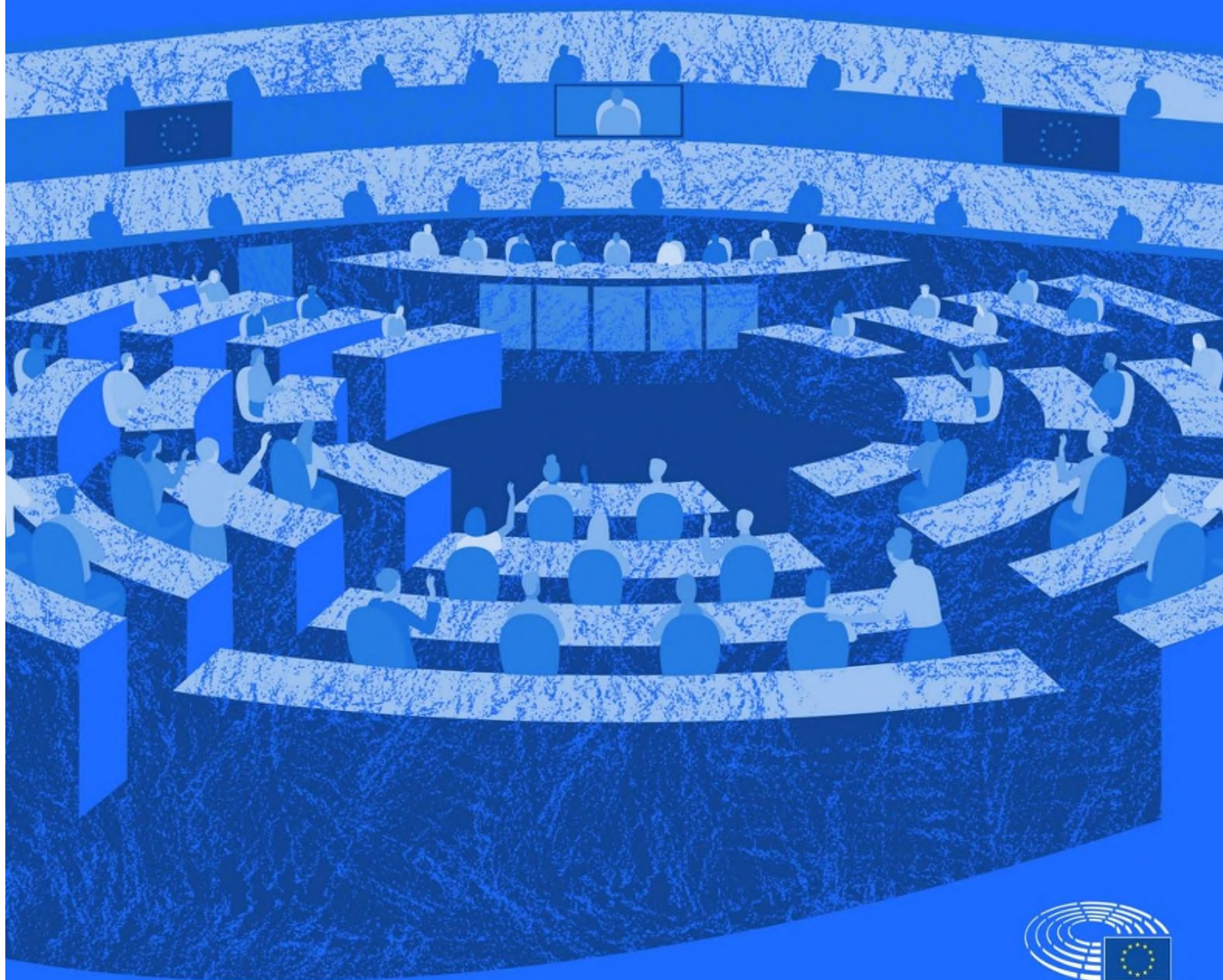


ACTIVITY REPORT

2019 – 2024

PETI

Committee on Petitions



European Parliament

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Foreword by the outgoing Chair

Dear Members,

In addition to the right to vote in the European elections, the right to petition is another effective and direct instrument of participatory democracy for every EU citizen. As you know, the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights confer on all citizens and residents of the European Union the right to submit a petition, individually or with others, on any matter which comes within the European Union's fields of activity and which directly affects them. And citizens want to be heard more than ever before, as the increasing number of petitions to the European Parliament shows: Last year, the European Parliament received 1 452 petitions, more than in 2022.



The Committee on Petitions is a unique committee as its entire activities are based on the input from petitioners, making it so very special for EU citizens. Basically, citizens contribute to making the agenda of the Committee. In addition, petitions are a useful source of information on instances of misapplication or breaches of EU law, as well as on shortcomings and loopholes in existing EU law. They are therefore a key scrutiny tool for Parliament and the other EU institutions to assess the transposition and application of EU law and its impact on the rights of EU citizens.

A significant number of petitions during this term led to the opening of infringement proceedings, initiated legislative actions and a PETI pilot project even paved the way for the creation of the European Capital of Small Retail. In addition, the Committee on Petitions adopted a number of key short motions for resolutions responding to real needs of EU citizens, including the recent resolution on standardised dimensions for carry-on luggage, which attracted a record media interest across 22 Member States last October. The vote on the Resolution was one of many real 'bridge with citizens' moments and an example of the European Parliament putting 'democracy in action'.

I invite you to discover the chapter with the many examples of petitions that led to concrete actions and the main achievements of the Committee on Petitions in the 2019-2024 term, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the outgoing Members for their work and impressive commitment!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dolores Montserrat'.

