

MORAIS BISMARQUE GASPAR Ana Gloria

From: Joerg Mitzlaff [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 March 2014 22:33
To: Euro-Ombudsman
Subject: AW: Own Initiative Inquiry: OI-9-2013-TN

Dear European Ombudsman,

thank for asking for feedback on the ECI procedure.

Here are my answers as one of the first initiators of an ECI.

1. Do you consider the citizens' initiative right to be sufficiently well known among the general public so that citizens feel confident in signing initiatives? If not, what, in your view, could be done to raise awareness?

ECI is not sufficient known in the general public in Germany. There was some attention to the right to water campaign. That's it.

2. Please give your view on the information and guidance the Commission provided to you as an organiser of an initiative (on the Commission website, in direct contacts etc.).

Support was not sufficient enough to be able to start collecting signatures just like that. It requires huge amount of time and IT expertise or money to be able to certify your own or commission hosted OCS platform.

3. Please give your view on the functionality and usefulness of the Commission's software for collecting signatures online. In particular, please consider issues such as hosting of the online collection system and the online system's accessibility for visually impaired persons.

Captcha is a No-Go, there are better ways to secure collections from robots. Not being able to collect emails for campaigners is a No-Go as well, it is essential to be able to stay in contact with the supporters of an ECI. And you need to visualize how many already signed and where for motivating other to follow.

4. The Commission extended the deadline for the first initiatives to collect signatures because of problems getting the online collection system up and running. Please comment on whether you consider that this extension of the deadline was sufficient and applied in a fair manner.

It had no effect because you still had to certify the system by yourself!

5. Please give your view on the functionality and usefulness of the paper form to be used for collecting handwritten signatures.

I have never seen this form.

6. Do you have any concerns or comments in relation to the treatment of personal data provided by citizens signing an initiative (either online or on a paper form)?

No concerns. Procedure is well defined and working.

7. Do you have any concerns or comments as regards the possibilities (or lack thereof) of tracking the number of signatures obtained throughout the collection period?

See above No. 3

8. What is your experience as regards the contacts with different national authorities in relation to your initiative (for certification of the online collection system and certification of the number of valid statements of support)?

Can't say.

9. What changes to the ECI Regulation would you consider useful, if any?

Offer a central European collection system for ECIs besides keeping the option to collect on your own platform with certification.

10. Please provide any other information or suggestions, in succinct form, that you would consider useful for improving the citizens' initiative procedure.

Why don't we have referendums for important European decisions?

Why ECI addresses the commission and not the parliament and why is the parliament not the decision maker in the end ;-)

Kind Regards,
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