



ECI DAY 2020
Today and Beyond | 25.02.2020



ECI DAY 2020 recommendations on the future of the European Citizens' Initiative (as ranked by the public)

ECI PROCEDURE

1. As an innovative transnational feature in the participatory democracy toolbox, the ECI needs to be part of a comprehensive informative and educational support package provided by governments at all political levels.
2. All EU Member States should lower to 16 the minimum age for signing an ECI.
3. Use of the Commission's central online collection system should remain optional, not mandatory, thereby preserving the right of ECI organisers to use certified alternative collection software.

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSE ON SUCCESSFUL ECIs

1. The ECI must be upgraded to become a real popular right of initiative, allowing successful ECI organisers to start a second round of signature collection and, if successful, to obtain a binding EU-wide referendum on their desired legislative proposal in the event that the EU institutions refuse to follow up on the ECI's demands.
2. The European Commission should be obliged to draft a legislative proposal for each successful ECI.
3. National parliaments should hold a debate and a vote on each successful ECI prior to the Commission decision on follow-up.

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ECI AS PART OF A PARTICIPATION TOOLBOX

1. Ongoing ECIs should be linked with the Conference on the Future of Europe by showcasing them on the latter's multilingual platform in order to encourage citizens to consider and support them.
2. The ECI must be more effectively connected with other existing participation instruments – such as the Commission's online consultations and European Parliament petitions – as well as potential new such instruments that may be developed in connection with the Conference on the Future of Europe.
3. For each successful ECI, a randomly selected representative Citizens' Assembly should be put together to review the ECI's objectives.

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ECI DAY 2020 recommendations on the future of participation (as ranked by the public)

NEW FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

1. **Democratic infrastructure:** Education and awareness-raising about the role of EU policies and decisions in citizens' lives needs to be strengthened and become part of the democratic infrastructure at EU level.
2. **Eligibility independent of residence:** Voting rights should be extended to all European citizens regardless of whether they live in their country of origin or not.
3. **Meaningful participation:** Citizens' participation at the European level must always have a clear link to the formal decision-making process in order to make it meaningful.
4. **Citizens' Assemblies:** Deliberative (randomly selected and representative) citizens' assemblies should become a standard part of the process towards major parliamentary or popular decisions in order to inform, contribute and guide.

CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

1. **By the people:** We need a Convention on the Future of Europe to explore the future of citizens' participation and democratic reform. This process should combine different methods of participatory democracy and should be both initiated and concluded by a Europe-wide popular vote.
2. **Review process:** Conferences on the Future of Europe and other democracy review efforts are never one-off exercises. They need to be conducted regularly and linked to proper follow-up and implementation procedures.
3. **Toolbox:** The Conference on the Future of Europe should establish a framework for genuine participatory democracy by assessing existing features at all political levels, identifying a participatory toolbox for the European level and developing a permanent mechanism for transnational active citizenship and participatory democracy.

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