



Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten) im Europäischen Parlament  
Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) in the European Parliament  
Groupe du Parti Populaire Européen (Démocrates-Chrétiens) au Parlement européen

## **Committee on Petitions - Annual Activities Report for 2010**

The Committee on Petitions presented its annual report for 2010 to the European Parliament in July. A resolution on the document was tabled by the committee in accordance with Article 201 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, which calls on the Committee on Petitions to inform Parliament on the results of its deliberations and proceedings each year.

Statistics show that in 2010, the European Parliament registered 1,655 petitions, which represents a drop of 14% compared to the 1,924 petitions in 2009. The environment remains the most concerning issue for petitioners, followed by fundamental rights, the internal market and justice. Germans are the most active petitioners followed by the Spaniards and Italians. Petitioners are also increasing their use of the online petition submission resource with 63.2% of all 2010 petitions received via the internet.

70% of petitions are closed within a year of being submitted. The Petitions Committee has pointed out that some delay can result from a degree of confusion in relation to different EU and national competences and those of the EU institutions and, in particular, the European Court of Human Rights. To tackle this problem, the Commission has successfully developed the "your Europe" gateway, which improved access, information and assistance on citizens' rights. However, the Committee feels that in this respect, the European Parliament remains behind target.

With regard to the registration of petitions, EPP Coordinator Mr Peter Jahr MEP has urged Parliament's administration to appropriately apply the restrictions with regard to the limits of the Union's fields of activity, as defined in Article 277 of the Treaty and in Article 201 of the Rules of Procedure. As a result, DG Presidency and DG IPol have been instructed to register petitions in accordance with the Treaty and Parliament's Rules.

In its resolution, the Petitions Committee welcomes the Commission's declaration entitled "Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union", as well as the Commission's decision to declare 2013 the "European Year of Citizenship" with a view to adding momentum to the debate on European citizenship and to informing EU citizens of their rights. With regard to the method of applying the Charter, the Committee on Petitions has decided to hold a hearing of experts on the subject in the second half of 2011. The Commission is called on to ensure the correct implementation of the EIA, SEIA, Habitats and Birds Directives as well as the 2010 Biodiversity Action Plan.

As petitions are the earliest indications that Member States are lagging behind in the implementation of EU law, the Commission is also asked to recognise the role of petitions in monitoring the effective implementation of EU law. In this respect, the Committee on Petitions regrets that its repeated calls to be kept informed of the progress of infringement proceedings relating to open petitions remain unanswered in most cases.

In 2010, the Committee on Petitions associated with the AFCO committee under rule 50 with regard to the Regulation on the European Citizens' Initiative ( ECI's)., The PETI committee wishes to play a significant role in the organisation of the public hearings that are to be organised as part of the procedure of an ECI.

The text of this resolution on the 2010 Annual Report of the Petitions Committee is scheduled to be voted on by the European Parliament in September 2011.