



The European Citizens' Initiative

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09/07/2013



Introduction

- A European citizens' initiative is **an invitation** to the **European Commission to propose legislation.**
- It must be in **a field where the Commission has the power to propose legislation**, for example environment, agriculture, transport, public health, etc.
- It has to be backed by at least **one million EU citizens**, coming from **at least 7 out of the 28 member states.**
- **1st transnational tool of participatory democracy** -> unique opportunity to bring the EU closer to citizens



Legal framework

Introduced by the Lisbon Treaty (Article 11(4) TUE):

*Not less than **one million citizens** who are nationals of a **significant number** of Member States may take the initiative of **inviting** the European Commission, within the **framework of its powers**, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a **legal act of the Union** is required for the purpose of **implementing the Treaties**.*

The procedures and conditions required for such a citizens' initiative shall be determined in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 24 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.



Legal framework (cont.)

Article 24, 1st subparagraph, TFEU:

*The European Parliament and the Council, acting by means of regulations in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, shall adopt the provisions for the **procedures and conditions** required for a citizens' initiative within the meaning of Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union, including the **minimum number of Member States** from which such citizens must come.*



EU Regulation needed:

Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 on the citizens' initiative

Adopted by European Parliament and Council in February 2011 and applicable since **1 April 2012**



Rules and procedures

- Citizens' committee (at least 7 EU citizens living in at least 7 different Member States) to launch initiative;
- Registration in Commission's online register (Commission's answer within 2 months). ECI should not be:
 - **Manifestly outside the Commission's powers**
 - **Manifestly abusive, frivolous or vexatious**
 - **Manifestly contrary to EU values****If it is ⇒ Commission rejects registration**



Rules and procedures (cont.)

- Organisers responsible for collection of signatures
- Collection possible in paper form and online
- Online collection: specific security requirements set out in [Commission implementing regulation \(EU\) No 1179/2011](#)
- Organisers must build their online collection system and get it certified by the competent authority in the Member State where data will be stored

Competent authority in HU: National Election Committee

- Commission has developed open-source [software](#) to help organisers build their system



Rules and procedures (cont.)

- Time-limit for collection: 1 year
- Minimum number of Member States: $\frac{1}{4}$ (currently 7)
- Minimum n° of citizens per Member State: N° of MEPs x 750

In Hungary: 16,500

- Any EU citizen old enough to vote in the European Parliament elections (18 except Austria 16) can sign up.
- Specific statement of support forms to sign up: varying data requirements according to Member State (examples for BE, HR)



Rules and procedures (cont.)

- Data to be provided for HU:

Full first names, family names, nationality and a personal identification (document) number (*ID card, passport or identification number*)

- Member States responsible for verification of statements of support: free to decide how (e.g. random checks) - 3 months to answer

Competent authority in HU: National Election Committee



Rules and procedures (cont.)

- Final stage for successful initiatives:
 - **COM must meet organisers at appropriate level**
 - **Public hearing in EP with Commission**
 - **COM has 3 months to respond, explaining its reasons for taking or not taking action**



The procedure at a glance



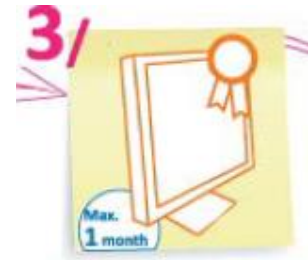
1/

If the Commission decides to follow your initiative. The legislative procedure starts.



2/

Register your initiative and set up a citizens' committee



3/

You wish to get your system of support



4/

Collect statements of support in at least 7 Member States. Get statements of support certified by Member States



5/

Commission examines your initiative and replies



The Commission decides to follow your initiative: the

You have at least one million signatories?