Dolores MONTSERRAT

Committee mandate

The Committee on Petitions (PETI) is the bridge between the EU Institutions and EU citizens, bringing their concerns and ideas to the attention of their elected representatives. The Committee has an important role in helping to identify problems with the implementation of EU legislation in Member States and loopholes in EU policies. Therefore, petitions are a key scrutiny and policy agenda-setting tool.

The Committee on Petitions is responsible for:

1. the treatment and examination of petitions;
2. the organisation of public hearings on citizens' initiatives;
3. relations with the European Ombudsman.

During the 9th legislative term, the PETI Committee has been in charge of 6 991 petitions: 1 357 petitions in 2019, 1 573 petitions in 2020, 1 392 petitions in 2021, 1 217 petitions in 2022 and 1 452 petitions in 2023. Petitions received deal with a wide spectrum of topics, mainly in the area of fundamental rights (i.e. disability, women's rights, children's rights, LGBTI equality, free movement, voting rights), environment, health, justice, employment and consumers' rights. A significant number of petitions have led to legislative or political action, EU pilot cases, and sometimes even preliminary rulings or infringement proceedings.

In particular, in 2019 the large number of petitions on Brexit gave voice to the concerns raised by petitioners and contributed to ensuring that citizens' rights remained one of Parliament's main priorities in the Brexit negotiations. Moreover, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee played a major role in addressing citizens' concerns over the impact of national emergency measures on citizens' fundamental rights and freedoms.

In 2023, a new version of the PETI Web Portal was launched, to make it quicker and easier for anyone to exercise the fundamental right to petition. The platform was overhauled, new features were added and the layout was made adaptable to any device and screen size, while a new search engine allows users to find better results more quickly.

In addition to the treatment of petitions, the Committee has adopted in total 19 short motions for a resolution, 12 reports and 20 opinions on the files under the remit of other committees. It has reported annually to the Parliament on the outcome of its deliberations in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 and has adopted five reports on the European Ombudsman reports on its activities for 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. The Committee also conducted 11 Fact-Finding Visits to seven Member States and one-third country, in order to establish facts and follow-up on petitions received.

Moreover, the Committee was associated to the responsible committees in the organisation of the public hearings on the following European Citizens Initiatives: "Minority Safepack – one million signatures for diversity in Europe", "End the Cage Age", "Save bees and farmers! Towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment", "Stop Finning – Stop the Trade", "Save cruelty-free cosmetics – Commit to a Europe without animal testing" and "Fur-Free Europe".

Finally, in 2023 the Committee held a successful interparliamentary committee meeting on the rules, procedures and practices concerning the right to petition, as well as the national Parliaments' point of view on best practices and new approaches to the right to petition.



Impact of the Committee on Petitions in the 9th legislative term

A significant number of petitions have led to legislative or political action, EU pilot cases, and sometimes even preliminary rulings or infringement proceedings. Some highlights:

Environment

Illegal logging: The European Parliament Resolution of June 2022 on illegal logging in the EU was adopted on the basis of a Motion for a Resolution by the Committee on Petitions and further to its question for oral answer and to a fact-finding visit on alleged breaches of EU environmental law. In May 2023, the Committee on Petitions also organised a fact-finding visit on the management of the brown bear population and the illegal logging in Romania. The delegation met with various interlocutors, including national and regional authorities, petitioners, NGOs, environmental activists and academics. The European Commission had opened an infringement procedure.

Deterioration of ecosystems: The Committee on Petitions undertook a fact-finding visit to Mar Manor (Murcia), Spain, in February 2022, in relation to several petitions raising the issue of the deterioration of the natural environment of the Mar Menor lagoon. The delegation met with petitioners, scientists, political representatives at the national, regional and local level and visited the most affected areas. In September 2022, the Committee on Petitions organised a fact-finding visit to Poland to follow up petitions concerning alleged breaches of EU environmental law in the Białowieża primeval forest, which is protected under Natura 2000. The delegation met the Vice Minister of Environment, as well as the petitioners, NGOs and experts, and visited the Białowieża forest to meet and discuss with the forest management and local authorities.

EU Green Prosecutor: In March 2022, the Committee on Petitions held, together with the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI), a Public Hearing on “EU Green Prosecutor – a common toolbox for fighting environmental crime”. The Hearing examined the shortcomings and challenges in the enforcement of EU environmental criminal law on the basis of petitions received, as well as new tools to fight environmental crime, including the possible creation of a European Green Prosecutor Office. It led to the Opinion on the proposal for a directive on the protection of the environment through criminal law (Environmental Crime Directive).

Plastics: In February 2021, the Committee on Petitions held, together with the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), a Joint Public Hearing on “Plastics and waste management in the circular economy”. The Hearing focussed on the implementation of the current legislative framework on plastic waste, addressing the main challenges faced by the Member States, but also highlighting the opportunities offered by the legal framework to reduce the impact of plastic in the environment across Europe.

Mining activities: The Committee on Petitions has drawn attention to the consequences of reckless mining activities in different Member States, in breach of different EU environmental provisions, and with negative socio-economic consequences, for example in the fields of agriculture, rural tourism, and public

health. In December 2021, the Committee on Petitions, in association with the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), organised a hearing on the "Environmental and social impacts of mining activity in the EU" and commissioned a study on the subject. The hearing provided insight into the situation across the Union, legislative constraints and shortcomings, in order to give a structured response to the various petitions received by the Committee.

Climate Change: In March 2019, the Committee on Petitions held a Hearing on "Climate Change Denial" in order to explore the topic of climate change denial under different perspectives.

Health: As a follow-up to the petitions on the exposure to dangerous substances, the Committee on Petitions commissioned a study on "Endocrine Disruptors: From Scientific Evidence to Human Health Protection", which was presented at its meeting in April 2019.

