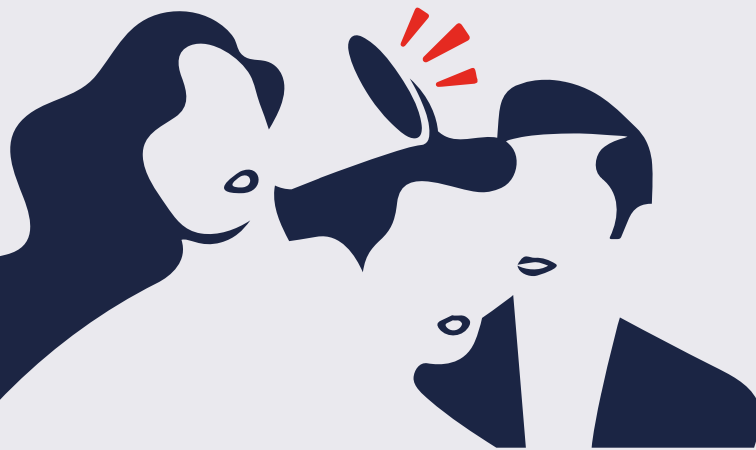




European Citizens' Initiative

A tool to carry your ideas across the EU



Why should you take the initiative?



Act on issues you care about – push the EU agenda's 'start button'



Build a network and get support from the European Citizens' Initiative Forum



Support in a way that works for you – sign or campaign for an initiative

Taking the initiative!

Taking the leap and submitting a European citizens' initiative can be rewarding in so many ways. From the collection of signatures, to watching your idea spread among your fellow citizens, a European citizens' initiative campaign is marked by many special achievements and milestones. All things made possible by your leap. Why not take a look at what organisers have to say about their journeys through the ECI:

“ By launching a European citizens' initiative, we have been able to hear insights from and have fantastic discussions with people across the EU that we would never have normally gotten to speak to in the course of our work. The most positive thing has been hearing the thanks and the words of encouragement from supporters across Europe. This motivation has reminded us of why – even when it is difficult – it is so important to raise our voices.”

Civil society initiative for a ban on biometric mass surveillance practices/'Reclaim Your Face' initiative organisers

“ Launching an ECI is a door opener! It is a way to place your demands and have a serious chance to make a difference. Our ideas have been taken into the 'housing for all' resolution of the European Parliament recently. It is important to try to collect 1M signatures, but focus mostly on the topic and the content. Place your demands and move on, even if you are not able to collect 1M! The magic happens afterwards, like we are facing with our follow-up project housing4europe.org. We met a lot of people who are joining.”

HOUSINGFORALL initiative organisers

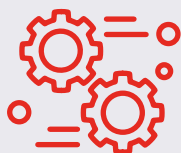
“ Our ECI was very much in line with the objectives and measures of the European Green Deal, as well as with the UN's 2030 Agenda. Therefore, since the von der Leyen Commission, soil protection issues have been taken up and debated at the EU level. I was invited to present our ideas at the European Parliament meetings. After the European Parliament adopted a resolution on soil protection, the Commission presented the new Soil Strategy: this is exactly what we were asking for with our ECI, only it happened three years later.”

People4Soil initiative organiser

“ The European Citizens' Initiative empowers citizens with an incredible tool in participatory democracy which ensures that our voices are heard at the highest levels of the European political system. We believed that if we give people a platform to call for banning cages for farm animals, they will join us in calling for reform, and this is what happened.”

End the Cage Age initiative organiser

Key facts on the European Citizens' Initiative



Became operational
on 1 April 2012 when the first
ECI regulation started to apply.



Organisers can use free of
charge the Commission-run
**Central Online Collection
System**, enabling online
collection of signatures in
full compliance with data
protection legislation.



Introduced by the **Lisbon
Treaty** which entered into
force on 1 December 2009.



**1 million
signatures**
needed to submit
your proposal to the
Commission, with the
obligation of reaching the
minimum threshold numbers
in at least 7 EU countries.



Several European citizens' initiatives have
successfully reached the required
number of support statements for the
European Commission to take action. Some
have resulted in new legislation, while
others have had other meaningful results.

Participatory democracy at EU level – a short guide

As an EU citizen, you have the right to take part in the EU decision-making process. Here, we take a look at the vast landscape of tools that allow you to have your voice heard and get involved and shape policies at EU level.

1. Vote or run as a candidate in European elections. Vote for the candidates whose political agenda best reflects your wishes for the EU. Throughout their mandate, keep in touch with your MEPs so they can represent your interests. EU nationals living in another EU country also have electoral rights. You also have the right to run as a candidate in elections. [Find out how.](#)

2. European Citizens' Initiative – As outlined above, the [ECI](#) allows you to propose action on an issue you care about and gather support across the EU. Once 1 million signatures are collected, you will meet with the Commission and participate in a public hearing at the European Parliament. The Commission will then examine the substance of your initiative and adopt a formal response outlining what action it will take or, if no follow up action is proposed, explain why not. If the Commission considers making a legislative proposal, the principles of subsidiarity, proportionality and better law-making will apply. In most cases, the European Parliament and Council will need to adopt the proposal for it to become EU law.

3. The Conference on the Future of Europe (2021/2022) gives citizens the ability to join the pan-European debate, organise bottom-up events, and put forward proposals that they consider important for the future of the EU. The Conference's multilingual platform has been designed to spark a truly pan-European debate, allowing for all Conference-related proposals to be collected. The EU institutions have committed to following up on the [outcomes of the Conference](#), wherever possible.

4. The Have Your Say Portal allows all citizens and stakeholders (public authorities, NGOs, researchers, academics, businesses) to send their feedback and contribute to shaping EU initiatives. Share your views and opinions about upcoming EU laws and initiatives, by answering the questionnaire of a public consultation or commenting on legal drafts. The Commission analyses and sums up the feedback and contributions received. Reports become available under some initiatives. This way you can see how the feedback contributes to fine-tuning the initiatives. [Learn more.](#)

5. The Have Your Say Simplify Portal allows you to share your ideas on how to simplify existing EU laws. Your suggestions will be discussed by the **Fit for Future Platform** expert group. Have a look at the list of topics in the Platform work programme and share your ideas to increase their digitalisation potential, to simplify procedures and obligations linked to labelling, authorisations and reporting, or to avoid overlaps or uncertainty. You can also propose new topics. [You can also propose new topics.](#)

6. Submit a petition to the European Parliament regarding the way European legislation is implemented and affects your life. Petitions relate to existing EU activities; they cannot request proposals for new EU laws; they can be submitted by a single petitioner. The Petitions Committee of the European Parliament aims to provide a response to all petitions and, when possible, a non-judicial remedy to legitimate concerns on issues related to the EU fields of activity which petitioners raise. [Find out how it works.](#)

TAKE THE INITIATIVE

European Citizens' Initiative
your tool to shape European policy



#EUTakeTheInitiative
ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative