

Citizen's Initiative: Towards a European Participatory Democracy

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The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe is pleased that during the European Parliament's Strasbourg plenary session today, the rules of procedures creating the Citizen's Initiative were adopted. The Group has taken an active part in the elaboration of these rules.

For the Vice-President of Parliament, Diana WALLIS (LibDem, UK), co-rapporteur for Parliament's Petitions committee, "It's a really exciting breakthrough in giving the people of Europe the possibility to actually start the process of getting a European wide law on something they feel strongly about. Few European countries offer this possibility to their population; it is great to see the EU and especially the Parliament in the lead in creating this first instrument of transnational direct democracy". Anneli Jäätteenmäki (Suomen Keskusta, Finlande), shadow rapporteur for AFCE added: "The European Parliament wanted to make the European Citizen's Initiative as citizen friendly as possible. We can be pleased with the result. I am especially delighted that the Commission and the Parliament have promised to organise a public hearing to guarantee that a successful initiative will be followed up appropriately. I hope that the European Citizen's Initiative will turn out to be a success and will broaden and refresh the debate on the future of the European Union."

Andrew DUFF (LibDem, UK), ALDE coordinator for AFCE concluded: "Liberals and Democrats welcome the fact that the scope of the Citizen's Initiative has been drawn sufficiently wide to allow proposals to be made that would change the EU treaties. Here the new law accurately reflects the Treaty itself, which foresaw as permissive a process as possible in the interests of boosting the popular legitimacy of Europe's new federal democracy. "