

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

Programme

PUBLIC HEARING

Transparency and freedom of information

21 June 2016 - Room JAN 6Q2 - 9:00-12:30

Introduction by Cecilia Wikström, Chair of the Committee on Petitions (5min)

I. The EU legal framework on transparency and freedom of information: success and limits

- Openness, Transparency and the Right to Access to documents in the EU
(*commissioned by Poldep C - with briefing paper available*) (15 min)

Prof. Deirdre Curtin, Professor of European Law at the European University Institute of Florence and at the University of Amsterdam

(<http://www.eui.eu/DepartmentsAndCentres/Law/People/Professors/Curtin.aspx>)

and

Prof. Päivi Leino-Sandberg Adjunct Professor of EU Law, Academy of Finland Research Fellow, University of Helsinki; Visiting fellow, Law department, European University Institute (<http://www.helsinki.fi/eci/Staff/Leino-Sandberg.html>)

- The EU and the Aarhus Convention: access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters (*commissioned by Poldep C - with briefing paper available*) (10 min)

Prof. Jonas Ebbesson, Chair of the Compliance Committee of the Aarhus Convention (UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters); Director of the Stockholm Environmental Law and Policy Centre

- The balance between transparency and confidentiality (*10 min*)

Dr. Vigjilenca Abazi , postdoctoral Researcher and Research Coordinator at the Maastricht Centre for European Law, Faculty of Law, Maastricht University

⇒ Q&A: 20-30 min

II. The freedom of information in practice

- The action of the Ombudsman

Fergal O'Regan, Head of the European Ombudsman's Inquiry Coordination Unit (*10 min*)

- **The civil society action**

Helen Darbshire, Executive Director of Access Info Europe (responsible for the online platform AsktheEU.org) (*10 min*)

Anaïs Berthier from Client Earth (petitioner/ petition n°134/2012) (*10 min*)

- **The position of the EU institutions**

Mariëtta Schuerman, Legal advisor at the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands (*10 min*)

⇒ Q&A: 20-30 min

Conclusions by Cecilia Wikström, Chair of the Committee on Petitions (*5min*)