Guidelines for a proposal of a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the citizens' initiative, pursuant to Article 11(4) of the Treaty on the European Union

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The Committee on Constitutional Affairs adopted an own-initiative report by Sylvia-Yvonne KAUFMANN (GUE/NGL, DE) requesting the Commission to submit a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the implementation of the citizens' initiative (Initiative – Rule 39 of the Rules of Procedure).

In this report, MEPs recall that the Treaty of Lisbon introduces the Citizens' Initiative, whereby citizens of the Union **numbering not less than one million who are nationals of a significant number of Member States** may take the initiative of inviting the Commission, within the framework of its powers, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties – Article 11(4) of the EU Treaty in the new wording ('TEU nw').

Citizens will thus play a direct role in the exercise of the European Union's sovereign power by being, for the first time, directly involved in the initiation of European legislative proposals.

In this context, the Commission is called upon to submit without delay, after the Treaty of Lisbon enters into force, **a proposal for a regulation** on the citizens' initiative on the basis of Article 24 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The regulations should be clear, simple and user-friendly, incorporating practical elements related to the definition of a citizens' initiative in order that it should not be confused with the right of petition.

MEPs call on the Commission to examine a number of **recommendations**, contained in the annex to the draft resolution, which focus on the following aspects:

Determining the minimum number of Member States: the minimum number of Member States from which the citizens taking part in the initiative must come is one quarter of the Member States. This requirement is fulfilled only if at least 1/500 of the population of each of the Member States concerned supports the initiative.

Determining the minimum age of participants: every citizen of the Union who has the right to vote in accordance with the legislation of his/her own Member State may participate in a citizens' initiative.

Determining the procedure: the procedure for a citizens' initiative comprises five stages:

1. registering the initiative with the Commission;
2. collecting of individual statements of support for the successfully registered initiative and official confirmation by the Member States of the result of the collection of individual statements of support;
3. organisers presenting the citizens' initiative to the Commission;
4. the Commission's formal statement of its position;
5. verifying that the requested legal act is consistent with the Treaties.

The principle of transparency: the organisers of a successfully registered citizens' initiative shall be required, within an appropriate period of time after the conclusion of the procedure, to present to the Commission a report on the funding of the initiative, including the sources of funding (transparency report). The report shall be examined by the Commission and published together with an opinion. As a general rule, the Commission should begin to address the content of a citizens' initiative only after a transparency report has been presented in due form.