

European Citizens' Initiative: Commission registers 'Housing for All' initiative

The objective of the initiative is *"to bring about better legal and financial framework conditions to facilitate access to housing for everyone in Europe"*. The organisers call on the European Commission to ensure *"easier access for all to social and affordable housing, not applying the Maastricht criteria to public investment in social and affordable housing, better access to EU funding for non-profit and sustainable housing developers, social, competition-based rules for short-term rentals and the compilation of statistics on housing needs in Europe."*

Under the Treaties, the EU can take legal action in this area, for example when it comes to internal market rules as well as strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion in Europe. The European Commission has therefore decided to register the Initiative. The Commission's decision concerns only the legal admissibility of the proposal. The Commission has not yet analysed the substance.

The registration of this Initiative will take place on 18 March 2019, starting a one-year process of collection of signatures of support by its organisers. Should the Initiative receive one million statements of support within one year, from at least seven different Member States, the European Commission will have to react within three months. The Commission can decide either to follow the request or not, and in both instances would be required to explain its reasoning.

Background

European Citizens' Initiatives were introduced with the Lisbon Treaty and launched as an agenda-setting tool in the hands of citizens in April 2012, upon the entry into force of the European Citizens' Initiative Regulation which implements the Treaty provisions. In 2017, as part of President Juncker's State of the Union address, the European Commission tabled [reform proposals for the European Citizens' Initiative](#) to make it even more user-friendly. In [December 2018](#), the European Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement on the reform, paving the way for application of the revised rules as of 1 January 2020.

Once formally registered, a European Citizens' Initiative allows one million citizens from at least one quarter of EU Member States to invite the European Commission to propose a legal act in areas where the Commission has the power to do so.

The conditions for admissibility are that the proposed action does not manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for a legal act, that it is not manifestly abusive, frivolous or

vexatious and that it is not manifestly contrary to the values of the Union.

For More Information

Full text of the proposed European Citizens' Initiative (available as of 18 March)

[ECIs currently collecting signatures](#)

[ECI website](#)

[ECI Regulation](#)

[Housing for All Initiative](#) – website