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## EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE FORUM

### How to report financial support



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The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) is a transnational participatory democracy tool that gives EU citizens the opportunity to shape European policy-making by asking the European Commission to propose legislation on a matter within its competence. This is done through a transnational campaign aimed at obtaining at least 1 million signatures, with minimum thresholds in at least seven Member States, in 12 months. The preparation phase is one of the most critical steps in the ECI process.

Organising an ECI campaign takes significant time and resources. Funds, human resources, IT support, legal advice and translations are among some of the inputs needed. **This guidance note focuses on reporting financial (and other) support during an ECI lifecycle.**

If you are interested in learning more about *how to raise funds* for your campaign, please read the guidance note [How to raise funds: your campaign](#).

## Why do organisers have to declare sources of support and funds?

Declaring funding and sources of support ensures full transparency on all initiatives. A declaration of funding and other sources of support is required by the [ECI Regulation](#). In particular, you must provide clear, accurate and comprehensive information on all sources of funding exceeding **EUR 500** per sponsor. This information must be published on the official ECI website and on your campaign website.

### Remember

Organisers must disclose funding and other sources of support per sponsor. If already received, you need to provide this information **when submitting your request for registration** and then **update it at least every two months, starting from the date of registration of the initiative**.

For example, if a sponsor provides you with financial support of EUR 260 on four different occasions, when the EUR 500 threshold is exceeded, this must be reported within the two-month period and the amount will be updated on every occasion after an amount exceeding EUR 500 has been declared. If a sponsor provides you with financial support of EUR 260 every 3 months, at the sixth month when the financial support exceeds EUR 500, you must report it. Ultimately, the goal is to report all sources of support and funding above EUR 500 that you may receive from the registration of your initiative until the submission of your initiative to the Commission.

**TIP**

This also helps your ECI look credible and demonstrates that there is real support behind it.

## Who is considered a sponsor?

Sponsors are:

- **physical or legal persons** providing funding or support above EUR 500;
- **organisations/legal persons providing non-financial support** on a voluntary basis.

Individuals providing non-financial support, such as volunteering in their personal capacity, are not considered sponsors under the ECI Regulation and this support does not need to be reported.

**KEY TIP**

Keep careful track of all sources of support and funding you receive in a file to make the reporting process easier. Remember, the purpose of disclosing all sources of support and funding is to ensure transparency.

## Financial reporting: an overview

**When submitting the request for registration** of your ECI, the organisers must declare all sources of support and funding already received in the organiser account such as:

- *Name of sponsor*
- *Date when the contribution was received*
- *Type*
- *Amount in EUR*

- *Other support*

After that, reporting must take place **at least every two months from the registration of the ECI (please refer to the timeline below)**. If you do not have any sources of support and/or funding to report at the time of registration, you simply select 'I declare that the initiative has no sources of support and/or funding'.

## Timeline for declaring support

**Scenario 1:** If your initiative reaches the threshold of 1 million signatures, you must report funding and support until the initiative is submitted to the Commission for examination.

### Registration of ECI

Declare any funding (if you have any) when you submit your ECI for registration

### Signature collection period (12 months)

Update funding every 2 months

### Submission of ECI

Continue updating funding until the official submission of your ECI to the European Commission

**Scenario 2:** If your initiative does not reach the threshold of 1 million signatures, you must report funding and support until the collection period closes.

### Registration of ECI

Declare any funding (if you have any) when you submit your ECI for registration

### Signature collection period (12 months)

Update funding every 2 months

### End of signature collection period

Stop declaring funding

## How to update and add new sources of support and funding

Organisers receive an *automatic reminder* in their organiser account to update the information on funding and support. To add new sources of funding and support, the organiser must click on the '**update funding**' under the '**My Initiative**' tab on the left-hand side menu of the organiser account.

On the **Support and Funding page**, add the details of the sponsor, i.e. name of sponsor, date and amount in EUR. Then select the type of sponsor: Organization or Private sponsor. If the sponsor is an **organization**, select 'Organization' and click on 'Add sponsor' to add the information to the list.

With **private sponsors**, you have the option to show or hide the private sponsor's name. If the private sponsor's name is public, add the details of the sponsor, i.e. name of sponsor, date, and amount in EUR. Then select 'Public'. Once all the information is completed, click on 'Add sponsor' to add the information to the list.

