Deliberations of the Committee of petitions in 2003 and 2004

2004/2090(INI) - 17/01/2005

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Rainer WIELAND (EPP-ED , DE) on the work of the Petitions Committee 2003-2004. The report reaffirmed that this committee was "one of the most important bodies within the European Parliament for the exercise of parliamentary scrutiny over the EU institutions as well as national, regional, local and social authorities, thereby improving transparency and awareness of the actions of the European Union as they relate to the European citizen".

The committee underlined the constructive role played by the Commission in the consideration of petitions, but it felt that cooperation with the Council needed to be improved. MEPs suggested that the Council set a 3-month deadline for all Member States' government departments and agencies to make a detailed response to the Petitions Committee and the petitioner(s), and that a similar deadline should be set for the Commission to respond. They also wanted the Commission to indicate in its annual report on the application of Community law those cases where infringement procedures had been initiated as a result of Parliament's involvement following the submission of petitions by European citizens.

Finally, the report called for measures to ensure that citizens of the new Member States become more aware of their rights to petition Parliament under Article 194 of the EC Treaty on matters coming within the EU's fields of activity which concern them directly, and to submit complaints to the Ombudsman under Article 195 of the EC Treaty when there are allegations of maladministration within the EU institutions or bodies. And those national parliaments which had not yet done so were urged to develop national committees on petitions to work where necessary with the EP Petitions Committee.