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**ECI-Day: EESC launches main support tool for committed citizens:**

**It will translate ECI submission texts in all EU languages**

**On 13 April, Europeans Citizens' Initiative Day, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) will launch an important new service for European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) organisers: It will take charge of the translation of the 800 character ECI submission text in all EU languages for all validated ECIs and thus remove one of the major difficulties for citizens and facilitate their political engagement.**

***"****From the outset, the EESC has seen its role as that of facilitator and mentor within the ECI framework. With this new initiative, we are also providing practical support for dedicated citizens"*, said [Anne-Marie Sigmund](http://memberspage.eesc.europa.eu/Detail.aspx?id=15007&f=1&s=0&o1=0&o2=0&o3=0&ln=sigmund), president of the ECI ad hoc group, on the occasion of the launch of this new tool.

The European Citizens' Initiative is the ultimate flagship for a more bottom-up approach in the European Union. It is a first step towards participatory democracy at EU-level and with an approach that pays no heed to borders it is also a major step towards cooperation between citizens from different Member States. *"For the EESC, it is important to break down the barriers of bureaucratic obstacles to citizens' initiatives,"*said EESC president, [Henri Malosse](http://memberspage.eesc.europa.eu/Detail.aspx?id=1064&f=1&s=0&o1=0&o2=0&o3=0&ln=malosse)*, "and with this new service,**the EESC is lifting a major burden from committed citizens. Furthermore, this translation service reflects the EESC's willingness to help build an ECI helpdesk to serve engaged citizens."*

The European Citizens' Initiative Day, a yearly event created by the EESC, gives ECI stakeholders and organisers the possibility to report on and exchange experience, but also to openly discuss the new Commission communication on implementing the ECI which was adopted on 1 April 2015. The main question this year will be about the changes needed to secure an ECI tool which enhances people's political engagement and provides them with more effective support.

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*The European Economic and Social Committee represents the various economic and social components of organised civil society. It is an institutional consultative body established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Its consultative role enables its members, and hence the organisations they represent, to participate in the EU decision-making process. The Committee has 353 members from across Europe, who are appointed by the Council of the European Union.*

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