

# **THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE AS A TOOL TO EMPOWER EUROPEAN CITIZENS?!**

You are cordially invited to a special workshop on the European Citizens' Initiative and European citizenship which will take place in the context of the Summer University on European citizenship.

**When?** From 10:00 – 12:00 CET on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**Where?** European Committee of the Regions, Room TDE51 (5<sup>th</sup> floor), Rue Belliard 99-101 B-1040

**Organised by:**

**In Partnership with:**



*The European Citizens' Initiative is the world's first-ever instrument for transnational, participatory and digitally facilitated democracy. It allows 1 million EU citizens to ask the European Commission to take legal action within its competence. What are the prospects for this participation right in the light of the revision of the current revision of the ECI regulation? Can we use this participatory instrument to push for the extension of other political rights of European citizens, notably the voting rights of EU citizens 'on the move'? These two questions will be dealt with in consecutive order and in a participatory manner during this workshop, in the company of relevant civil society stakeholders and experts. Find a more detailed outline and agenda below. [Register here.](#)*

## **Agenda**

Part 1: The prospects of the European Citizens' Initiative in the light of the revision of the regulation

Moderators: Daniela Vancic (Democracy International), Maarten de Groot (The ECI Campaign)

The first six years of experience with the European Citizens' Initiative have been disappointing according to many observers, with only 4 ECIs reaching the 1 million threshold and with hardly any impact on EU policy-making processes. Due to the growing pressure from civil society and the European Parliament, the Commission presented a long-overdue revision proposal of the ECI regulation in September 2017. A year later, the revision has entered a decisive phase with the interinstitutional negotiations about to kick off. What are the most important improvements and deficiencies in the revision up to this point and what can civil society and citizens expect from the updated version of this instrument? Beyond a general discussion on these questions, we will take stock of, and discuss possible next steps for, the #EPForgetUsNot civil society campaign that

mobilised 89 civil society organisations to call upon the European Parliament to take responsibility for this citizens' instrument.

## Part 2: Using the ECI to campaign for the extension of voting rights for EU citizens on the move

Moderators: Petar Markovich (ECIT), Maarten de Groot (The ECI Campaign)

While the ECI in its current form has many shortcomings, it is the only official instrument for EU citizens to get mobilised and organise themselves around a political issue across national borders. Can the ECI be used to further the cause of European citizenship? Out of conviction that the only right answer is 'yes', ECIT, together with its partners, has started the preparations for a citizens' initiative on universal European suffrage. The ultimate objective of this campaign plan is to grant the right to vote and stand for election for EU citizens residing in a country other than their country of nationality for regional and national elections and referenda, as an extension of the provision for local and European elections that already exists since the Treaty of Maastricht. The outcomes of the preparatory work for this ECI will be presented and discussed with a view to planning the next phase of alliance- and campaign-building and fundraising in the run-up to its official launch.

While the workshop is specifically targeted at representatives of civil society organisations and citizens already involved or potentially interested in the campaigns mentioned above, any interested individual is welcome to attend the workshop. You can register via this [form](#).