



Brussels, 13 April 2018

## NOTICE TO STAKEHOLDERS

### WITHDRAWAL OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND EU RULES IN THE FIELD OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE

The United Kingdom submitted on 29 March 2017 the notification of its intention to withdraw from the Union pursuant to Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. This means that, unless a ratified withdrawal agreement<sup>1</sup> establishes another date, all Union primary and secondary law will cease to apply to the United Kingdom from 30 March 2019, 00:00h (CET) ('the withdrawal date').<sup>2</sup> The United Kingdom will then become a 'third country'.<sup>3</sup>

Preparing for the withdrawal is not just a matter for EU and national authorities but also for private parties.

The organisers of the ongoing citizens' initiatives as well as those intending to launch a citizens' initiative before the withdrawal date are reminded of legal repercussions, which need to be considered when the United Kingdom becomes a third country.

The rules in the draft Withdrawal Agreement concerning transitional arrangements, agreed at negotiators' level between the EU and the UK and published on 19 March 2018, exclude the applicability in the United Kingdom of EU law on the European citizens' initiative during the transition period. ([https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/draft-agreement-withdrawal-united-kingdom-great-britain-and-northern-ireland-european-union-and-european-atomic-energy-community-0\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/draft-agreement-withdrawal-united-kingdom-great-britain-and-northern-ireland-european-union-and-european-atomic-energy-community-0_en))

Thus, as of the withdrawal date, the EU rules on the European citizens' initiative, and in particular Article 11(4) of the Treaty on European Union and Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative ("ECI Regulation")<sup>4</sup> will no longer apply to the United Kingdom.

This will have, in particular, the following consequences for the organisation of the initiatives ongoing at the withdrawal date:

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<sup>1</sup> Negotiations are ongoing with the United Kingdom with a view to reaching a withdrawal agreement.

<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, in accordance with Article 50(3) of the Treaty on European Union, the European Council, in agreement with the United Kingdom, may unanimously decide that the Treaties cease to apply at a later date.

<sup>3</sup> A third country is a country not member of the EU.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 65, 11.03.2011, p. 1.

## **1. ORGANISERS**

As of the withdrawal date, United Kingdom citizens can no longer be organisers of citizens' initiatives under the ECI Regulation which are ongoing on the withdrawal date or which have been launched on or after the withdrawal date.

In case there are United Kingdom citizens or residents among the seven registered initiative organisers, they must be replaced by other individuals as of the withdrawal date so that the committee fulfils the conditions of Article 3(2) of the ECI Regulation.

## **2. SIGNATORIES**

As of the withdrawal date, statements of support submitted on the United Kingdom form will no longer be considered by the Commission unless they have been verified and certified under Article 8(1) of the ECI Regulation before the withdrawal date. This shall apply to both statements of support submitted by United Kingdom citizens residing in the United Kingdom, and by EU27 citizens residing in the United Kingdom.

Statements of support submitted by the United Kingdom citizens residing in those Member States, which accept statements of support from their residents<sup>5</sup>, will only be considered if collected before the withdrawal date. Verification and certification under Article 8(1) of the ECI Regulation can take place before or after the withdrawal date.

## **3. ONLINE COLLECTION SYSTEMS**

As of the withdrawal date, any online collection system certified by the United Kingdom authorities in accordance with Article 6 of the ECI Regulation can no longer be used.

A dedicated Commission website ([ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative](https://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative)) provides general information on the European Citizens' Initiative. This website will be updated with further information, where necessary.

European Commission  
Secretariat-General

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<sup>5</sup> Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.