

Newsletter July 2018



Joint AFCO/PETI meeting - Report on the Ombudsman's strategic inquiry on the transparency of legislative discussions in the Council

AFCO and PETI held a joint meeting on 11 July as part of the preparatory work on a joint report on the Ombudsman's strategic inquiry OI/2/2017 on the transparency of legislative discussions in the preparatory bodies of the Council of the EU.

The two committees welcomed the European Ombudsman, Mrs Emily O'Reilly, as well as the Council, presented by Mr. Heinz Faßmann (Council

Presidency, Minister for Education, Science and Research of Austria). Members also heard comments from the Rapporteurs, Mrs Yana Toom (PETI) and Mr Jo Leinen (AFCO).

In her inquiry, the Ombudsman found that the Council's current practices constitute maladministration. In particular, she criticized the Council's failure to systematically identify and record individual Member States' positions in preparatory bodies, and the widespread practice of restricting access to legislative documents while the decision-making process is ongoing (the so-called 'LIMITE' marking). The presentation of the AFCO-PETI joint report is scheduled for 24 September 2018.

Petitions on non-recognition of LGBT families

The Committee examined a petition concerning the non-recognition of LGBT families in the EU. The petitioner, present at the meeting, denounced the fact that LGBT families do not have the same family and naturalisation rights across the Union and stressed the especially vulnerable situation of children of LGBT couples.



According to the European Commission, substantive matters of family law fall within the competence of Member States. Following the discussion, the PETI Committee took the decision to keep the petition open, ask the Commission for a written update, forward to the EP Intergroup on LGBT rights for information, and to seek an opinion from the LIBE and JURI committees. The Committee also decided to send letters to the Council Presidency and the relevant national authorities.

Members stressed Parliament's opposition to all forms of discrimination and recalled various EP initiatives on the matter of LGBT rights. Members also referred to the new momentum following the CJEU judgment of 5 June 2018 on freedom of movement of same sex spouses.

Upcoming PETI activities in September:

- Fact-finding mission to Sevilla and Madrid, Spain (Sept 2018)

Petitions on animal testing and research

The Committee heard two petitioners on the subject of animal welfare. One petition, brought on behalf of PETA, calls on the EU institutions to invest in more progressive research to promote alternatives to animal testing for the proper implementation of the REACH Regulation, which requires animal tests to be carried out only as a last resort. The petitioner claimed that this requirement is routinely ignored or misapplied by certain industries.



The Committee decided to keep the petition open, send it to the EP Intergroup on Animal Welfare for information, and to seek an opinion from the ENVI Committee on the matter.



Petition on dangerous medical waste

The Committee discussed a petition from Romania on allegations of unlawful disposal of medical waste in the vicinity of the Chiajna-Rudeni landfill in Bucharest.

The petition reported that a medical waste management company has been disposing truck-loads of

medical waste illegally instead of following proper hazardous waste disposal procedures. The petitioner claims this has resulted in water pollution and violation of air emissions standards, as well as other risks to public health. He also alleges the incidence of local corruption. Although the Commission stated that the documentation provided by the competent Romanian authorities indicated investigations and remedial measures had been taken, the petitioner maintained that the problem was ongoing.

The Committee decided to keep the petition open and to send a letter to the Romanian authorities seeking their opinion on the issues raised by the petitioner.

Next PETI meeting: - 03 and 24 September 2018

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

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