Petitions Committee. 2001-2002 annual report

2002/2019(INI) - 10/07/2002

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Ioannis KOUKIADIS (PES, GR) reviewing the committee's work in the parliamentary year 2001-2002. It stressed that petitions forwarded by individuals to the Petitions Committee enabled the EU to assess the way in which Community law was being implemented at national and European level. Petitions also gave a clear idea of how far individual citizens felt that Europe, from which they often felt far removed and uninvolved, was meeting their expectations. The committee called on the European Convention to provide for the right of petition to be consolidated and for the introduction of a uniform code of good administrative behaviour. It also wanted a change to the Treaties to enable members of the public to initiate reform of Community legislation by means of petitions addressed to the European Parliament. The committee also called for various forms of cooperation with national parliaments to be considered and encouraged, especially with national petitions committees (particularly at the stage when petitions are first submitted). In addition, it wanted consideration to be given to ways of tackling foot-dragging by national authorities in their dealings with the EP Petitions Committee. The report was critical of the Council's lack of enthusiasm for collaboration with the Petitions Committee and called on the Council and the Commission to review the 1989 Interinstitutional Agreement in order to define a clear, coherent and binding framework for essential cooperation with Parliament in this area. Other recommendations included: - a call for increased cooperation with the Ombudsman, if necessary through changes to the Rules of Procedure and the Ombudsman's Statute; - the introduction of interim protective measures suspending action taken by national or local authorities which might violate Community regulations and thereby cause irretrievable harm to the natural environment or cultural assets; - a call for the findings of the Petitions Committee to be given wide publicity on an annual basis through a special publication; - holding a special plenary sitting of the EP to present the reports drawn up by the Petitions Committee, the Ombudsman and the Legal Affairs Committee on the implementation of Community law, attended where appropriate by representatives of the national parliaments, the highest-ranking judicial authorities and Community bodies.