

Brussels, 15 JUL. 2010
C/2010/4908

Dear President,

The European Commission thanks the Italian Senate for having transmitted the resolution of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs on the Green Paper and on the proposal for a Regulation on the European citizens' initiative.

The Commission takes note of the comments made on different points of the proposal and would like to emphasize that, in its proposal, it tried to find a good balance between the need for appropriate and proportionate rules and procedures and the need to keep the instrument simple and user-friendly, taking into account the many contributions received during the public consultation as well as the outcome of the Stakeholder Hearing organised on 22 February 2010.

In particular, in relation to the minimum number of Member States from which citizens must come, the proposal fixes it at one third since it would be in line with other provisions of the Treaty (e.g. "enhanced cooperation", subsidiarity control mechanism) and reflects the outcome of the public consultation.

As regards the suggestion to add a short deadline for the notification of national measures (Article 20), the Commission would like to underline that such deadlines are already foreseen in Article 14 for the designation of competent authorities in the Member States, which are the most important national measures for the implementation of the Regulation.

Concerning the comment on delegated acts mentioned in the opinion of the third permanent committee, it is clear that the European Parliament will be treated on equal footing with the Council.

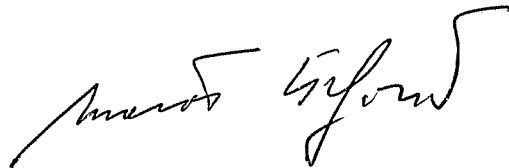
As regards the diffusion of information on this new instrument, the Commission notably foresees to create a website including information on the rules and conditions, on the proposed citizens' initiatives as well as on the competences of the European Union and the powers of the Commission. Concerning the support service suggested in the resolution, this question still needs to be studied by the Commission and other institutions and bodies.

*Mr Renato Schifani
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The proposal is currently being discussed in the European Parliament and the Council. In the Parliament, a draft report of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs is expected in September and an agreement on a general approach has been reached at the General Affairs Council on 14 June. The discussions focused mainly on the timing of the decision on admissibility, the online collection systems, the verification of statements of support by the Member States and the identification documents required for such verifications.

The Commission hopes that the Regulation will be in place by the end of this year, so that citizens will be able to benefit from this new instrument soon.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mario Monti', written in a cursive style.

*Mr Renato Schifani
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