market issues. Members pointed to the considerable number of petitions received on alleged infringements of fundamental rights of holders of State-owned maritime concessions and the proper application of Directive 123/2006/EC (Services Directive) in Italy.

The committee also noted the following:

- the anxiety of petitioners concerned about their future rights following the referendum in the United Kingdom on withdrawal from the European Union which was evident in a large number of petitions concerning the United Kingdom. Members recalled that Parliaments resolution of 5 April 2017 underlined that the withdrawal agreement can only be concluded with its consent and its requirement for the fair treatment of EU-27 citizens living in the United Kingdom and of United Kingdom citizens living in the EU-27. The Commission was asked to ensure that citizens are not used as bargaining chips or see their rights eroded as a result of the negotiations;
- numerous petitions to the European Parliament demonstrated obstacles that persons with disabilities have to face in various fields such as access to public transport, use of sign languages, financing or access to education. The committee underlined its willingness to continue its support for efforts to strengthen the rights of persons with disabilities. It called for the European institutions to ensure that implementation measures by the national authorities comply fully and consistently with EU legislation and with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Members emphasised that a fact-finding visit to Slovakia took place in September 2016 to gather information on the issue of the use of investments in institutions for persons with disabilities and recommended that the Commission look into the current situation.

Relations with the Commission: Members reminded the Commission that requests for assistance from the Committee on Petitions should be followed up properly, and reiterated their call on the Commission to improve the quality of its replies, in substance as well as depth. Furthermore, they considered the fact that national courts have primary responsibility for ensuring the proper implementation of EU legislation in the Member States should by no means preclude a more proactive role by the Commission, particularly in cases related to protection of the environment and public health where the precautionary principle should prevail.

The committee went on to remind the Commission that the Committee on Petitions is committed to responding to citizens expectations in a timely and responsible manner, while ensuring the democratic scrutiny and proper application of EU law. In this respect, it was concerned by

the considerable increase by 21 % in open infringement cases compared to the previous year. The Commission was asked again to share information on the state of play of ongoing infringement procedures. Members also insisted that the Commission identify the means of enhancing cooperation with Member States authorities when it comes to responding to inquiries regarding the implementation of, and compliance with, EU law.

Lastly, the report emphasised Parliaments strong collaboration with the European Ombudsman, and the Ombudsmans crucial role in helping to improve decision-making processes and administration at EU level.

Report on the deliberations of the Committee on Petitions during the year 2016

The European Parliament adopted by 356 votes to 206 with 61 abstentions, a resolution on the deliberations of the Committee on Petitions during 2016.

Members recalled that petitions were an important source of first-hand information for detecting violations and gaps in the application of EU legislation at national level. The petitions allow Parliament and other Union institutions to reconnect with Union citizens concerned by the application of Union law.

The resolution stressed the wide range of areas covered by the petitions. In terms of statistics, Parliament underlined the increase by 10 % in the number of petitions received in 2016 (1 569). 1 110 petitions (70.8 %) were considered admissible. There were 6 132 users of Parliaments Petitions Web Portal who supported one or several petitions in 2016, as compared to 902 in 2015.

Main areas concerned: the main subjects of concern raised in petitions in 2016 pertained to the internal market (in particular the provision of services and the free movement of people), fundamental rights (especially the rights of the child and of persons with disabilities), social affairs (working conditions), environmental issues (waste management, pollution and environmental protection) and the specific issue of Brexit (loss of acquired rights and the mandate of the referendum).

Parliament took note the anxiety of petitioners concerned about their future rights following the referendum in the United Kingdom on withdrawal from the European Union which was evident in a large number of petitions concerning the United Kingdom. Members recalled that Parliaments [resolution of 5 April 2017](#) underlined that the withdrawal agreement can only be concluded with its consent and its requirement for the fair treatment of EU-27 citizens living in the United Kingdom and of United Kingdom citizens living in the EU-27. The Commission was asked to ensure that citizens are not used as bargaining chips or see their rights eroded as a result of the negotiations.

Members pointed to the important ongoing work carried out by the Committee on Petitions in connection with petitions pertaining to issues on disabilities. They emphasised the need to improve the political participation of persons with disabilities, in particular in preparation for the next European elections.

There were numerous petitions on the practices of child welfare authorities and the protection of childrens rights, particularly with cross-border implications. Parliament noted notes that a large number of issues raised in petitions, such as those related to the procedures and practices specifically followed by the relevant authorities in the Member States in child-related decisions with cross-border implications, need to be examined thoroughly.

Relations with the Commission: Members reminded the Commission that requests for assistance from the Committee on Petitions should be followed up properly, and reiterated their call on the Commission to improve the quality of its replies, in substance as well as depth. Furthermore, they considered the fact that national courts have primary responsibility for ensuring the proper implementation of EU legislation in the Member States should by no means preclude a more proactive role by the Commission, particularly in cases related to protection of the environment and public health where the precautionary principle should prevail.

Parliament went on to remind the Commission that the Committee on Petitions is committed to responding to citizens expectations in a timely and responsible manner, while ensuring the democratic scrutiny and proper application of EU law. In this respect, it was concerned by the considerable increase by 21 % in open infringement cases compared to the previous year. The Commission was asked again to share information on the state of play of ongoing infringement procedures. Members also insisted that the Commission identify the means of enhancing cooperation with Member States authorities when it comes to responding to inquiries regarding the implementation of, and compliance with, EU law. They stressed that transparency and access of citizens to documents of the Union institutions should be the rule in order to ensure the highest level of protection of citizens democratic rights.

Lastly, the resolution emphasised Parliaments strong collaboration with the European Ombudsman, and the Ombudsmans crucial role in helping to improve decision-making processes and administration at EU level.