



Commission registers 'Minority Safepack' European Citizens' Initiative

Brussels, 29 March 2017

The European Commission has today decided to register a European Citizens' Initiative inviting the Commission "to improve the protection of persons belonging to national and linguistic minorities and strengthen cultural and linguistic diversity in the Union".

The registration of this Initiative on 3 April 2017 will start a one-year process of collection of signatures of support by its organisers.

This registration follows an initial Commission Decision to refuse to register the 'Minority Safepack' Initiative on 13 September 2013, which was annulled by the General Court of the European Union on 3 February 2017. The Commission has reassessed the proposed Initiative, which requests proposals for 11 legal acts. Further details of the proposed acts can be found in the Annex.

While 2 of the 11 acts manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission's power to propose legislation, 9 of them do not. Statements of support may therefore be collected on the basis of these 9 proposals.

The Commission's decision to register the Initiative concerns only the legal admissibility of the proposal. The Commission has not analysed the substance at this stage. Should the Initiative receive one million statements of support within one year, from at least seven different Member States, the 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.

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, as foreseen by the European Citizens' Initiative Regulation, 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 "Minority Safepack" ECI](#) (available on 3 April)

[Minority Safepack Organisers' Website](#)

[Other ECIs currently collecting signatures](#)

[ECI website](#)

[ECI Regulation](#)

Annex – Full list of the 11 proposals of the 'Minority Safepack' Citizens' Initiative

1. A recommendation of the Council 'on the protection and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity in the Union' on the basis of the second indent of Article 167(5) TFEU and the second indent of Article 165(4) TFEU;
2. A decision or a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the basis of the first indent of Article 167(5) TFEU and the first indent of Article 165(4) TFEU, the subject matter of which is to adapt 'funding programmes so that they become accessible for small regional and minority language communities';

3. A decision or a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the basis of the first indent of Article 167(5) TFEU and the first indent of Article 165(4) TFEU, the subject matter of which is to create a centre for linguistic diversity that will strengthen awareness of the importance of regional and minority languages and will promote diversity at all levels and be financed mainly by the European Union;
4. regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the basis of Articles 177 TFEU and 178 TFEU, the subject matter of which is to adapt the common provisions relating to EU regional funds in such a way that the protection of minorities and the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity are included therein as thematic objectives;
5. A regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the basis of Article 173(3) TFEU and Article 182(1) TFEU, the subject matter of which is to change the regulation relating to the 'Horizon 2020' programme for the purposes of improving research on the added value that national minorities and cultural and linguistic diversity may bring to social and economic development in regions of the EU;
6. A Council directive, regulation or decision on the basis of Article 20(2) TFEU and Article 25 TFEU, for the purpose of strengthening within the EU the place of citizens belonging to a national minority, with the aim of ensuring that their legitimate concerns are taken into consideration in the election of Members of the European Parliament; ***[considered not admissible by the Commission]***
7. Effective measures to address discrimination and to promote equal treatment, including for national minorities, in particular through a revision of the existing Council directives on the subject of equal treatment, on the basis of Article 19(1) TFEU; ***[considered not admissible by the Commission]***
8. The amendment of the EU legislation in order to guarantee approximately equal treatment for stateless persons and citizens of the Union, on the basis of Article 79(2) TFEU;
9. A regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the basis of Article 118 TFEU, in order to introduce a unitary copyright so that the whole EU can be considered an internal market in the field of copyright;
10. An amendment of Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services, for the purpose of ensuring the freedom to provide services and the reception of audiovisual content in regions where national minorities reside, on the basis of Article 53(1) TFEU and Article 63 TFEU;
11. A Council regulation or decision, with a view to the block exemption of projects promoting national minorities and their culture, on the basis of Article 109 TFEU, Article 108(4) TFEU or Article 107(3)(e) TFEU.

IP/17/776

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