

**Question for oral answer O-000106/2018  
to the Commission**

Rule 128

**Cecilia Wikström**

on behalf of the Committee on Petitions

Subject: Role of the German Youth Welfare Office (*Jugendamt*) in cross-border family disputes

The Committee on Petitions has received a large number of petitions on the role of the German Youth Welfare Office (*Jugendamt*) denouncing alleged systematic discrimination against non-German parents in cross-border family disputes involving children, including discrimination related to parental responsibility and child custody. According to the petitioners, the competent German authorities would not recognise or enforce decisions and judgements taken by the judicial authorities of Member States in family disputes with cross-border implications, and they would not admit a place outside Germany for the normal residence of the child, which may jeopardise the effective protection of the best interests of the child.

The European Parliament has been very active on the matter with the organisation of two fact-finding visits, the creation of a specific working group within the Committee on Petitions, and the adoption of a resolution.

Could the Commission provide detailed and updated information on the follow-up to requests by the Committee on Petitions related to the problems raised in petitions on the role of the *Jugendamt* and the German family law system in cross-border family disputes, in order to protect the best interests of the child?

What measures will the Commission adopt to ensure accurate checks on the non-discriminatory nature of procedures and practices used in the German family law system, including by the *Jugendamt*, in the framework of family disputes having cross-border implications, in order to protect the best interests of the child and other related rights?

What measures has the Commission taken to provide more training courses and international exchanges for officials employed in the social services, in order to raise awareness of the functioning of their counterparts in various Member States and to overcome cultural differences on the concept of the best interests of the child?

Tabled: 27.9.2018

Forwarded: 1.10.2018

Deadline for reply: 8.10.2018