Protection of species and habitats: On the basis of petitions received, the Committee on Petitions organised a Public Hearing on "The state of implementation of the Habitats Directive" in May 2023 to discuss with experts the shortcomings and challenges in the enforcement of the Habitats Directive and the ways to promote full compliance with the legislation. This event was organised in association with the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), when the 'Nature Restoration' Regulation was under discussion in the Parliament.

Fundamental rights / Democracy / Enforcement of EU Law

Oral Question on "Improving the strategic approach on the enforcement of EU Law": With this oral question, voted in October 2023, the Committee on Petitions asked the European Commission about its current approach to handling alleged breaches of EU law and the infringement procedure. The overall aim is to increase the effectiveness of enforcement actions and to ensure adequate follow-up to the potential breaches identified by citizens through petitions.

Official visit to Cyprus: Following a petition for the return of the closed area of the occupied town of Famagusta to its original inhabitants, and at the invitation of the exiled Mayor of Famagusta, the Chair of the Committee, Ms Dolors Montserrat, visited Cyprus in October 2023. The Chair witnessed first-hand the heart-breaking situation in Famagusta, in particular the sealed-off area of Varosha, and met with the Mayor, the President of the Republic and the President of the Parliament, expressing her unwavering support for the people of Famagusta. Following her visit, the Chair sent a letter to the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, conveying a clear message: Putting an end to the increasing violations of the status quo in Famagusta and returning the fenced-off area to its lawful inhabitants under the UN administration, as stipulated by EU and the UNSC Resolutions, should be embraced as a confidence-building measure to be pushed forward in the context of the EU-Turkey relations.

Debate on Rules of Law in Hungary, Poland and Spain: Over the years, several petitions concerning the Rule of Law in Hungary, Poland and Spain have been

discussed. In January 2024, the Committee discussed eight petitions on the Amnesty Law in Spain and its alleged incompatibility with the Spanish Constitution and the EU Treaties.

US' Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA): In 2016, the Committee on Petitions was seized with a number of petitions on the alleged violation of EU rights by FATCA and the extraterritorial effects of US laws in the EU. The Committee on Petitions held a Hearing on FATCA and its extraterritorial effects on EU citizens, and a delegation from the Committee conducted a fact-finding visit in Washington DC in July 2022, in order to hold an exchange of views with tax officials, Senators and Representatives in Congress and stakeholders.

Equality and diversity

Cultural and Linguistic diversity: In April 2022, the Committee on Petitions held a Public Hearing on "Cultural and Linguistic diversity in the EU". The panels focused on the promotion of European cultural and linguistic diversity within the EU legal framework and concentrated on the added value of cultural and linguistic diversity in the EU. Discussions focused on how to promote and prevent the loss of linguistic and cultural diversity, vital components of European cultural heritage.

LGBTI Equality in the EU: The Committee regularly receives petitions on the fundamental rights of LGBTI+ EU citizens, their different treatment in different Member States, the mutual recognition of legal parenthood in LGBTI+ families in the EU and the free movement within the EU. The Committee has initiated the European Parliament Resolution on LGBTI+ rights in the EU, which was adopted in September 2021.

Mutual recognition of parenthood and marriages: The Committee on Petitions recognised the serious obstacles faced by same-sex couples and 'rainbow families' in their daily lives and called for the mutual recognition of parenthood and marriage. In December 2022, a Public Hearing on "Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation" was organised in association with the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI). Finally, the Commission presented its proposal for a Regulation aimed at harmonising at EU level the rules of private international law relating to parenthood. The European Parliament's legislative resolution on this proposal refers to the various petitions submitted by Union citizens highlighting the need for a legal framework for cross-border recognition of parenthood between Member States. A study on the Commission's proposal has also been commissioned for the Committee on Petitions.

Disability

EU Disability Card: The Committee on Petitions has acknowledged that currently there is no mutual recognition of disability status among the EU Member States and has repeatedly called for an EU Disability Card. The European Commission has put in place a pilot project on the introduction of an EU disability card with the aim to ensure equal access to benefits across borders for people with disabilities, mainly in the areas of culture, leisure, sport and transport. In September 2023, a legislative

proposal to establish the European Disability Card and a European Parking Card for people with disabilities has been presented by the Commission and is currently being negotiated by the EU co-legislators. The report of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) on this proposal highlights the many petitions calling for the introduction of an EU-wide recognised EU disability Card and Parking Card.

Working conditions

Honorary magistrates: Following several petitions sent to the Committee on Petitions, the Commission decided in July 2021 to open an infringement procedure against Italy. By sending a letter of formal notice to Italy, the Commission called on Italy to amend its legislation on the working conditions for honorary magistrates.

Teachers in the European Union: On the basis of several petitions received in recent years, the Committee on Petitions decided to express a common position on the current situation of teachers' working conditions in the EU and called on the European Commission to step up its efforts to improve the prestige and attractiveness of this profession in the EU and ultimately to ensure a high quality education for current and future generations of pupils. The Oral Question was debated in Plenary on 8 February 2024.

Small and medium sized enterprises

European Capital of Small Retail (ECSR): The idea of creating an ECSR was initially proposed by a petition that was unanimously supported by the Committee on Petitions and decisive for the successful vote of the European Parliament Resolution in January 2023. The Committee on Budget also successfully voted to include it as a Preparatory Action in the 2024 Budget, with a total budget of €3 million. The project to create an ECSR was officially presented by the European Commission in Barcelona in December 2023.

Transport / Free movement

Improving air passenger rights during COVID-19 crisis: The Committee on Petitions and the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) held a joint Hearing to assess how effectively air passenger rights were protected during the COVID-19 outbreak, highlighting that key rights were not protected despite the Commission's efforts. Petitions on air passengers' rights to reimbursement or compensation for flight cancellations in COVID-19 times led to a monitoring by the European Commission in all Member States. The monitoring led to the opening of infringement proceedings against Italy and Greece.

