Friday 19 June 2020

P9_TA(2020)0172

European citizens' initiative: temporary measures concerning the time limits for the collection, verification and examination stages in view of the COVID-19 outbreak ***I

Amendments adopted by the European Parliament on 19 June 2020 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down temporary measures concerning the time limits for the collection, verification and examination stages provided for in Regulation (EU) 2019/788 on the European citizens' initiative in view of the COVID-19 outbreak (COM(2020)0221 — C9-0142/2020 — 2020/0099(COD)) [1]

(Ordinary legislative procedure: first reading)

(2021/C 362/47)

Amendment 6

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 1

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
(1) On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization announced that the COVID-19 outbreak had become a worldwide pandemic. The Member States have been affected in a dramatic and exceptional way by the consequences of that pandemic. They have taken a series of restrictive measures to stop or slow down the transmission of COVID-19, including lockdown measures to restrict the free movement of their citizens, the prohibition of public events, and the closure of shops, restaurants and schools. Those measures have led to a ***near*** standstill of public life in almost all Member States.	(1) On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization announced that the COVID-19 outbreak had become a worldwide pandemic. The Member States have been affected in a dramatic and exceptional way by the consequences of that pandemic. They have taken a series of restrictive measures to stop or slow down the transmission of COVID-19, including lockdown measures to restrict the free movement of their citizens, the prohibition of public events, and the closure of shops, restaurants and schools. Those measures have led to a standstill of public life in almost all Member States.

[1] The matter was referred back for interinstitutional negotiations to the committee responsible, pursuant to Rule 59(4), fourth subparagraph.

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Amendment 7

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 6

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
(6) Member States have indicated that they will only gradually reduce the level of restrictions introduced by the measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to monitor and control the public health situation. An extension of the period for the collection of statements of support by six months, covering the period starting from 11 March 2020, when the World Health Organization announced that the outbreak had become pandemic, is therefore appropriate. That extension is based on the assumption that at least in the first six months since 11 March 2020 ***a majority*** of Member States or a number of Member States representing more than 35 % of the Union population will have measures in place that will substantially hamper the organisers' possibilities to carry out local campaigning and collect paper statements of support. The collection period of initiatives the collection of which was ongoing on 11 March 2020 should therefore be extended by six months. Where the collection period of an initiative started after 11 March, that period should be extended proportionately.	(6) Member States have indicated that they will only gradually reduce the level of restrictions introduced by the measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to monitor and control the public health situation. An extension of the period for the collection of statements of support by six months, covering the period starting from 11 March 2020, when the World Health Organization announced that the outbreak had become pandemic, is therefore appropriate. That extension is based on the assumption that at least in the first six months since 11 March 2020 ***at least a quarter*** of Member States or a number of Member States representing more than 35 % of the Union population will have measures in place that will substantially hamper the organisers' possibilities to carry out local campaigning and collect paper statements of support. The collection period of initiatives the collection of which was ongoing on 11 March 2020 should therefore be extended by six months. Where the collection period of an initiative started after 11 March, that period should be extended proportionately.

Amendment 8

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 7

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
(7) Given that the end of the pandemic in the Union is difficult to predict, it is appropriate to empower the Commission to adopt implementing acts to further prolong the collection period in respect of initiatives, for which the collection period is still ongoing on 11 September 2020 in cases where the exceptional circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic continue to exist. The six-month extension of the collection period provided for by this Regulation should allow the Commission sufficient time to decide whether a further prolongation of the collection period is justified. The empowerment should also allow the Commission to adopt implementing acts to prolong the collection period in the case of a new public health crisis linked to a new outbreak of COVID-19, ***if a majority*** of Member States or a number of Member States representing more than 35 % of the Union population have taken measures that are likely to have the same effect.	(7) Given that the end of the pandemic in the Union is difficult to predict, it is appropriate to empower the Commission to adopt implementing acts to further prolong the collection period in respect of initiatives, for which the collection period is still ongoing on 11 September 2020 in cases where the exceptional circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic continue to exist. The six-month extension of the collection period provided for by this Regulation should allow the Commission sufficient time to decide whether a further prolongation of the collection period is justified. The empowerment should also allow the Commission to adopt implementing acts to prolong the collection period in the case of a new public health crisis linked to a new outbreak of COVID-19, ***provided that at least a quarter*** of Member States or a number of Member States representing more than 35 % of the Union population have taken measures that are likely to have the same effect.

