

Please note that in accordance with the [Regulation](#), European Citizens' Initiatives cannot be launched before 1 April 2012.

How will the European citizens' initiative work?

- **Organisers**

- Initiatives must be organised by a **citizens' committee** composed of at least 7 EU citizens who are resident in at least 7 different EU countries. Members of the European Parliament cannot be counted among the 7 citizens needed.

- **Minimum number of signatories**

- An initiative must be backed (in the form of "statements of support") by at least **1 million EU citizens** from **7 or more EU member countries** (the requirement is at least one quarter of all EU member countries – currently there are [27 EU countries](#) in total).

- **Minimum number of signatories per member country**

- In 7 countries among those where statements of support have been collected, there is a **minimum number of statements** to be reached (equal to the number of MEPs elected in that country, multiplied by 750). Check these minimum numbers for each member country in Annex I of the [Regulation](#).

- **Minimum age**

- The minimum age required to organise and support an initiative is the **voting age for European Parliament elections** (currently 18 in every country except Austria, where it is 16).

- **Registration of proposed initiatives**

- Organisers have to ask for the **registration** of their proposed initiative in one of the [EU's official languages](#) in an **online register** made available by the Commission. The Commission has to answer within **two months**.
- The Commission will refuse to register the proposed initiative if:
 - the **composition of the citizens' committee** does not follow the rules or
 - it is manifestly **outside the scope of Commission's powers** to submit a proposal for the requested legal act or
 - it is manifestly **abusive, frivolous or vexatious** or
 - it is manifestly **contrary to EU values**.
- After registration, organisers can ask to add translations of their proposed initiative, in **other official EU languages**, to the register.

- **Collecting statements of support**

- Statements of support can be collected on **paper or online**. They must comply with the models for the statement of support (see Annex III of the [Regulation](#)). These models **ask for different data** depending on the country that will be verifying the statements.

- Starting from the date the proposed initiative is registered, the organisers will have **1 year to collect** these statements.

- **Collecting online**
 - Before starting to collect statements online, organisers must ask the relevant national authority of the EU member country where the data will be stored to **certify their online collection system**. The authority must reply within **1 month**.
 - The Commission will make available open source **software** that can be used by organisers to collect statements of support online. The Commission will also adopt **technical specifications** to help organisers build their collection system.

- **Getting statements of support verified and certified**
 - Once the organisers have collected the required number of statements, they will submit them for verification and certification to the relevant **national authorities** in each country.
 - Within **3 months** the national authorities should deliver **certificates indicating the number of valid statements of support** collected. National authorities will use appropriate checks to verify the statements, which can include random sampling.

- **Submission and examination of the citizens' initiative**
 - After obtaining the certificates from the national authorities, the organisers **submit their initiative** to the Commission.
 - The Commission will have **3 months to examine** it and decide how to react. In that time, it will **meet the organisers** at an appropriate level so they can explain the issues raised in their initiative.
 - The organisers will also have the opportunity to present their initiative at a **public hearing** organised at the **European Parliament**.
 - In its **answer** set out in a communication, the Commission will explain its **conclusions** on the initiative, what **action** it intends to take, if any, and its **reasoning**.

- **Transparency about backers/funding**
 - Organisers must provide regularly updated information on the **sources of support and funding** for their initiative.

- **Periodic reviews**
 - **By 1 April 2015** and **every 3 years** after that, the Commission will present a **report** on the application of the [Regulation](#).