

## **Adopted resolution**

### **Position on the implementation of the European Citizen's Initiative (ECI) and further actions**

- Having regard that the ECI is an important step towards a more participatory model of democracy in Europe and will for the first time give citizen's the possibility to directly raise issues and bring them on the agenda of their political institutions. And thus will help to create European-wide initiatives, discourses and consciousness that will bring us closer towards real European democracy and citizenship;
- Taking note that exact procedures and conditions required for such a Citizens' initiative<sup>1</sup> are to be determined in a Regulation to be adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on a proposal from the European Commission; and expressing the wish that the Commission will take due account of the result of the public consultation;

To implement the Citizens' initiative in a practicable and citizens-friendly way the EGP-Council is of the opinion that the general framework such legislation should consist of;

1. the minimum number Member States should be 5 with a minimum of 0, 05% of necessary signatures per Member State,
2. the minimum age for supporting an initiative should be set at 16,
3. a legal pré-check must be made available to the organizers of an initiative, A legal check of the admissibility has to take place at the beginning of the procedure.
4. the ECI can be submitted in form of a general proposal, comprising the title, the scope and a motivation and that it can also – but must not - be submitted in the form of a draft legal act,
5. the time limit for the collection of signatures should be two years,
6. that all possible legal and technical ways to collect signatures should be allowed. This includes the collection of signatures in the public sphere as well as online-gathering of signatures,
7. verification of the signatures should be dealt with by the responsible authorities of the Member States. A verification of every single signature must not be necessary. Random examination can be sufficient to proof whether a sufficient amount of signatures has been reached and
8. initiatives should be registered and that for this purpose the Commission should provide a specific website and put at disposal an extensive explanation of formal and legal requirement for the success of an initiative,
9. in the interest of transparency and democratic accountability, organisers of initiatives should be required to provide basic information in relation to the organisations that support an initiative and how the initiative is or will be funded,
10. the formal and legal admissibility has to be verified legally under the point of view of the respect of the competences of the EU and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. If the ECI is formally and legally admissible, the Commission is obliged to

---

<sup>1</sup> the European citizen's initiative is not to be confused with a petition nor with a referendum. It is nothing more (and nothing less) than a non-binding instrument for agenda-setting by the citizens of the EU. It only applies to issues within the European Unions' fields of competence and legislative powers. The European Commission is not obliged to take up a citizen's initiative. In which case Parliament could always take it up via its own rights of initiative (Art. 225 TFEU) if the majority of its members consider that it would be sensitive to get active in the field proposed by the initiative

take into account the content of its proposal and possible ways to take action on it adequately. The initiators have the right to be heard by the Commission in a public hearing and to be informed properly and transparently on its deliberations and their result. Notwithstanding the fact that the letter of the Treaty does not oblige the Commission to take action on all citizen's initiatives, we call on the Commission to take the political commitment to always present a legislative initiative to the EP and the Council. If it does not agree with the proposal, it should state so and explain why.

11. the Commission has 6 months time to proof the initiative,
12. there should be additional mechanisms supporting initiators of an ECI, by establishing an independent agency for help and advice for citizen's initiatives.

The EGP-Council calls upon the Green Group in the European Parliament

1. to organise a common EGP-GGEP meeting with Green members of national and regional parliaments in order to define a common position on the procedure and to discuss about the promotion of specific citizen's initiatives.
2. together with the green European and the national partners actively promote the instrument.