



Co-Funded by the European Union



European Year of Citizens 2013

EUROPE DIRECT INFORMATION CENTRE- CENTRAL REGION



IT'S ABOUT EUROPE
IT'S ABOUT YOU

Join the debate

www.europa.eu/citizens-2013

The Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs) form part of the Europe Direct Information Network, a free information service on the EU. It complements the role of the European Commission and EU Representations in disseminating information and serving as a bridge between the EU institutions and the public.

EDIC Central Region Malta aims at keeping the society informed about various EU related topics and inform the citizens about

their rights through: organization of workshop and seminars; dissemination of electronic newsletters; dissemination of publications and brochures; post regular updates to the dedicated website and FB page; answer and respond to emails, telephone or face to face questions and requests

We provide free information and publications on the EU including awareness of EU institutions, policies, legislation, programmes and funding opportunities.

EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENS 2013

2013 has been officially named “The European Year of Citizens”. It focuses both on what has been achieved for citizens and on meeting their expectations for the future.

The Year provides an opportunity for people throughout Europe to:

- learn about the rights and opportunities open to them through EU citizenship – particularly their right to live and work anywhere in the EU
- take part in debates about the obstacles of using these rights and generate specific proposals for addressing them.
- prepare to vote in the 2014 European elections and engage in the EU’s democratic life.

EU CITIZENSHIP REPORT

The first EU Citizenship Report was adopted by the European Commission in 2010. Ever since the EC has been working on:

- Strengthening the rights of around 75 million crime victims a year across the EU
- Slashing red tape for 3.5 million people registering a car in another EU country each year, with savings of €1.5 billion
- Banning extra credit card charges and pre-ticked boxes for online shoppers
- Reinforcing fair trial rights for all EU citizens, applying to around 8 million proceedings a year
- Clarifying property rights for Europe’s 16 million international couples

Nevertheless, many people still continue to face obstacles when exercising their rights as European citizens. The Commission therefore wants to hear about these problems that citizens might face when moving around in the EU, whether for work, study or holiday, when exercising electoral rights or their rights as consumers. The Commission also wants to hear what kind of European Union citizens would like to see by 2020.

WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE?

The European citizens' initiative enables one million EU citizens from at least seven EU countries to call on the European Commission to propose legislation on matters where the EU has competences to legislate.

It is a right that is enshrined in the EU treaties.

The rules and procedures governing the citizens' initiative are set out in an EU regulation adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU in February 2011.

WHAT CAN BE PROPOSED AS A EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE?

A citizens' initiative has to be an invitation to the European Commission to propose a law in a field where it has the power to

do so, for example in the fields of environment, agriculture, transport or public health.

WHO CAN ORGANISE A EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE?

All EU citizens (nationals of an EU country) old enough to vote in European Parliament elections (18 years old except in Austria-16) have the possibility to be organizers of initiatives. However, they first have to form a citizens' committee composed

of at least seven EU citizens living in at least seven different EU countries. Citizens' initiatives cannot be run by organisations. Organisations can promote or sponsor the initiative.

More information can be found on www.ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative

Art 11(4) of the Treaty on the European Union: "Not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States may take the initiative of inviting the European 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."

THE LISBON TREATY: A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

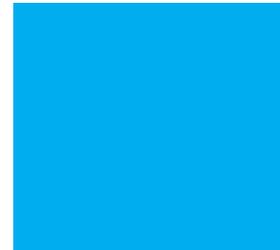


It took half a century of the European integration before European citizens received their very own direct access to transnational democracy. Article 11 of Treaty of the European Union is groundbreaking as it offers four important tools for transnational participation: information, consultation,

dialogue and agenda setting are the key concepts that provide many new opportunities. Citizens and representatives of associations should be given the opportunity to make known and exchange their views about everything the EU decides and does.

WHAT IS EU CITIZENSHIP?

Any person who holds the nationality of an EU country is automatically also an EU citizen. EU citizenship is additional to and does not replace national citizenship. It is for each EU country to lay down the conditions for the acquisition and loss of nationality of that country.



WHAT RIGHTS DO YOU HAVE AS AN EU CITIZEN?

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union entails the right to:

- move and reside freely within the EU;
- vote for and stand as a candidate in European Parliament and municipal elections;
- be protected by the diplomatic and consular authorities of any other EU country;
- petition the European Parliament and complain to the European Ombudsman.

THESE RIGHTS APPLY
TO ALL EU CITIZENS!

EU CITIZENS ARE ENTITLED TO OTHER RIGHTS INCLUDING:

- the right to contact and receive a response from any EU institution in one of the EU's official languages;
- the right to access European Parliament, European Commission and Council documents under certain conditions; and
- the right of equal access to the EU Civil Service.

THE TREATY ALSO PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF NATIONALITY.

The Lisbon Treaty introduced a new form of public participation for European citizens, the Citizens' Initiative. This allows one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of EU countries to call directly on the European Commission to bring forward an initiative of interest to them within the framework of its powers.





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