

President submits legislative initiative to the Saeima to strengthen voter participation in the decision-making on issues of public importance

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On 31 March, President Edgars Rinkēvičs signed and submitted to the Presidium of the Saeima the draft law “Amendments to the Law on National Referendums, Legislative Initiatives and the European Citizens’ Initiative.” This proposal aims to enhance the involvement of eligible voters in decision-making on issues of public importance and to provide greater state support for the collection of signatures on legislative initiatives registered by the Central Election Commission.

“With the amendments to the Law on National Referendums, Legislative Initiatives and the European Citizens’ Initiative adopted on 8 November 2012, state participation in the signature collection process for legislative initiatives submitted by voters was significantly reduced. Although the Constitutional Court, in its ruling of 12 February 2014, concluded that the new procedure for signature collection complies with the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, it also emphasised that the legislator must ensure that the legal framework remains feasible and that voters can effectively exercise their right to propose legislative initiatives. Since 2013, no voter-initiated draft laws or draft amendments to the Constitution have been submitted to the President and considered by the Saeima. This raises doubts as to whether the current procedure genuinely enables voters to effectively exercise their right to legislative initiative. By restoring the two-stage signature collection process for voter-submitted draft laws or draft amendments to the Constitution and by increasing state involvement in the signature collection process, the engagement of eligible citizens in decision-making on matters of public importance would be strengthened, thereby promoting the development of democracy,” outlines the letter from President Edgars Rinkēvičs to the Presidium of the Saeima.

“To prevent the inefficient use of public funds and to ensure that the signature collection process is initiated only for draft laws addressing issues of true significance and relevance to the public, state involvement in the process would commence only if at least one-twentieth of the electorate that participated in the most recent Saeima elections signs the initiative within six months of its registration. Following this threshold, the signature collection process would be organised in the same manner as stipulated in the law for national referendum, with the additional provision that electronic signatures would also be permitted in the second

stage of the process for voter-initiated legislative proposals,” states the letter from President Edgars Rinkēvičs to the Presidium of the Saeima.

The draft law stipulates that the new procedure for submitting voter legislative initiatives will apply to draft laws or draft amendments to the Constitution submitted to the Central Election Commission for review and registration after 1 January 2027. This transition period is intended to provide responsible institutions with sufficient time to implement all the necessary measures to ensure the proper functioning of the new process.

The President of Latvia has submitted the draft law “Amendments to the Law on National Referendums, Legislative Initiatives and the European Citizens’ Initiative” to the Saeima in accordance with Article 65 of the Satversme.

The draft law, its explanatory notes and the President’s letter to the Presidium of the Saeima can be accessed [here](#).

31.03.2025. Likumprojekts “Grozījumi likumā “Par tautas nobalsošanu, likumu ierosināšanu un Eiropas pilsoņu iniciatīvu””

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