In this context, the Committee on Petitions adopted in November 2020 the "Motion for a Resolution on the Schengen system and measures taken during the COVID-19 crisis". Following the discussion of a petition denouncing the difficult situation of more than 4 million homeless people in Europe during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee also adopted a "Motion for a Resolution on tackling homelessness rates in the European Union".

Carry-on luggage in airplanes: In October 2023, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution calling for standardised dimensions for carry-on luggage by single vote based on the Committee on Petitions' Short Motion for Resolution. The Resolution attracted a record media interest across the Member States: 22 Member States covered the topic. There was a particularly lively coverage in the Spanish media, including radio and TV. Parliament's visibility was above average, especially online, where half of the articles referred to the EP in the title. In November 2023, the Commission adopted a proposal calling for "a small number of common sizes and weights to reduce the confusion".

Security and safety situation of truck drivers: A fact-finding visit to France (Hauts de France region) was organised in May 2022 to examine aspects related to safe and secure parking areas in the EU. The members of the delegation met with petitioners, stakeholders, in particular the secure parking organisation that carries out audits, the motorway and parking operators and their national association, as well as with the representatives of the gendarmerie of the Somme department.

Schengen: Over the years, the Committee on Petitions has received several petitions calling for the respect of the Schengen principles and the removal of "temporary" border controls for the benefit of all EU citizens. The Committee on Petitions organised a Hearing on "Schengen Borders: issues raised by petitioners" and decided in March 2023 to draft a "Short Motion for a Resolution on the accession to the Schengen area", which was adopted in Plenary in July 2023. The European Commission confirmed to the Committee on Petitions that it is prepared to use the legal means at its disposal if Member States prolong internal border controls in a disproportionate manner.

Brexit: The Committee on Petitions examined and discussed the impact of Brexit on Citizens' Rights on several occasions. In 2019, in particular, the Committee held an exchange of views with the European Parliament's Brexit Steering Group and gave voice to the concerns raised by petitioners, helping to ensure that citizens' rights remain one of Parliament's key priorities in the Brexit negotiations.

Scrutiny and oversight activities of the Committee on Petitions

The Commission remains the natural partner of the Committee on Petitions in processing petitions as the responsible EU institution for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with EU law. The committee and the Commission have a well-established and consistently maintained level of cooperation. The main contact point in the Commission is the Secretariat-General, which coordinates the distribution of petitions to the relevant Commission's services and transmits the Commission's replies to the secretariat of the committee. The Commission's services participate in all meetings of the Committee on Petitions when petitions are discussed. The services of the European Commission are regularly asked to provide a preliminary investigation on issues raised by petitioners related to cases of misapplication of EU law at national or regional level. Information of the European Commission reports on the infringements initiated on the basis of or linked to petitions can be found in its annual communications on monitoring the application of EU law.

The Committee on Petitions is the only body in the European Parliament in direct contact with EU citizens and the activities of the Committee on Petitions are based on the input provided by petitioners. The information submitted by petitioners in their petitions and at committee meetings, along with the Commission's assessment and the replies of the Member States and other bodies, are crucial for the work of the committee. Admissible petitions also provide valuable contributions to the work of the other parliamentary committees, given that they are forwarded to other committees for an opinion or for information via the Petitions Network.

The Committee on Petitions attaches paramount importance to the examination and public discussion of petitions at its meetings and petitioners have the right to present their petitions and frequently take the floor in the discussion, thereby actively contributing to the work of the committee. In this way, the dialogue is taking place between EP, EC and citizens.

Hearing of Commissioners

Following the European elections in May 2019, and the establishment of the new Parliament, the commissioners-designate appeared before the parliamentary committees in their prospective fields of responsibility and took part in hearings to enable the recently elected MEPs to evaluate their competence and suitability for their positions.

In this respect, the Committee on Petitions participated on 30 September 2019 in the hearing of the **Vice-President-designate for Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight, Maroš Šefčovič**, as associated committee. During the hearing, Mr

Šefčovič pledged to improve the Commission's handling of petitions. More specifically, he committed to work closely with the Committee on Petitions and to attend its presentation of the annual report. In addition, he promised to encourage the participation of the Commissioners responsible in the debate of those topics raised in a significant number of petitions. Finally, he pledged to do his utmost to submit accurate answers within the three-month deadline.

The Committee on Petitions was invited to take part in the hearing of the Vice President-designate for Values and Transparency, Věra JOUROVÁ, (on 7 October 2019) organised by the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) in association with the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI). The Committee on Petitions was also invited to the hearing of the Commissioner-designate for Equality, Helena DALLI, (on 2 October 2019) organised by the Committees on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) and on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL).

Structured dialogue with Commissioners

The Commission participated in the structured dialogue with the Committee on Petitions throughout the legislature.

In 2020, considering the reduced timeslots for committee meetings and activities owing to Parliament's precautionary measures to limit the spread of COVID-19, the Conference of Committee Chairs exceptionally decided (on 3 April 2020) that committees could hold exchanges of views with the Commission in a written format.

As a result of this decision, on 21 April 2020, the Chair of the Committee on Petitions, Dolors Montserrat, sent a letter to Commission's Vice-President, Maroš Šefčovič, with a list of questions mainly inquiring about the Commission's envisaged measures to address the health, economic and social crises resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, about the Commission's involvement in the committee's work and its approach to petitions not raising systemic breaches of EU law, as well as a series of interinstitutional questions ranging from the Conference on the Future of Europe to transparency obligations in the Council. Taking into account the replies submitted by the Commission's Vice-President, on 7 May 2020, the committee adopted its key messages for Parliament's summary report in the framework of the structured dialogue.

