Press release | 09.12.2010

European Citizens' Initiative

EU Commission has to treat seriously the first successful citizens' initiative

Avaaz and Greenpeace handed over more than one million signatures to the European Commission today in Brussels. This is the first successful initiative since the Lisbon Treaty came into force. The objective is to ban the planting of genetically modified crops in Europe. The handover is taking place one day after the European Council has ratified the rules of the ECI. Next week the European Parliament is going to finish the legislative process.

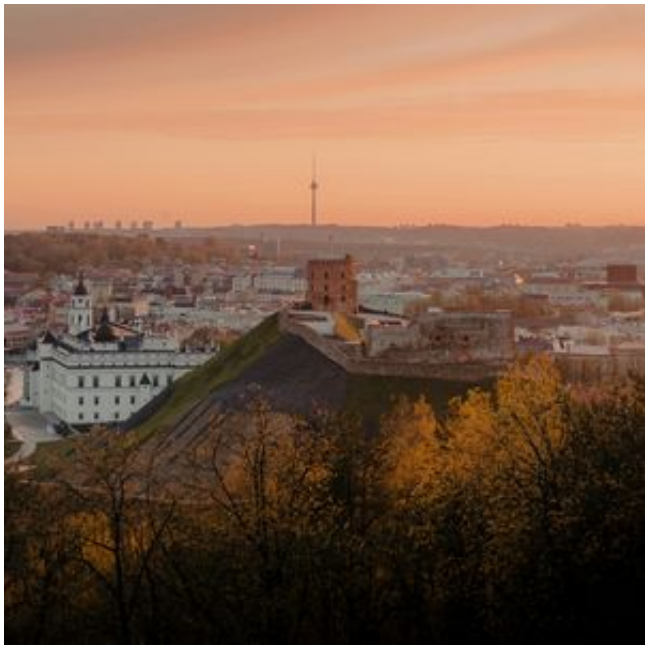
Commenting on the Greenpeace/Avaaz initiative, Green MEP **Gerald Häfner**, and one of the Parliament's chief negotiators on the European Citizens' Initiative said:

"The initiative of Greenpeace and Avaaz shows the necessity of the ECI in Europe. Citizens want to participate in European politics. They want to design their Europe. It's imperative to put the Citizens' Initiative in motion to show that the institutions do listen to the people.

Greenpeace and Avaaz have collected more than one million signatures following the rules decided by the European Parliament and Council. The EU Commission must not only formally receive the signatures but treat this act of direct democracy seriously. It must give it the attention it deserves after having been signed by more than one million citizens who want their voices to be heard. Political actions have to follow."

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