Press release | 30.11.2010

# European Citizens' Initiative

## EP on the side of citizens, as MEPs vote to strengthen European Citizens' Initiative

The European Parliament's constitutional affairs committee today adopted a legislative report aimed at enacting the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI), as provided for under the Lisbon Treaty. The Greens welcomed the unanimous vote, which clearly improves the ECI as compared with the original proposals by the European Commission. After the vote, Green MEP and co-draftsman (rapporteur) for the legislation **Gerald Häfner** said:

***"MEPs have today demonstrated that they are on the side of citizens by making the proposed European Citizens' Initiative clearer and easier to use. As such, the EP has set out its stall for negotiations with member state governments and the Commission on the final legislation. The citizens' initiative is a crucial provision of the Lisbon Treaty, and it must be implemented in a way which maximises the democratic rights of citizens and gives them a greater say in and over EU affairs.***

***"Today's vote has strengthened the proposed citizens' initiative in a number of key areas. Crucially, MEPs want to reduce the threshold of member states from which signatories must come to enact an initiative to one-fifth of EU members (originally this was set at one-third). This will make it easier to use. The EP also wants the Commission to assess the admissibility of initiatives at a much earlier stage once it has a minimum of seven signatures from seven countries, and not 300,000 signatures as proposed by the Commission. Successful initiatives should also be publicly heard to improve dialogue between the citizens and EU institutions.***

***"Today's unanimous vote gives the EP a strong mandate for the forthcoming trialogue negotiations with the Council and Commission. We will now fight to ensure all the improvements made today are included in the final legislation, so we create a citizens' initiative that is meaningful and user-friendly for all Europeans."***

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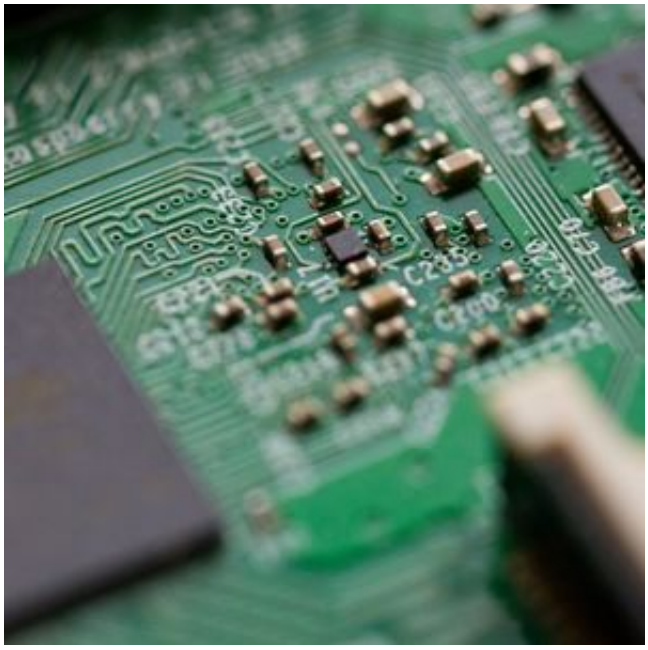


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