7/



Current state of play

➤ Initiatives

- **39 requests for registration:**
 - 21 accepted, 2 of which withdrawn, 10 of which achieved their collection period -> **9 are ongoing**
 - 15 rejected
 - 3 being analysed
- **3 initiatives (*Right2Water, One of us, Stop vivisection*) announced that they have reached 1 million statements of support and the minimum thresholds in more than 7 MS** – statements of support are still to be verified



Open initiatives

Title	Languages available	Registration date ^	Deadline for collection
European Free Vaping Initiative	EN*	25/11/2013	25/11/2014
Weed like to talk	EN*	20/11/2013	20/11/2014
European Initiative for Media Pluralism	EN* BG DE EL ES FI FR HR HU IT NL PL PT RO SV	19/08/2013	19/08/2014
DO NOT COUNT EDUCATION SPENDING AS PART OF THE DEFICIT! EDUCATION IS AN INVESTMENT!	EL* DE EN PT	06/08/2013	06/08/2014
Teach for Youth -- Upgrade to Erasmus 2.0	EN* DE FR PL	17/06/2013	17/06/2014
ACT 4 Growth	EN*	10/06/2013	10/06/2014
Let me vote	FR* DE EL EN ES IT LT LV NL PT SV	28/01/2013	28/01/2014
End Ecocide in Europe: A Citizens' Initiative to give the Earth Rights	EN* BG CS DE EL ES ET FI FR HR HU IT LT LV MT NL PL PT RO SK SL SV	21/01/2013	21/01/2014
Unconditional Basic Income (UBI) - Exploring a pathway towards emancipatory welfare conditions in the EU	EN* BG CS DA DE EL ES ET FI FR HU IT NL PT RO SK SL SV	14/01/2013	14/01/2014



Current state of play (cont.)

➤ Online collection

- Difficulties for the first organisers to find affordable host providers to install the software and to provide the required documentation for the certification
- **Exceptional measures** taken by the Commission:
 - Temporary and optional platform for **hosting** the organisers' online collection systems
 - Direct technical assistance to the organisers, including in the drafting of the necessary documents for the certification
 - Statements of support accepted until 1 November 2013 for all initiatives registered before 31 October 2012
- In total, so far 14 initiatives have used the Commission servers



Signatories (information as published by the organisers)

- a) Right2water: **>1,85 M** (thresholds reached in 13 countries: AT, BE, DE, EL, ES, FI, HU, IT, LT, LU, NL, SI, SK)
- b) Uno di Noi: **>1,85 M** (thresholds reached in 20 countries: AT, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK)
- c) Stop vivisection: **>1.12 M** (thresholds reached in 12 countries: BE, BG, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IT, PL, SI, SK)



Signatories (cont.)

- d) Unconditional basic income:
>150,000
- e) End ecocide: A Citizens' Initiative to
give the Earth Rights: **>75,000**
- f) European initiative for media
pluralism: **>10,000**



European
Commission



Further information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative>

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THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE
Official register

European Commission > European Citizens' Initiative

IMPORTANT NOTICE: It is not possible to launch a European citizens' initiative before **1st April 2012**, when the Regulation setting out the procedures and conditions for the citizens' initiative will begin to apply.

You can set the agenda!

The European citizens' initiative allows one million EU citizens to participate directly in the development of EU policies, by calling on the European Commission to make a legislative proposal.

This website provides information on all citizens' initiatives, it explains the rules, and enables you to launch your initiative.

About the citizens' initiative

- Basic facts
- What you need to know about the citizens' initiative
- The procedure step by step
- Detailed explanations on the rules governing the citizens' initiative
- How to sign up to an initiative?
- Want to give your support? Find out how
- FAQ
- Frequently asked questions

Find an initiative

- Open initiatives
- Initiatives open for signatures
- Closed initiatives
- Initiatives for which the collection period is over, including those that have received an answer from the Commission
- Obsolete initiatives
- Initiatives which did not gather enough support or which have been withdrawn
- Search

Launch an initiative

- Can your idea be a citizens' initiative?
- Find out if your idea falls within the Commission's powers
- Download the software for online collection
- You wish to collect statements of support online? Download the free software that will help you set up your online collection system
- Register your initiative

A NEW RIGHT FOR EU CITIZENS
YOU CAN SET THE AGENDA!

Guide to the
European
Citizens' Initiative

Point of contact for any questions: Europe Direct

<http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/contact>