

SLAPP

strategic lawsuit against public participation

The definition

in our special dossier

SLAPPs are vexatious lawsuits and legal cases aimed at silencing critics and intimidating journalists, human rights defenders or activists; plaintiffs are usually powerful individuals, companies and politicians, who abuse legal procedures in order to stop, delay or prevent journalistic investigations, public scrutiny and criticism



139 matches in the database of the Resource Centre:
73 news and statements, 36 reports, 14 legal resources,
5 support centres, 4 academic sources, 2 books, 2 manuals, 2 videos

A story of shared efforts and prompt responses

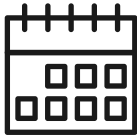
Months of advocacy, research, events, meetings, lobbying; dozens of statements and letters to EU institutions; several dozens of publications, articles, and op-eds. Since the murder of **Daphne Caruana Galizia** in Malta in October 2017, the common efforts to advocate for a EU initiative against SLAPPs have gradually gained more and more support and involved **more and more organisations** and stakeholders all over Europe.

A milestone in this story was the "EU SLAPP Symposium" organised by **Greenpeace Europe** in Amsterdam in February 2020: this was the actual starting point of a wide advocacy activity that led to the constitution of the **CASE**, Coalition Against SLAPPs in Europe.

The following timeline - **a look back**, a diary of a story of success - presents **a selection** of resources from our database, where over 130 items are focused on strategic lawsuits against public participation.

Resources are of **a mixed nature**, and the timeline follows **the steps** of the last three years: this story is made of pressure from civil society and responses from institutions, it is a sequence of meetings and publications, conferences and talks behind closed doors, papers and recommendations, that had its provisional "final" goal in the approval of the EU Commission **anti-SLAPP package** on 27 April 2022.

The timeline



27 Apr. 2022, EU Commission [anti-SLAPP package](#)

The Commission approves a proposal for a directive and a recommendation

16 Mar. 2022, Double report launch:

The [CASE coalition](#) publishes a study with a collection of over 500 SLAPPs in Europe and [ARTICLE 19](#) Europe launches its report focused on 11 European countries

1 Feb. 2022, [Petition](#) delivered to the Commission

Over 200,000 signatures are handed to Věra Jourová, Vicepresident of the EU Commission

10 Jan. 2022, Dossier "[SLAPP and Democracy](#)", an analysis focused on Italy

OBCT publishes an overview of cases under the perspective of the victims

10 Jan. 2022, [CASE submission](#) to SLAPP consultation

The partners of the CASE coalition work on a comprehensive and detailed overview of cases

23 Nov. 2021, [Special Report](#) by the OSCE RoFM

The Representative on Freedom of the Media publishes a study on legal harassment

11 Nov. 2021, [INI Report](#) of the European Parliament

With a large majority, the EP approves the proposal for a Resolution on SLAPP

12 Oct. 2021, OSCE [South East Europe Media Conference](#) in Tirana

OBCT is invited in Albania to moderate a panel about SLAPP

16 Sep. 2021, EU Commission [Safety Recommendation](#)

This initiative includes a mention of SLAPP, stressing the fact that it deserves a separate action

20 Jul. 2021, [Rule of Law Report 2021](#)

In almost all country chapters, SLAPPs are considered dangerous threats to the Rule of Law

30 Jun. 2021, A [comparative study](#), CEPS (EU Commission)

More than 300 pages based on the preliminary paper of one year before, OBCT outputs mentioned

22 Jun. 2021, [Resolution](#) of the Council of Europe

SLAPPs are mentioned among the attacks and threats suffered by journalists

14 Jun. 2021, [DRAFT Report](#) of the EP about SLAPP

The preliminary work of the rapporteurs, who also met stakeholders, the CASE and OBCT

1 Jun. 2021, A study by [Justin Borg-Barthet](#) (commissioned by the EP)

One of the works commissioned by the European Parliament within the work leading to the INI

26 Mar. 2021, [launch of the website](#) of the CASE

After months of meetings and research, the website is the public access to the activity of the CASE

7 Dec. 2020, A [model directive](#) by the CASE

Experts worked on an anti-SLAPP model directive that was sent to the EU Commission

2 Dec. 2020, European Democracy Action Plan, [EDAP](#)

The initiative includes 3 pillars, and SLAPP is the main objective of the second one

25 Nov. 2020, [EP Resolution](#) on Media Freedom

A milestone resolution picking up recommendations and contents of the [Resolution of 3 May 2018](#)

27 Oct. 2020, [Human Rights Comment](#) by CoE Commissioner

Dunja Mijatović comments: "Time to take action against SLAPPs"

1 Sept. 2020, [Report](#) by Index on Censorship

"Breaking the silence", the result of a group discussion organized by Index on Censorship on 8 July 2020

30 Jun. 2020, [Report](#) by Greenpeace Europe

Sued Into Silence: How the rich and powerful use legal tactics to shut critics up

15 Jun. 2020, [Study](#) commissioned by the EP

Safety of Journalists and the Fighting of Corruption in the EU

8 Jun. 2020, [Letter of 100 ngos](#) to EU institutions

Ending SLAPPs, Gag Lawsuits in Europe, to Protect Democracy and Fundamental Rights

29 May 2020, [Study](#) requested by the European Commission, CESP

Ad-Hoc Request: 69 pages, 5 chapters and 6 case studies

20 May 2020, [Letter](#) to the European Commission

Almost 30 ngos support the [legal advice](#) concerning the introduction of anti-SLAPP legislation

12 Nov. 2019, [Expert talk](#) in Brussels

OBCT participates in an event hosted by three MEPs: it is the first time that SLAPP is mentioned in the European Parliament as a topic of study and open discussion

3 May 2018, [EP Resolution](#) on media pluralism and media freedom

The European Parliament calls on the Commission to propose an Anti-SLAPP Directive

19 Feb. 2018, [letter to the Vicepresident](#) of the EU Commission signed by 6 MEPs

The request for anti-SLAPP measures is supported by several ngos, but the Commissioner rejects it