To **anonymise the private sponsor**, simply repeat the same steps as before, and instead of 'Public' select 'Anonymised'. Again, click on 'Add sponsor' to add the information to the list of sponsors.

Further information on the publication of the names of private sponsors is available here: [Privacy policy concerning citizens' initiative organisers' personal data in the ECI Register \(europa.eu\)](#)

#### Remember

Non-economically quantifiable support (other sources of support) given by an Organization must also be reported. To report this, add the ***name of the sponsor*** providing this non-economically quantifiable support, select '***Organisation***' and provide a ***short description*** of the support. If you want to add more information than the field provides for, you have the option to upload a document.

All sources of funding and other sources of support that you report will be shown in a table on the '**support and funds**' page of the organisers' account (as shown in the table below).

Name of sponsor	Date	Type	Visibility	Amount in EUR
Name of sponsor	05/04/2024	Organisation	Public	1,000
Name of sponsor	15/04/2024	Private sponsor	Anonymised	510
Name of sponsor	20/05/2024	Private sponsor	Anonymised	510
Name of sponsor	10/06/2024	Organisation	Public	650

Once you have added all sponsors for the two-month period, confirm that you have read the privacy statement and **request validation**.

Once your new information on funding and sources of support is validated, the information is displayed in the ECI website, on the official page of your ECI, as shown in the example below.

## Sources of funding

Last update: 17/06/2024

Name of sponsor	Date <sup>(1)</sup>	Amount in EUR <sup>(2)</sup>
Organisation A	05/04/2024	1,000
Private Sponsor (anonymised) <sup>(3)</sup>	15/04/2024	510
Organisation B	20/05/2024	550
Name of sponsor (visible)	10/06/2024	650

Total amount of support and funding: €2,710.00

(1) Date when the contribution was received. In case of in-kind contributions, date when the in-kind contribution started.

(2) Actual amount of funding provided or estimated value of in-kind contribution.

(3) Name is not published, as the private sponsor has chosen to remain anonymous.

## Other sources of support

Name of sponsor	Date <sup>(4)</sup>	Description
Organisation A	05/04/2024	Description of the contribution
Organisation B	20/05/2024	Description of the contribution

(4) Date when the contribution was received or in case of a period when it started.

To see how the information on sources of support and funding would display on your official ECI page, see examples of recent ECIs:

- [Fur Free Europe](#)
- [Voters without Borders](#)

**Have any questions about financial reporting? Ask our experts at the ECI Forum!**

## FAQ

### **What happens to the collected funds that are under EUR 500?**

You do not need to report any funds collected below EUR 500.

## **Do we have to set up an NGO or legal entity? Which bank account can people donate to? Can it be to our NGO bank account?**

There is no requirement to set up a legal entity. Your NGO can be the main coordinator behind the ECI. Each ECI does it differently, you can set up a legal entity for your ECI if you want to. The advantage of setting up a legal entity is that instead of the representative, it is the legal entity that is legally managing the initiative, including the data protection aspects. The representative will be given a mandate to act on behalf of the legal entity.

You can use any bank account and set up a new bank account as you see necessary. You can use your NGO bank account for donations, just make sure to keep track of the funds.

## **Do we need to set up a bank account only for donations? What is the process?**

You should check the Member State laws and with your bank for the process of setting up a bank account only for donations.

## **How do we report financial support when the same organisation provides funds from offices in two different Member States?**

In this case (for example, when Organisation X from Belgium provides EUR 1000 of funding and then the same organisation's German office provides EUR 600), you must report the amount of funding for each country branch separately even if they are parts of the same organisation. So, you would report EUR 1000 from Organisation X Belgium and EUR 600 from Organisation X Germany. Please check out the [Save Cruelty Free Cosmetics](#) initiative web page to see how they reported financial support from the branches of the same organisation based in two different Member States.

## **What if Organisation Z from France provides 300 EUR of funding and Organisation Z from Poland offers 300 EUR of funding within the two-month reporting period?**

You must report the amount of funding for each country separately even if they are branches of the same organisation. As in this case each sum is below the EUR 500 threshold, you do not need to report them. However, if any of these national branches offers additional amounts, you will need to report the total amount per country if it exceeds EUR 500.

## **If I am unsuccessful in collecting 1 million signatures, when do I stop reporting?**

If you do not reach the threshold of 1 million signatures, the reporting period ends with the end of the collection period. Otherwise, you need to continue reporting until the submission of your ECI to the Commission.