



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on Petitions

2014/2253(INI)

27.2.2015

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Petitions

for the Committee on Legal Affairs

on the 30th and 31st Annual Reports on monitoring the application of EU Law
(2012 - 2013)
(2014/2253(INI))

Rapporteur: Rosa Estaràs Ferragut

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Petitions calls on the Committee on Legal Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that the right to petition the European Parliament is one of the building blocks of European citizenship, as laid down in Article 44 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and Article 227 of The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU); points out that this right provides the necessary tools for increasing public participation in the European Union's decision-making process; underlines, in the light of the above, the Committee on Petitions' crucial role as the effective juncture between EU citizens, Parliament and the Commission;
2. Welcomes the fact that the Commission is attaching ever more importance to petitions as a source of information on citizens' complaints and potential infringements of EU law in its actual implementation, as evidenced by the fact that the two annual reports paid particular attention to petitions; notes that this has been accompanied by a corresponding increase in the number of petitions that were forwarded by the Committee on Petitions to the Commission with requests for information;
3. Points out that petitions submitted by EU citizens refer to violations of EU law, particularly in the fields of fundamental rights and the environment; considers that petitions give evidence of the fact that there are still frequent and widespread instances of incomplete transposition or misapplication of EU law;
4. Welcomes the lower number of directives to be transposed in 2013 (74) in comparison with the 2011 figure (131); highlights, nevertheless, the higher number of directives to be transposed in comparison with the 2012 figure (56);
5. Notes that a total of 731 infringement cases were closed because the Member State in question had demonstrated its compliance with EU law; points out that the Court of Justice delivered 52 judgments under Article 258 TFEU in 2013, of which 31 (59.6 %) were in favour of the Commission;
6. Notes the number of infringement cases closed in 2013 before reaching the Court of Justice (200 out of 484); considers it essential, therefore, to continue to carefully monitor Member State actions, taking into consideration the fact that some of the petitions refer to problems that persist even after the matter has been closed;
7. Notes that the EU Pilot procedure is fully operational in all Member States and has produced impressive results so far, in particular with regard to the gathering of information and the improvement of the specific situation causing concern to citizens, as indicated by the reduced number of infringement procedures;
8. Welcomes the Commission services' engagement in strengthening the exchange of information with the Committee on Petitions and wishes to reiterate its requests for:
 - (a) improved communication between the two parties, in particular with regard to the initiation and progress of infringement procedures by the Commission, including the EU

Pilot procedure,

(b) efforts to be made to give information to the Committee on Petitions within a reasonable timeframe, allowing the committee to respond to citizens' requests more effectively,

(c) the Commission to take into account the reports of the Committee on Petitions, and particularly the findings and recommendations contained therein, when drawing up its communications;

9. Welcomes the increasing use by the Commission of implementation plans for new pieces of EU legislation addressed to the Member States, which reduce the risks to timely and correct implementation and, in turn, have an impact on the number of relevant petitions submitted.