



*Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
Committee on Petitions*

DRAFT PROGRAMME

Hearing

“Revaluation of the wolf population in the EU”

5 December 2019, 10:30 to 13:00

European Parliament, Brussels

**Paul Henri Spaak building
Room 3C50**

Background

For decades, the wolf was regarded as strongly endangered in Europe. Its population is now recovering in many areas of the continent due, among other things, to favourable legislation and changes in the habitat, although some small populations remain critically endangered. According to current reports, the population has spread very strongly in recent years, especially in Central Europe (Carpathian population and the Dinaric-Balkan population) and this trend will continue. Despite their long-term protection in some countries and their functional role as ecosystem keystone species, wolves are still considered to be 'conflict species', a view which has led to the reappearance and intensification of a wide range of conflicts, especially vis-a-vis of the economically costly depredation on livestock and pets.

The joint Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and Petitions (ENVI- PETI) Committees public hearing, with the association of the Agriculture Committee, will focus on the wolf population within the EU. The basic objective is to have a better understanding on the status of wolf populations in EU and furthermore, to consider possible changes to the current management of the wolf population in Europe. AGRI Committee will support the hearing with their expertise, as associated.

Panel 1

The first panel on “**Analysis of the wolf population in the EU**” should provide the most updated information concerning the size and distribution of the wolf population in the EU, the role of wolf on its habitat and the scientific assessment of the vitality of the specie. The panel will also provide some first-hand experience on the behavioural aspects of the wolf population returned to the French Alps and the social and cultural aspect related to it.

Panel 2

The second panel will focus on the topic “**Legal framework and international obligations**”. Therefore, the debate should tackle how the wolf legal protection is granted through the following legal instruments: The Convention on the Conservation of the European Wildlife and Natural Habitats 19.IX.1979 (The Bern Convention), the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EC, and the national laws of the EU Members States. This panel could also discuss technical considerations, implications and recommendations on the interpretation of the conditions for derogations for strictly protected species under the Habitats Directive and European Conventions.

Panel 3

The **impact of the wolves' population on the environment and rural communities** will be this panel's key issue. Much of these impacts, which vary widely between Member states, depend on the husbandry systems, whether farm animals are grazing freely in forest and mountain habitats without fencing, shepherds or dogs to protect them or if they are removed from natural habitats and kept on fields or other fenced pastures close to farms.

The questions arises which protective measures can be adopted and at what costs that safeguard traditional rural communities way of life; how to formulate a coordinated livestock strategy comprising all relevant agricultural and environmental interests; how to ensure a maximum degree of legitimacy while being realistic with respect to the various expectations; which institutional, cross-sector and international coordination is necessary while maintaining enough flexibility to allow for specific local conditions; and finally, which support mechanisms (EAFRD, LIFE) are available on EU level;

Order of business

WELCOME

- 10.30 – 10.40 **Ms Anja Hazekamp**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
Ms Tatjana Ždanoka, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Petitions
- 10.40 – 10.45 **Petition 0984/2016** by Samuel Martin Sosa (Spanish), on behalf of “Ecologistas en Acción”, on wolves south of the River Duero
- 10.45 – 10.50 **Petition 0426/2018** by Stanislav Bergant (Slovenian), on behalf of Organic Farmers Association and 50 other NGOs, on wild game and carnivores management in the EU

FIRST PANEL - Analysis of the wolf population in the EU

(ENVI Chair)

10.50 – 11.30 (40 minutes)

- 10.50 – 10.55 **Ms Anja Hazekamp**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
- 10:55 – 11:05 **Prof. Luigi Boitani**, Chair of the IUCN/SSC Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe
- 11.05 – 11.15 **Dr. Geneviève Carbone**, Researcher in ethnozoology and ethology
- 11.15 – 11.30 Q&A session

SECOND PANEL - Legal framework and international obligations

(PETI Chair)

11:30 – 12:10 (40 minutes)

- 11.30 – 11.35 **Ms Tatjana Ždanoka**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Petitions
- 11.35 – 11.45 **Prof Arie Trouwborst**, Tilburg University, Member of the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe
- 11.45 – 11.55 **Prof. Ilpo Kojola**, Research Professor, Natural Resources Institute Finland
- 11.55 – 12.10 Q&A session

THIRD PANEL - Impacts on the environment and rural communities

(AGRI Chair)

12:10 – 12:50 (40 minutes)

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| 12.10 – 12.15 | Mr Nobert Lins , Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development |
| 12.15 – 12.25 | Dr. John Linnell , Senior Scientist, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research |
| 12.25 – 12.35 | Ms Michèle Boudoin , President COPA-COGECA Sheepmeat working party |
| 12.35 – 12.50 | Q&A session |

CONCLUDING REMARKS

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| 12.50 – 13:00 | Ms, Anja Hazekamp , Vice-Chair of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
Ms Tatjana Ždanoka , Vice-Chair of the Committee on Petitions |
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