In addition, as part of the annual cycle of the structured dialogue, the Committee on Petitions welcomed the remote participation of **Vice-President, Maroš Šefčovič**, at its meeting on 3 December 2020, to follow up on the written procedure conducted in April and May 2020 and discuss the relevant initiatives that are part of the new Commission's Work Programme, and in particular on the delivery of the headline ambition 'A New Push for European Democracy.'

In **2021**, the PETI Committee welcomed the remote participation of **Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič** at its meeting on 3 December 2021. The purpose of this exercise was to follow up on the written procedure conducted in April and May 2021 and discuss the relevant initiatives that are part of the new Commission's Work Programme, to have an overview of the state of play of legislation linked to its fields of competence.

In **2023**, an exchange of views with **Vice-President, Maroš Šefčovič, as part of the structured dialogue**, took part at the PETI meeting on 28 February 2023.

On 22 March 2021, the committee held an exchange of views with **Helena Dalli, Commissioner for Equality**, presenting the "Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030" an ambitious proposal to ensure their full participation in society, on an equal basis with others in the EU and beyond, in line with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which establish equality and non-discrimination as cornerstones of EU policies.

On 15 July 2021, the committee held an exchange of views with **Věra Jourová, Vice President for Values and Transparency**, on the Commission's follow-up to the successful ECIs.

On 30 November 2022, **Helena DALLI, Commissioner for Equality**, intervened in the annual workshop on the rights of persons with disabilities focussing on Disability Assessment, Mutual Recognition and the EU Disability Card, and also during the public hearing organised by the Committee on Petitions in association with the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs and the Committee on Legal Affairs on the "Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation" at the meeting of 1 December 2022.

Questions to the EC

Oral questions	Reference
EU transparency in the development, purchase and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines Committee decision: 16/06/2021 Plenary: 21/10/2021	O-000046/2021
Illegal logging in the EU Committee decision: 15/03/2022 Plenary: 23/06/2022	O-000020/2022
Improving the strategic approach to the enforcement of EU law Committee decision: 24/10/2023 Debate in Plenary: 14/12/2023 (End of procedure)	O-000047/2023
Working conditions of teachers in the European Union Committee decision: 23/01/24 Debate in Plenary: 08/02/2024 (End of procedure)	O-000002/2024

European Ombudsman

The Committee on Petitions is responsible for relations with the European Ombudsman, who investigates complaints about maladministration within the institutions and bodies of the EU. The Committee shares with the European Ombudsman the objective of ensuring the transparency, professionalism and integrity of the EU institutions vis-à-vis EU citizens, with regard to the adoption and implementation of EU laws in areas of vital importance for people's lives, such as fundamental rights, environmental protection, consumer protection and workers' rights. The right to submit a petition is one of ways EU citizens and residents can make themselves heard, alongside the European Citizens' Initiative and the reference of complaints to the Ombudsman.

The Committee on Petitions plays a key **role in the election of the European Ombudsman**, as it is responsible for the organisation of the hearings of the nominees. At the election of the Ombudsman in December 2019, PETI heard the five candidates before the election of the Ombudsman in Plenary.

Based on the Ombudsman's proposals, the **Rules on the procedure for the election of the European Ombudsman were revised in 2023**, taking on board most of the proposed improvements. Under the new rules, the support of a Member to the candidates for the office of Ombudsman will only be valid if included in a standardised form with clear date of signature. If a Member grants signatures in support of more than one nomination, none of those signatures will count. There is also a provision on a clear date when a full list of the Members

giving their support to the nominees will be published. Finally, a new provision, according to which nominees are, upon request, to be issued with a temporary badge granting them access to Parliament's premises, was introduced, in order to allow all candidates, who have been nominated, equal access to EP to meet with Members.

On 4 September 2019, on 3 September 2020, on 14 July 2021, on 8 September 2022 and on 27 June 2023 the Ombudsman presented to the Committee on Petitions **annual reports on the activities of the European Ombudsman**. The Committee prepared five reports on the European Ombudsman reports on its activities in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 respectively. The Committee on Petitions was also regularly informed about Ombudsman's initiatives.

The Committee on Petitions and the Ombudsman give great importance to the rights of persons with disabilities. On 17 March 2020, on 28 October 2020 and on 30 November 2022 the European Ombudsman participated in the Committee on Petitions' **Annual Workshop on the rights of people with disabilities**. During the Annual Workshop on 29 November 2023, the member of the Ombudsman's Strategic Inquiries Team participated in discussion on the EU institutions' efforts to ensure effective communication with and about persons with disabilities. As a member of the EU Framework for the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), the European Ombudsman kept the Committee informed about its activities to promote and monitor the EU administration's implementation of the UN CRPD.

The Committee on Petitions is a member of the **European Network of Ombudsmen**, which includes the European Ombudsman, national and regional ombudsmen and similar bodies in the Member States, the candidate countries and other European Economic Area countries. The aim of the network is to promote the exchange of information about EU law and policy and to share best practices.

Overview of the activities of the Petitions Network (2019–2024)

In 2016, the Committee on Petitions decided to set up a network – the Petitions Network – in which all committees are invited to participate. The purpose of the Petitions Network is to increase awareness and to strengthen cooperation between the committees of the European Parliament on issues raised in petitions.

The Petitions Network meets at least once a year both at Members' and staff level to exchange information concerning ongoing files of interest for the Members of the Network, and to share best practices. As stipulated in the 2016 Petitions Network guidelines, if the petition falls within the competence of other

committees of the EP, the Chair of the Committee on Petitions may forward it to other committees for an opinion or for information. The opinion may be provided in the form of a letter or other written document. The content and the form of the reply are left to the discretion of the committee concerned. Petitions forwarded for information do not require a reply.

