



## JUSTIITS- JA DIGIMINISTEERIUM

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### Answer to the Inquiry

Dear Sibel Seyran

You submitted an inquiry to the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs, in which You ask for an explanation regarding the right to petition. In response to Your inquiry, we would like to clarify that the right of petition also extends to foreign citizens, but the scope of this right depends on its type and the individual's residence permit status in Estonia.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, everyone has the right to address state agencies and local governments with memorandums, applications, and requests for explanations. This right is universal and extends to absolutely all natural persons, including citizens of both the European Union and, for example, Turkey, regardless of whether they are staying in the country temporarily or permanently.

In matters of local life, the right to initiate a citizens' initiative for the passing, amending, or repealing of legislation by the local council or government, or for the resolution of other local matters, rests with at least 1%, but not fewer than five, of the residents of the relevant rural municipality or city who are at least 16 years of age. In this context, in addition to Estonian citizens and European Union citizens, an alien—that is, a person who is not a citizen of Estonia or another Member State of the European Union—is also considered a resident of a rural municipality or city, provided they meet the aforementioned requirements and reside in Estonia on the basis of a long-term resident's residence permit or a permanent right of residence. The right to and procedure for a local citizens' initiative are set out in the Local Government Organisation Act (Section 32), which is publicly available in English at: <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/517022026004/consolide/current>.

To submit a collective address to the Riigikogu (the Parliament of Estonia), it is necessary to collect at least 1,000 supporting signatures. A supporting signature may be given by a permanent resident of Estonia who is at least 16 years of age, which includes an Estonian citizen residing in Estonia; a citizen of the European Union, a Member State of the European Economic Area, and the Swiss Confederation residing in Estonia who holds a permanent right of residence; and an alien residing in Estonia who holds a long-term resident's residence permit or a permanent right of residence. The right to and procedure for a collective address are set out in the Response to Memorandums and Requests for Explanations and Submission of Collective Addresses Act (Chapter 3), which is publicly available in English at: <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/529122024003/consolide/current>.

The conditions for organizing a demonstration or public meeting are set out in Subchapter 2 of the Law Enforcement Act, which is publicly available in English at: <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/511092025010/consolide>.

Sincerely

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