Committee on Petitions. Annual report 1995-1996

1996/2007(INI) - 03/06/1996

A satisfactory outcome for a number of German petitioners who complained about unfair tax treatments of earnings from abroad and for an Irish petitioner who won the right to work as apharmacist in Northern Ireland after petitioning Parliament are among notable successes recorded by the Petitions Committee during the parliamentary year up to the end of March 1996. The committee's annual report, presented by Antoni GUTIERREZ DIAZ (E, EUL/NGL) also reveals a success for a British petitioner, living in Greece, who complained of discrimination in respect of importing a tax-free vehicle specifically designed for a person with disability and for a Spanish petitioner who won a review of a German pension. In the last twelve months the committee received 1,169 petitions, down slightly from the peak of 1,352 the previous year. German citizens complained the most with 308 petitions followed by Britons with 181 and by Italians who submitted 166 petitions. Many petitioners were supported by large numbers of signatories with 10 bearing 10,000 signatures or more, including one on the 1988 Lockerbie air disaster. As in previous years, the petitions revealed serious shortcomings in the workings of the internal market, particularly with regard to free movement and recognition of qualifications. Petitions concerning pensions and other social security matters were the most frequent together with complaints of breaches in the application of EU environmental legislation. Mr GUTIERREZ DIAZ's report comments that there is striking evidence of continuing failure to comply with Directive 85/337 requiring an environmental impact assessment of major development projects, with over half of all environmental petitions raising this issue. Mr GUTIERREZ DIAZ's motion for a resolution, which was unanimously approved by the committee, calls on the Commission to monitor very closely the member states' application of Community law.