Members of the Petitions Network receive information on petitions forwarded by the Committee on Petitions and recommendations made by the coordinators, follow up consideration of petitions, which fall under the competence of their respective committee, in the Committee on Petitions.

Members of the Petitions Network are invited to inform coordinators and rapporteurs of reports and opinions in their respective committees on petitions raising issues relevant to the files on the committee agenda. This may initiate the consideration of such petitions at committee meetings and consider petitions in various activities of the committee (drafting of amendments, organisations of hearings and workshops etc.).

At the beginning of the 2019–2024 term, the Chair of the Committee on Petitions invited the Chairs of the other committees to nominate the Member(s) responsible for petitions in each committee. Once constituted, the Petitions Network met at MEPs level on 29 June 2022 and 28 November 2023 (meetings were not organised during COVID–19 period).

In addition, during the 2019–2024 term, the Committee on Petitions forwarded via the Petitions Network **2 205 petitions for information** to other committees (standing, temporary committees or subcommittees). The committees that received the highest number of petitions are ENVI (527), LIBE (455) and EMPL (159).

In the same term, PETI committee through its Network forwarded **317 petitions for opinion** to 23 committees. The committees that received the highest number of requests are ENVI (49), LIBE (45) and IMCO (41). Regarding their answers, IMCO (38), ENVI (44) and ECON (24), were among the most responsive committees.

Fact finding and outreach activities

Fact-finding visits and ad hoc delegations

Title	Date
Fact-finding visit to Bulgaria in relation to alleged unfair contract terms in mortgage loans and on compliance of landfill sites with EU environmental and waste legislation	24-26 February 2020
Fact-finding visit to Spain in relation to 379 unsolved murders committed by the terrorist group ETA	3-5 November 2021
Fact-finding visit to Mar Menor (Murcia-Spain) in relation to the environmental deterioration of Mar Menor (a saltwater lagoon on the Mediterranean coast located in the in South-Eastern Spain)	23-25 February 2022
Fact-finding visit to Balears (Spain) on cases of child sexual abuse in the Balearic Islands	11-13 April 2022
Fact-finding visit to the Hauts de France region on aspects related to safe and secure parking areas in the EU	23-25 May 2022
Joint delegation of EMPL, LIBE and PETI committee members to New York - the 15th session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD COSP), United Nations	14-16 June 2022
Fact-finding visit to Washington D.C. to raise awareness about the impact of the US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) on EU citizens and hold exchange of views with US Congress and the US Government representatives to find concrete solutions for the problems of the numerous EU citizens and their family members impacted by the extraterritorial application of citizenship-based taxation	18-22 July 2022
Fact-finding visit to Poland on access to education for disabled pupils and on the situation in the primeval forest in Białowieża	19-21 September 2022
Fact-finding visit to Germany on the functioning of the 'Jugendamt' (Youth Welfare Office)	3-4 November, 2022
Fact-finding visit to Romania on the management and the protection of the brown bear population and the illegal logging in Romania	15-18 May 2023

Joint delegation of EMPL, LIBE and PETI committee members to New York - the 16th session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD COSP), United Nations	13-15 June 2023
Fact-finding visit to Donegal (Ireland) on the use of defective mica blocks in construction in Ireland, an alleged non-compliance with the EU Construction Products Regulation (CPR) and the protection of homeowners	30 October - 01 November 2023
Fact-finding visit to Catalonia (Spain) on assessing in situ the language immersion model in Catalonia, its impact on families moving to and residing in the region, as well as on multilingualism and non-discrimination and the principle of the Rule of Law	18-20 December 2023

Public hearings

Title	Date
Climate Change Denial (jointly with ENVI)	21 March 2019
FATCA and its extraterritorial impact on EU citizens	12 November 2019
The revaluation of the wolf population in the EU (jointly with ENVI)	05 December 2019
Union Citizenship: Empowerment, Inclusion, Participation (jointly with AFCO, JURI and LIBE)	29 October 2020
Plastics and waste management in the circular economy (jointly with ENVI)	25 February 2021
Interinstitutional relations in the treatment of petitions : the role of the Commission	26 May 2021
How to treat farmers in a fair and equal manner across the EU (jointly with AGRI)	16 June 2021
How to improve air passenger rights during the COVID-19 crisis? (jointly with TRAN)	14 July 2021
Environmental and social impacts of mining activity in the EU (jointly with ENVI)	2 December 2021

EU Green Prosecutor - a common toolbox for fighting environmental crime (jointly with JURI)	15 March 2022
Cultural and linguistic diversity in the EU	20 April 2022
Social and environmental impacts of renewables energies	15 June 2022
The United Kingdom and Erasmus+ (jointly with CULT)	15 June 2022
Challenges for mental health of new generation across EU	25 October 2022
Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation (jointly with JURI and LIBE)	1 December 2022
The language immersion model in Catalonia, Spain	28 February 2023
The state of implementation of the Habitats Directive (jointly with ENVI)	25 May 2023
Schengen Borders - issues raised by petitioners	18 July 2023
The EP Committee on Petitions and the petitions' systems of third countries	24 October 2023
The responsibilities of fossil fuel companies in the cost of living crisis	14 February 2024

Public hearings on European Citizens Initiatives

Title	Date
Minority Safepack - one million signatures for diversity in Europe (co-organised by LIBE and CULT in association with PETI)	15 October 2020
End the Cage Age (organised by AGRI in association with PETI)	15 April 2021
Save bees and farmers! Towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment (co-organised by AGRI and ENVI in association with PETI)	24 January 2023
"Stop Finning – Stop the Trade" (organised by PECH in association with PETI and ENVI)	27 March 2023
Save cruelty-free cosmetics – Commit to a Europe without animal testing (organised by ENVI in association with PETI and AGRI)	25 May 2023

Fur-Free Europe (organised by AGRI and IMCO in association with PETI)	12 October 2023
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Policy departments, studies and workshops

Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs contributed to PETI Committee Members' work through the provision of expertise in the form of studies, in depth analyses, briefings as well as the organisation of workshops for the PETI Committee Members. Most of the expertise provided was directly linked to the issues raised in petitions sent to the Committee or to fact-finding visits organised by the Committee.

