

European citizens' initiative was introduced by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and further specified by Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011, as a tool of participatory democracy; and this thesis examines whether European citizens' initiative is an effective tool. It starts with an introduction of theories of legitimacy and democratic deficit related to the European Union, in connection with which the European citizens' initiative came into existence, and also the theory of participatory democracy, within the scope of which the European citizens' initiative can be placed. The thesis then specifies three criteria in order to examine the effectiveness of this tool. In the first criterion, it analyses the criteria set for the European citizens' initiative in the above-mentioned Regulation in comparison with similar tools on national levels, and with regard to other academic analyses on this topic. In the second criterion, the thesis examines citizens who use European citizens' initiative on the basis of a questionnaire among representatives and substitutes of selected initiatives. In the third criterion, it analyses up-to-date results of two initiatives with closed collection of statements and with European Commission's conclusions, *Water and sanitation are a human right! Water is a public good, not a commodity!* and *One of us*.