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Amendment 9

Proposal for a regulation

Article 2 — paragraph 1 — subparagraph 2 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
	The Commission shall inform the organisers and the Member States of the extension granted in respect of each initiative concerned and publish its decision in the online register referred to in Article 4(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788. It shall also publish the list of all such initiatives and the new collection period for each initiative in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Amendment 10

Proposal for a regulation

Article 2 — paragraph 2 — subparagraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
(2) The Commission may adopt implementing acts to prolong the maximum collection periods of initiatives referred to in paragraph 1, ***if a majority*** of Member States or a number of Member States representing more than 35 % of the Union population continue to apply after 11 September 2020 measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which substantially hamper the possibility for organisers to collect paper statements of support and to inform the public of their ongoing initiatives.	(2) The Commission may adopt implementing acts to prolong the maximum collection periods of initiatives referred to in paragraph 1, ***where at least a quarter*** of Member States or a number of Member States representing more than 35 % of the Union population continue to apply after 11 September 2020 measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which substantially hamper the possibility for organisers to collect paper statements of support and to inform the public of their ongoing initiatives.

Amendment 11

Proposal for a regulation

Article 2 — paragraph 2 — subparagraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
The Commission may adopt implementing acts to prolong the maximum collection period of initiatives for which the collection is ongoing at the moment of a new COVID-19 outbreak ***requiring*** a ***majority*** of Member States or a number of Member States representing more than 35 % of the Union population ***to*** apply measures that affect organisers of those initiatives to the same extent.	The Commission may adopt implementing acts to prolong the maximum collection period of initiatives for which the collection is ongoing at the moment of a new COVID-19 outbreak ***where at least*** a ***quarter*** of Member States or a number of Member States representing more than 35 % of the Union population apply measures that affect organisers of those initiatives to the same extent.

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Amendment 12

Proposal for a regulation

Article 2 — paragraph 2 — subparagraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
Those implementing acts shall ***be adopted in accordance with the advisory procedure referred to in Article 6(2) and shall*** identify ***which*** initiatives ***are concerned and*** the new end date of their collection period.	***The*** implementing acts ***referred to in the first and second subparagraphs*** shall identify ***the*** initiatives ***in respect of which the collection period is prolonged along with*** the new end date of their collection period ***and the results of the assessment referred to in the fifth subparagraph.*** ***The implementing acts referred to in this paragraph shall be adopted in accordance with the advisory procedure referred to in Article 6(2).***

Amendment 13

Proposal for a regulation

Article 2 — paragraph 2 — subparagraph 5

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
For the purpose of assessing whether the ***requirement*** in the first and second ***subparagraph is*** fulfilled, ***the Member States shall provide*** the Commission***, upon request, with information on the measures that they have taken or intend to take in response to the COVID-19 pandemic***.	***The Member States shall provide the Commission, upon request, with information on the measures that they have taken or intend to take in response to the COVID-19 pandemic or in response to a new COVID-19 outbreak.*** For the purpose of assessing whether the ***requirements*** in the first and second ***subparagraphs are*** fulfilled, the Commission ***shall adopt implementing acts laying down the detailed criteria for such assessment.***

Amendment 14

Proposal for a regulation

Article 4 — paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission	*Amendment*
(1) Notwithstanding Articles 14(2) and 15(1) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788, where the European Parliament or the Commission have encountered difficulties since 11 March 2020 in organising a public hearing or a meeting with organisers, respectively, because of the measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic by the Member State where those institutions intend to organise the hearing or meeting, they shall organise the hearing or the meeting as soon as the public health situation in the Member State concerned makes it possible to do so.	(1) Notwithstanding Articles 14(2) and 15(1) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788, where the European Parliament or the Commission have encountered difficulties since 11 March 2020 in organising a public hearing or a meeting with organisers, respectively, because of the measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic by the Member State where those institutions intend to organise the hearing or meeting, they shall organise the hearing or the meeting as soon as the public health situation in the Member State concerned makes it possible to do so, ***or, in the event that the organisers agree to participate remotely in the hearing or meeting, as soon as they are able to agree with the institutions on a date for it.***