Title	Date
Workshop: Conflicts of Interest	April 2019
Study: Achievements of the Committee on Petitions during the 2014-2019 parliamentary term and challenges for the future	July 2019
Briefing: Commitments made at the hearing of MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ, Vice-President-designate Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight	November 2019
Study: EU Agencies and Conflicts of Interests	January 2020
Study: The Post-2020 European Disability Strategy	July 2020
Study: Obstacles to participation in local and European elections, inside the E.U.	September 2020
Study: Impact of noise pollution on residents of large cities, with special regard to noise pollution from aircrafts	September 2020
Study: The environmental impacts of plastics and micro-plastics use, waste and pollution: EU and national measures	October 2020
Workshop: The Rights of Persons with Disabilities	October 2020
Study: End the cage age: Looking for alternatives	November 2020
Study: Obstacles to the Free Movement of Rainbow Families in the EU	March 2021
Workshop: The LGBTI+ rights in the European Union	March 2021

Study: Inter-institutional relations in the treatment of petitions: the role of the Commission	April 2021
Study: Cooperation of the Committee on Petitions with the Committees of the European Parliament and impact on their work	June 2021
Study: Biometric Recognition and Behavioural Detection. Assessing the ethical aspects of biometric recognition and behavioural detection techniques with a focus on their current and future use in public spaces	August 2021
Briefing: Biometric Recognition and Behavioural Detection. Assessing the ethical aspects of biometric recognition and behavioural detection techniques with a focus on their current and future use in public spaces	September 2021
Study: Strengthening the role and impact of petitions as an instrument of participatory democracy – Lessons learnt from a citizens’ perspective 10 years after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty	October 2021
Annual Workshop: The Rights of persons with disabilities	November 2021
Study: Internal and external dimension of illegal logging: legal issues and solutions	November 2021
Study: The implementation of the 2015 Concluding Observations of the CRPD Committee by the EU	December 2021
Study: Social and environmental impacts of mining activities in the EU	May 2022
In-Depth Analysis: FATCA legislation and its application at international and EU level: an update	September 2022
Study: Monitoring of nitrogen in water in the EU – Legal framework, effects of nitrate, design principles, effectiveness and future developments	September 2022
Briefing: Tracking the EU Commissioners’ commitments – MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ – September 2022	September 2022
Study: Environmental crime affecting EU financial interests, the economic recovery and the EU’s Green Deal objectives	October 2022
Workshop: Transparency and citizen engagement in the fight against corruption	October 2022

Background material: Background material for the PETI Fact-finding visit to Germany on the Jugendamt – 3-4 November 2022	October 2022
Annual Workshop: The rights of persons with disabilities	November 2022
Study: The boundaries of the Commission’s discretionary powers when handling petitions and potential infringements of EU law	November 2022
Study: Disability assessment, mutual recognition and the EU Disability Card – Progress and opportunities	November 2022
Workshop: Transparency of pricing and reimbursement of medicinal products	January 2023
Workshop: Impact of climate change on social security and the most vulnerable groups	March 2023
Study: Cross-Border Legal Recognition of Parenthood in the EU	April 2023
Briefing: The impact of climate change on social security and the most vulnerable groups – Attribution – when is extreme weather influenced by climate change?	April 2023
Study: Linguistic and cultural diversity – Minority and minoritised languages as part of the European linguistic and cultural diversity	June 2023
Study: Compensation for victims of climate change disasters	July 2023
Study: Rules, procedures and practices of the right to petition parliaments – A fundamental right to a process	September 2023
Briefing: Briefing for the official visit of Ms Dolors Montserrat, Chair of the Committee on Petitions, to Cyprus – 19-20 October 2023	Delivered in October 2023
Study: Targeted measures for persons with disabilities to cope with the cost-of-living crisis	November 2023
Study: Homelessness in the European Union	November 2023
Annual Workshop: The Rights of persons with disabilities	November 2023
Study launched: The right to access to documents and the digital era	To be presented in April 2024
Study launched: Implications of the Digital Transformation on Different Social Groups	To be presented in September 2024

Annex

Committee Members

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/peti/home/members>

Files adopted 2019 – 2024

During the past five years, the PETI Committee adopted several reports, such as annual activity reports, reports on the activities of the European Ombudsman, INI reports and short motions for a resolution. It also adopted a large number of opinions on issues of direct relevance with petitions received.

Annual Activity Reports

Title	Reference
Report on the outcome of the Committee on Petitions' deliberations in 2019	2020/2044(INI)
Report on the outcome of the Committee on Petitions' deliberations in 2020	2021/2019(INI)
Report on the outcome of the Committee on Petitions' deliberations in 2021	2022/2024(INI)
Report on the outcome of the Committee on Petitions' deliberations in 2022	2023/2047(INI)

Reports on Ombudsman activities

Title	Reference
Report on the annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman in 2018	2019/2134(INI)
Report on the annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman in 2019	2020/2125(INI)
Report on the annual report of the activities of the European Ombudsman in 2020	2021/2167(INI)
Report on the annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman in 2021	2022/2141(INI)

Report on the annual report on the activities of the European Ombudsman in 2022	2023/2120(INI)
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Other INI Reports

