European Citizens’ Initiative

Newsletter

Highlights

10 years of the European Citizens’ Initiative!

Welcome to 2022 – the year we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI)! 10 years since the first initiatives were registered – we’re up to 86 and counting! 10 years of campaigning for signatures and support; reforms to make the ECI tool more user-friendly; adaptations due to the pandemic; the birth of the ECI Forum; launching the ECI Ambassadors programme... 10 years of fostering debate and bringing EU citizens and policymakers closer together.

Together, we have achieved a lot in 10 years. In 2018 the #EUTakeTheInitiative campaign started to help raise awareness about the ECI: events and promotion, videos, a podcast series, and this very newsletter itself! And we feel this is just the beginning.
A record number of initiative organisers and multipliers joined in communications efforts about the ECI in 2021.

**Give the gift of participation this year.** Check below for important **dates to mark in your calendar** and for how you can **get involved in spreading the word about the ECI!**

#EUTakeTheInitiative - start, sign and support citizens’ initiatives!

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**Close of signature collection: Stop Finning - Stop the Trade**

The 'Stop Finning - Stop the Trade' citizens' initiative has collected more than 1 million signatures (of which over 500,000 in January 2022 only!), however the collection remains open through 31 January. Organisers are trying to protect sharks and end the trade of fins in the EU including the import, export and transit of fins.

You can hear organiser Nils Kluger talk more about this citizens’ initiative in [episode 3 of CitizenCentral podcast](#).

If you wish to support this initiative, you can do so by 23.59 on 31 January - click ‘more’ below. There are 12 additional initiatives also open for signature collection.
Court judgment on the validity of registration decision of ECI ‘Minority SafePack’ (C-899/19, appeal by Romania)

On 20 January the Court of Justice confirmed that the Commission was right in partially registering the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) “Minority SafePack” in 2017 (ruling of case C-899/19).

The Commission registered 9 out of the 11 proposals which the initiative was inviting the Commission to make. The Romanian government challenged this decision because it considered that the proposals were not within the competences of the Union. The General Court confirmed in 2019 that the Commission acted lawfully. That judgment was appealed by Romania. The appeal has now been dismissed by the Court of Justice.

Further details are found in the link below (in French).

Update of the Central Online Collection System

On 11 January the Commission released a new version of the European Citizens' Initiative Central Online Collection System (COCS) application. It includes the brand-new EU Captcha (security module for checking whether the user is human) which is open source, multilingual and GDPR-compliant.

The new COCS also offers initiative organisers detailed statistics on the use of the system for the collection of signatures. Moreover, when inserting personal data to support an initiative, citizens can now read in more detail why their data needs to be collected.
The majority of open initiatives use COCS, and all new initiatives registered from 1 January 2023 will be required to use it.

Take the Initiative campaign

Celebrate 10 years of the ECI with us!

The 10th anniversary of the ECI will be celebrated through activities and events throughout the year. How can you get involved? Help spread the word! We want every EU citizen to know about their right to participate in EU policy making through the ECI. Here are a few ideas for helping everyone to know they can sign, support or start a citizens’ initiative:

- Check out our updated Communications Materials page and get inspiration for spreading the word
- Listen to and share real stories about ECI organisers via CitizenCentral podcasts
- Watch and share videos about the ECI

You can also mark these dates in your calendar:
  - 1 April – the ECI’s ‘official’ birthday
  - 9 May – Europe Day (a good hook for talking about the ECI)
2 June – ECI Day 2022

More details about promotional activities will be shared in the coming months.

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**Status of support per Initiative – Congratulations for reaching milestones!**

The organisers of European citizens’ initiatives are obliged to inform the European Commission of the number of collected statements of support (both online and on paper) at least every two months. This information is then made visible on our website.

Congratulations to those organisers whose initiatives reached certain milestones recently:

- **Over 1 million:**
  - Stop finning, Stop the Trade

- **Over 325,000:**
  - Save cruelty free cosmetics – commit to a Europe without animal testing

- **Over 250,000:**
  - Right to Cure

- **Over 150,000:**
  - Start Unconditional Basic Incomes (UBI) throughout the EU

- **Over 125,000:**
  - Ban Fossil Fuel Advertising and Sponsorships

- **Over 65,000:**

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- Civil society initiative for a ban on biometric mass surveillance practices (Reclaim your face)

If you’d like to support any of the ongoing initiatives, please visit our website.

From the Forum

**Latest success story now available in all official EU languages**

A brand-new success story called "Minority SafePack – one million signatures for diversity in Europe" has been published in all 24 official EU languages on the ECI Forum. Do you want to learn how the organisers managed to collect more than 1 million signatures? Then reading our latest publication (in the language of your choice) is a must!

Learn

**Did you know…? From our FAQs**

What’s the difference between a petition and the ECI? A petition relates to existing EU activities (not new EU laws); can be submitted by a single petitioner (ECIs require a group of at least 7 people); and has no minimum number of signatures.
Petitions can only be submitted to the European Parliament. Citizens’ initiatives are submitted to the European Commission.

Check out our extensive FAQ page to learn more about the European Citizens’ Initiative. And hop on over to the ECI Forum – a peer-to-peer space to exchange ideas and help citizens’ initiatives succeed.

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