

Wednesday 6 May 2009

The petitions process (amendment of Title VIII of the Rules of Procedure)

P6_TA(2009)0353

European Parliament decision of 6 May 2009 on revision of the Rules of Procedure with regard to the petitions process (2006/2209(REG))

(2010/C 212 E/25)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the letter from its President of 20 July 2006,
- having regard to Rules 201 and 202 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs and the opinion of the Committee on Petitions (A6-0027/2009),

1. Decides to amend its Rules of Procedure as shown below;
2. Points out that the amendments will enter into force on the first day of the next part-session, with the exception of the amendment concerning Rule 193a (new), which will enter into force on the first day after the entry into force of the relevant Treaty provision;
3. Instructs its President to forward this decision to the Council and the Commission, for information.

PRESENT TEXT

AMENDMENT

Amendment 1

Parliament's Rules of Procedure Rule 191 – paragraph 2 a (new)

2a. Where a petition is signed by several natural or legal persons, the signatories shall designate a representative and deputy representatives who shall be regarded as the petitioners for the purposes of this Title.

If no such representatives have been designated the first signatory or another appropriate person shall be regarded as the petitioner.

Amendment 2

Parliament's Rules of Procedure Rule 191 – paragraph 2 b (new)

2b. Each petitioner may at any time withdraw support for the petition.

After withdrawal of support by all the petitioners the petition shall become null and void.

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PRESENT TEXT

AMENDMENT

Amendment 3**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 191 – paragraph 3**

3. Petitions must be written in **one of the** official **languages** of the European Union.

Petitions written in any other language will be considered only *where* the petitioner has attached a translation **or summary drawn up** in an official language **of the European Union**. **The translation or summary shall form the basis of Parliament's work**. Parliament's correspondence with the petitioner shall employ the official language in which the translation **or summary** is drawn up.

3. Petitions must be written in **an** official **language** of the European Union.

Petitions written in any other language will be considered only *if* the petitioner has attached a translation in an official language. Parliament's correspondence with the petitioner shall employ the official language in which the translation is drawn up.

The Bureau may decide that petitions and correspondence with petitioners may be drafted in other languages used in a Member State.

Amendment 4**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 191 – paragraph 5**

5. Petitions entered in the register shall be forwarded by the President to the committee responsible, which shall first **ascertain whether the petitions registered fall within the sphere of activities of the European Union**.

5. Petitions entered in the register shall be forwarded by the President to the committee responsible, which shall first **establish the admissibility or otherwise of the petition in accordance with Article 194 of the EC Treaty**.

If the committee responsible fails to reach a consensus on the admissibility of the petition, it shall be declared admissible at the request of at least one quarter of the members of the committee.

Amendment 5**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 191 – paragraph 6**

6. Petitions declared inadmissible by the committee shall be filed; the petitioner shall be informed of the decision and the reasons *therefor*.

6. Petitions declared inadmissible by the committee shall be filed; the petitioner shall be informed of the decision and the reasons *for it*. **Where possible, alternative means of redress may be recommended.**

Amendment 6**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 191 – paragraph 7**

7. *In such cases the committee may suggest to the petitioner that he contact the competent authority of the Member State concerned or of the European Union.*

deleted

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PRESENT TEXT

AMENDMENT

Amendment 7**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 191 – paragraph 8**

8. *Unless the petitioner asks for it to be treated in confidence, it shall be entered in a public register.*

8. *Petitions, once registered, shall as a general rule become public documents, and the name of the petitioner and the contents of the petition may be published by Parliament for reasons of transparency.*

Amendment 8**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 191 – paragraph 8 a (new)**

8a. *Notwithstanding the provisions contained in paragraph 8, the petitioner may request that his or her name be withheld in order to protect his or her privacy, in which case Parliament must comply with the request.*

Where the petitioner's complaint cannot be investigated for reasons of anonymity, the petitioner shall be consulted as to the further steps to be taken.

Amendment 9**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 191 – paragraph 8 b (new)**

8b. *The petitioner may request that his or her petition be treated confidentially, in which case suitable precautions shall be taken by Parliament to ensure that the contents are not made public. The petitioner shall be told under which precise conditions this provision is to apply.*

Amendment 10**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 192 – paragraph -1 (new)**

-1. *Admissible petitions shall be considered by the committee responsible in the course of its normal activity, either through discussion at a regular meeting or by written procedure. Petitioners may be invited to participate in meetings of the committee if their petition is to be the subject of discussion, or they may request to be present. The right to speak shall be granted to petitioners at the discretion of the Chair.*

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PRESENT TEXT

AMENDMENT

Amendment 11
Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 192 – paragraph 1

1. The committee *responsible* may decide to draw up a report *or otherwise express its opinion on petitions it has declared admissible*.

The committee may , *particularly in the case of petitions which seek changes in existing law*, request opinions from other committees pursuant to Rule 46.

1. The committee may, *with regard to an admissible petition*, decide to draw up *an own-initiative* report *in accordance with Rule 45(1) or to submit a short motion for a resolution to Parliament, provided that there is no objection by the Conference of Presidents. Such motions for resolutions shall be placed on the draft agenda of the part-session held no later than eight weeks after their adoption in committee. They shall be put to a single vote and shall also be without debate unless the Conference of Presidents exceptionally decides to apply Rule 131a.*

The committee may request opinions from other committees *that have specific responsibility for the issue under consideration in accordance with Rule 46 and Annex VI.*

Amendment 12
Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 192 – paragraph 2

2. An electronic register shall be set up in which citizens may lend their support to the petitioner, appending their own electronic signature to petitions which have been declared admissible and entered in the register.

2. An electronic register shall be set up in which citizens may lend *or withdraw* their support to the petitioner, appending their own electronic signature to petitions which have been declared admissible and entered in the register.

Amendment 13
Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 192 – paragraph 3

3. When *considering* petitions *or* establishing facts, the committee may organise *hearings of petitioners or general hearings or dispatch members to establish the facts of the situation in situ*.

3. When *investigating* petitions, establishing facts *or seeking solutions* the committee may organise *fact-finding visits to the Member State or region concerned by the petition*.

Reports on the visits shall be drafted by their participants. They shall be forwarded to the President after approval by the committee.

Amendment 14
Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 192 – paragraph 4

4. *With a view to preparing its opinions*, the committee may request the Commission *to submit documents, to supply information and to grant it access to its facilities*.

4. The committee may request *assistance from* the Commission *particularly in the form of information on the application of, or compliance with, Community law and information or documents relevant to the petition. Representatives of the Commission shall be invited to attend meetings of the committee.*

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PRESENT TEXT

AMENDMENT

Amendment 15

**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 192 – paragraph 5**

5. The committee *shall, where necessary, submit motions for resolutions to Parliament on petitions which it has considered.*

5. The committee *may ask the President to forward its opinion or recommendation to the Commission, the Council or the Member State authority concerned for action or response.*

The committee may also request that its opinions be forwarded by the President to the Commission or the Council.

Amendment 16

**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 192 – paragraph 7**

7. The *President shall inform petitioners of the decisions taken and the reasons therefor.*

7. The *petitioner shall be informed of the decision taken by the committee and the reasons for that decision.*

When consideration of an admissible petition has been concluded, it shall be declared closed and the petitioner informed.

Amendment 17

**Parliament's Rules of Procedure
Rule 193 a (new)**

Rule 193 a

Citizens' initiative

When Parliament is informed that the Commission has been invited to submit a proposal for a legal act under Article 11(4) of the EU Treaty, the Committee on Petitions shall ascertain whether this is likely to affect its work and, if need be, shall inform those petitioners who have addressed a petition on related subjects.