Title	Reference
Protection of persons with disabilities through petitions: lessons learnt	2020/2209(INI)
Engaging with citizens: the right to petition, the right to refer to the European Ombudsman and the European Citizens' Initiative	2020/2275(INI)
EU Citizenship Report 2020: empowering citizens and protecting their rights	2021/2099(INI)

Opinions

Title	Reference
Opinion for EMPL on the implementation of Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation in light of the UNCRRPD	2020/2086(INI)
Opinion on the Council Decision on the conclusion of the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community	2018/0427(NLE)
Opinion for JURI on Monitoring the application of European Union law 2017, 2018 and 2019	2019/2132(INI)
Opinion for AFET on the Turkey - Annual progress report 2019 and 2020	2019/2176(INI)
Opinion for LIBE on the Situation of fundamental rights in the European Union - annual report for the years 2018-2019	2019/2199(INI)
Opinion for EMPL on Reducing inequalities with a special focus on in-work poverty	2019/2188(INI)
Opinion for AFCO on Citizens' dialogues and Citizens' participation in the EU decision-making	2020/2201(INI)

Opinion for CULT on the Implementation of inclusion measures within Erasmus+ 2014-2020	2021/2009(INI)
Opinion for JURI on the Protection of the rights of the child in civil, administrative and family law proceedings	2021/2060(INI)
Opinion for AFCO on Strengthening transparency and integrity in the EU institutions by setting up an independent EU ethics body	2020/2133(INI)
Opinion for LIBE on the Commission's 2020 Rule of law report - COM(2020)0580	2021/2025(INI)
Opinion for AFCO on the Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of the environment through criminal law and replacing Directive 2008/99/EC	COM(2021)0851 – C9 0466/2021 – 2021/0422(COD)
Opinion for LIBE on the Commission's 2021 Rule of Law report	2021/2180(INI)
Opinion for AFCO on the Implementation report on the Agreement on the withdrawal of the UK from the EU	2020/2202(INI)
Opinion for AFET and INTA on the Recommendations on the negotiations for a new partnership with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2020/2023(INI)
Opinion for LIBE Towards equal rights for persons with disabilities	2022/2026(INI)
Opinion for LIBE on the Situation of fundamental rights in the European Union – annual report for the years 2020-2021	2021/2186(INI)
Opinion for JURI on Better regulation: joining forces to make better laws	2021/2166(INI)
Opinion on Monitoring the application of European Union Law in 2020, 2021 and 2022	2023/2125(INI)
Opinion on the EMPL draft report on the Proposal for a Directive establishing the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card for persons with disabilities	COM(2023)0512 – C9-0328/2023 – (2023/0311(COD))

Short Motions for Resolution

Title	Reference
Short Motion for a Resolution on Additional funding for biomedical research on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis	2020/2580(RSP)
Short motion for a Resolution on International and domestic parental abduction of EU children in Japan	2020/2621(RSP)
Short motion for a Resolution on tackling homelessness rates in the European Union	2020/2802(RSP)
Short motion for a resolution on the Schengen system and measures taken during the COVID-19 crisis	2020/2801(RSP)
Short motion for a resolution on the Rights of persons with intellectual disabilities in the COVID-19 crisis	2020/2680(RSP)
Short motion for a Resolution on Chemical residues in the Baltic Sea based on petitions 1328/2019 and 0406/2020	2021/2567(RSP)
Short motion for a Resolution on LGBTI+ rights in the EU	2021/2679(RSP)
Short motion for a resolution on the safety of truck parking lots in the EU	2021/2918(RSP)
Short motion for a resolution on the Measures against water pollution caused by nitrates, including improvements in the different nitrate measuring systems in Member States	2021/3003(RSP)
Short motion for a resolution on the Improving EU regulation on wild and exotic animals to be kept as pets in the European Union through an EU positive list	2022/2809(RSP)
Short motion for a resolution on the Digital divide: the social differences created by digitalisation	2022/2810(RSP)
Short motion for a resolution on the creation of a European Capital of Local Trade	2022/2874(RSP)
Short motion for a Resolution on Harmonising the rights of autistic persons	2023/2728(RSP)
Short motion for a resolution on the accession to the Schengen area	2023/2668(RSP)
Short motion for a Resolution on Standardised dimensions for carry-on luggage	2023/2774(RSP)

Short motion for a resolution on the Handling heavy goods vehicles at border crossing point	2024/2540(RSP)
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Resolutions (Rule 136)

Title	Reference
Resolution further to Question for Oral Answer B9-0033/2021 on EU transparency in the development, purchase and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines	2021/2678(RSP)
Resolution further to Question for Oral Answer B9-0016/2022 on Illegal logging in the EU	2022/2523(RSP)

Relevant websites

[Guidelines of the Committee on Petitions](#)

[PETI website](#)

[Petitions Web Portal](#)

The Petitions Web Portal was launched at the end of 2014 and allows petitions to be submitted electronically. Today, over 80% of petitions sent to the European Parliament's Committee on Petitions are submitted through the Portal.

To make it quicker and easier for anyone to submit a petition, the platform was overhauled and a new version was launched in 2023. New features were added, notably four 'Quick Start Guides' explaining how to submit, track and support a petition. The layout has been made adaptable to any device and screen size, and a new search engine allows users to find better results faster. In addition, the homepage now features 'spotlight themes'. The PETI Portal 2.0 was completed with the addition of an AI chatbot, available in five languages (English, French, German, Italian and Spanish) which account for over 98% of visits.

PETI Annual Reports on the outcome of its deliberations for [2019](#), [2020](#), [2021](#) and [2022](#)

[Legislative Observatory](#)

[Presentations from the public hearings](#)

[Studies](#)

[European Commission](#)

[European Ombudsman](#)

[EPRS - European Parliamentary Research Service](#)

[Think Tank](#)