

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	1995/2006(INI)	Procedure completed
Deliberations of the Committee on Petitions in 1994 and 1995		
Subject 1.20.03 Right of petition 8.40.01.06 Committees, interparliamentary delegations		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	PETI Petitions		22/02/1995
		PSE KUHN Annemarie	

Key events			
01/01/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/06/1995	Vote in committee		Summary
21/06/1995	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0151/1995	
10/07/1995	Debate in Parliament		
12/07/1995	Decision by Parliament	T4-0341/1995	Summary
12/07/1995	End of procedure in Parliament		
25/09/1995	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1995/2006(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 227-p7
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PETI/4/06358

Documentation gateway					
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0151/1995 OJ C 249 25.09.1995, p. 0004	21/06/1995	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0341/1995	12/07/1995	EP	Summary

Deliberations of the Committee on Petitions in 1994 and 1995

The Council of Ministers should respond to public concern by finally adopting a compromise decision to improve the intolerable conditions in which animals are transported, the committee insisted in adopting unopposed a report by Mrs Annemarie KUHN (D, PES) on the committee's deliberations during 1994/95. The resolution contained in the report noted that many petitioners had complained about what they regarded as the intolerable conditions obtaining during the transport of domestic animals and animals destined for slaughter. Accordingly, it urged the Council "at last to reach a compromise in this matter, which has been pending for some considerable time, so that the security of the supply of animals for slaughter to the Union may be ensured in a civilized way and the public shown that the Community is taking account of their reservations". The resolution also urged the Council and Commission to show greater determination than hitherto in using the Union Treaty provisions on justice and home affairs to close the gaps in national legislation and intergovernmental agreements that often led to conflicts in areas such as marriage law, civil status and asylum. They should also speed up their efforts to ensure the free movement of persons. The Commission, in particular, should join with Parliament in considering ways to reduce the considerable disparity in the medical criteria laid down by Member States for the approval of occupational invalidity pensions. In future, the Commission should also apply the directive providing for the environmental impact assessment of development projects (which is currently being revised) in such a way that the Union's competence in this sphere was further increased. Petitions "reduce the democratic deficit" The resolution, which was based on the committee's experience of petitions during the parliamentary year in question, stressed that petitions were a fundamental civil right and thus an excellent means of reducing the Union's democratic deficit and relative lack of transparency. "The petitions procedure represents one of the best opportunities for the Community's institutions and bodies to be directly informed about the effect of their regulations, decisions and directives on the lives of Union citizens and persons residing in the European Union," it said. Under Article 156 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure both European Union citizens and third country nationals legally resident in the Union have a right to petition the European Parliament. The resolution pointed out that the petitions procedure strengthened the European Parliament's control functions. Member States obliged to supply information "without delay" The resolution reminded Member States of their obligation to provide the Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, with comprehensive information without delay on issues raised in petitions. Since citizens and Union residents wanted to be more closely involved in shaping the Community, it had become even more important for their petitions to be considered quickly and carefully. Accordingly, the committee called for better and closer cooperation from the Commission in the consideration of petitions, which it should deal with more quickly. The resolution also pointed out that some petitioners did not have the private means to assert "their manifestly just interest in the petitions procedure" and that national legal aid systems often did not cover international legal disputes. The committee agreed that it might be necessary, in the case of some complicated legal questions, to obtain an independent legal opinion. The Committee on Budgets was asked to find an appropriate source of funding for this. In her explanatory statement, Mrs Annemarie KUHN said that for the committee the parliamentary year 1994-1995 was dominated by the need to fill the newly created post of European Ombudsman. None the less, the number of petitions received was ever increasing. In particular, the proportion of petitions identifying serious infringements of Community law rose steadily prompting the Commission to initiate legal proceedings.

Deliberations of the Committee on Petitions in 1994 and 1995

Adopting the report by Mrs KHUN (PSE, D), the European Parliament undertook to take any complaints by Union citizens addressed to it seriously and to substantiate them efficiently vis-à-vis the Council and the Commission. It therefore instructed its committees and delegations to examine all petitions closely and to follow up the demands made. As far as the deliberations of the Committee on Petitions during the year from 1994 to 1995 were concerned, Parliament noted that the citizens of the Union had demonstrated a particularly strong commitment which the European institutions could not meet with indifference. The committee therefore: - noted the large number of complaints about the intolerable conditions obtaining during the transport of domestic animals and animals destined for slaughter and welcomed the Council's compromise in this matter; - urged the Council and the Commission to show greater determination than hitherto in using the Union Treaty provisions on justice and home affairs to close the gaps in national legislation and intergovernmental agreements that often led to conflicts in areas such as marriage law, civil status and the right of asylum; - called on the Council and the Commission to speed up their efforts to ensure the free movement of persons; - called on the Commission to reduce the considerable disparity in the medical criteria laid down by Member States for the approval of occupational invalidity pensions; - called for the Union's competence in relation to the directive providing for the environmental impact assessment of development projects to be strengthened. The European Parliament also reminded Member States of their obligation to provide the Commission and the Committee on Petitions with information on the issues raised in petitions without delay in order to demonstrate Parliament's interest in the complaints addressed to it. Similarly, it called on the Commission and the Committee on Petitions to jointly define new working methods so that manifestly just petitions were dealt with more quickly. In this respect, the European Parliament proposed that a database should be created so that identical legal questions could be dealt with quickly. Parliament also stressed that the Commission could obtain an external legal opinion on particularly complicated legal questions. Finally, the European Parliament noted the increase in the number of petitions identifying serious infringements of Community law, called on its Committee on Petitions to reconsider how frequently it should meet and raised the possibility of making provision for extraordinary or supplementary meetings.?