

Newsletter March 2024



The train collision at Tempí, Greece

The Committee has discussed Petition No 0024/2024 by Maria Karystianou, on behalf of the 'Group of persons affected by the train accident at Tempí', on the train collision of a passenger train with a freight train running between Athens and Thessaloniki on 28/02/2023. The collision caused the death of 57 people, making it the deadliest railway accident ever recorded in Greece.

The petitioner pointed out to the inadequate maintenance and lack of modern railway safety systems in Greece, due to alleged financial crimes investigated by the European Public Prosecutor's Office. The petitioner denounced an alleged cover-up regarding the investigation of the incident and the collection of evidence by national authorities. Finally, the petitioner called on the Parliament to uphold the rule of law in Greece, in order to ensure the punishment of those responsible. The representative of the Commission has stated that Greece, despite the challenges related to the efficiency of justice, has made considerable progress against corruption. The Committee has decided to keep the petition open, to ask the Commission for a written reply and to forward the petition to the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) for an opinion.

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Petitions in national sign languages

The Committee has discussed [Petition No 1056/2016](#) by Mark Wheatley (British) on behalf of European Union of the Deaf, requesting the European Parliament allow for the tabling of petitions in national sign languages used in the EU. The petitioner stated that currently petitions can be tabled to the European Parliament in all EU official languages. In the petitioner's view, deaf sign languages users should also be given the possibility of tabling petitions in sign languages.



The petitioner highlighted that deaf sign languages users should also have the right to communicate in their own sign language, on an equal basis with other petitioners. Members agreed that the use of the sign language should be promoted, adding that the management of petitions is a matter which is for the European Parliament itself to organise. The Committee has decided to keep the petition open and to mandate the European Parliament services to continue exploring viable solutions.



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Stelvio Natural Park in Italy

PETI Members debated [Petition No 1171/2023](#) by Veronica Dini (Italian) on behalf of 'Comitato Salviamo il lago bianco', 'Comitato Civico Ambiente di Merate' and 'Comitato Brianzolo di "Attuare la Costituzione"', signed by two other persons, on the approval and implementation of a project for the production of artificial snow in the Stelvio Natural Park in Italy.

The petitioner called into question the validity of the environmental impact assessment that was carried out for the project, allegedly based on outdated and insufficient research, in breach of Directive 92/43/EC (The Habitats Directive) and of EU Court of Justice case-law. The petitioner pointed out the negative impact of project-related works on the area and on the conservation of the habitat, calling on the EU to help to preserve the Stelvio Natural Park. The Commission stated that it is still examining the material provided by the petitioner and reassured that the information received will be taken into account in the monitoring of Italy's implementation of the Habitats Directive. The Committee decided to keep the petition open and ask the Commission for a written reply.

Labour rights of police officers in the EU

The Committee debated Petition No 1407/2023 by David Gutierrez Prieto (Spanish), on behalf of "Confederación Española de Policía", on labour rights of police officers in the EU. The petitioner stated that the number of attacks against police officers during the exercise of their duties has been increasing significantly in the last years. He called for police forces in the European Union to be considered a risk profession in the Member States



and for a minimum and homogeneous legal protection that effectively defends their fundamental and labour rights. The petitioner also asked to adopt EU legislation on penalties for attacks against police officers. The Commission informed that the police forces are covered by the existing EU directives relating to risks at work. Members decided to keep the petition open, ask the Commission for a comparative study on the security forces profession in the EU to assess if they are considered a risk profession, provide data on the attacks against police officers in the EU and forward the petition to the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) for information.

Texts adopted

- ▶ **Short Motion for Resolution on The handling of heavy goods vehicles at border crossing points**
- ▶ [Mission Report following the fact-finding visit to Ireland](#) 30 October - 1 November 2023
- ▶ [Mission Report following the fact-finding visit to Catalonia \(Spain\)](#) 18 - 20 December 2023

Next PETI meeting ▶ 8 and 9 April 2024, Room SPINELLI 1G3, Brussels

See [agenda](#), [documents](#) and [live broadcast](#)

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