

### **Question 1**

***Do you consider that one third of the total number of Member States would constitute a "significant number of Member States" as required by the Treaty?***

I think that requiring an individual to get one million signatures from at least one third of the

Member States is setting quite a high threshold. The language barriers alone makes the

idea of canvassing in 9 different Member States quite daunting.

***If not, what threshold would you consider appropriate, and why?***

a threshold of 5 Member States would be acceptable.

### **Question 2**

***Do you consider that 0.2% of the total population of each Member State is an appropriate threshold?***

if an initiative was to receive this sort of support it would be "genuinely representative of a Union interest". Clearly the requirement of minimum 0.2% of the population need to be gathered in a Member State before those signatures will be counted may be overly strict in some circumstances.

***If not, do you have other proposals in this regard in order to achieve the aim of ensuring that a citizens' initiative is genuinely representative of a Union interest?***

I think it might be simpler to cap the number of signatures that can be collected in any single Member State. I would suggest 300,000 as a suitable figure.

### **Question 3**

***Should the minimum age required to support a European citizens' initiative be linked to the voting age for the European Parliament elections in each Member State? If not, what other option would you consider appropriate, and why?***

Yes, I think the minimum age required to vote in the EP elections is an appropriate age requirement.

### **Question 4**

***Would it be sufficient and appropriate to require that an initiative clearly state the subject matter and objectives of the proposal on which the Commission is invited to act?***

Requiring a clear statement of the subject matter and objectives of the proposal before a submission can be made seems appropriate.

***What other requirements, if any, should be set out as to the form and wording of a citizens' initiative?***

It should be in one of the official languages of the EU.

### **Question 5**

***Do you think that there should be a common set of procedural requirements for the collection, verification and authentication of signatures by Member States' authorities at EU level? To what extent should Member States be able to put in place specific provisions at national level? Are specific procedures needed in order to ensure that EU citizens can support a citizens' initiative regardless of their country of residence? Should citizens be able to support a citizens' initiative online?***

I think that the easiest way would be to collect all the signatures online. I think it would be inadvisable to introduce EU ID cards for the purposes of harmonising the collection and verification of citizen's signatures.

*If so, what security and authentication features should be foreseen?*

Obviously it would need to be a highly secure website if it is going to be taking information such as names and passport IDs. I think it would also be essential that although the ID number would be used to verify the digital signature, that the fact that they had signed this initiative could not be traced with this ID number.

**Question 6**

*Should a time limit for the collection of signatures be fixed? If so, would you consider that one year would be an appropriate time-limit?*

Yes, I think one year is an appropriate time-limit.

**Question 7**

*Do you think that a mandatory system of registration of proposed initiatives is necessary?*

*If so, do you agree that this could be done through a specific website provided by the European Commission?*

Yes, I think this would be a great not only to register proposed initiatives, the website could also be used to promote the various proposals. I think that ads bringing people's attention to this website should be run on all state-funded television and radio stations in all Member States periodically.

**Question 8**

*What specific requirements should be imposed upon the organisers of an initiative in order to ensure transparency and democratic accountability?*

I think that organisers should have to declare whatever "interests" they might have in the Commission acting on a particular issue.

*Do you agree that organisers should be required to provide information on the support and funding that they have received for an initiative?*

I think that for individual citizens or for even a small group of citizens, the thought of having to fill out financial statements explaining how they have funded their campaign could be huge disincentive and as this is supposed to be engaging citizens I wouldn't want to make the process needlessly bureaucratic. That said, I think that it should be necessary to provide this information where there is at least one contribution of €10,000 or more, or if total funding exceeds €50,000, regardless of the size of each contribution.

**Question 9**

*Should a time limit be foreseen for the Commission to examine a citizens' initiative?*

An obligation for the Commission to examine a citizens' initiative within a reasonable timeframe not exceeding 6 months would be fantastic but I think there should be some allowance whereby this this period could be extended to 9 months or even a year where the subject matter was very complex and/or politically or socially sensitive.

**Question 10**

*Is it appropriate to introduce rules to prevent the successive presentation of*

***citizens' initiatives on the same issue? If so, would this best be done by introducing some sort of disincentives - or time limits?***

**I don't think this would be appropriate as the whole process of obtaining 1 million signatures is in itself a sufficient disincentive. Also considering the fact that any time voters at national level have rejected an EU treaty, they have always had to vote again on the same issue it seems a little unfair to force citizens to accept the Commission's refusal as final.**