THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS’ INITIATIVE
WITHIN DEMOCRACY CONTEXT

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Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law are the main European values that supported the construction of the European Union (EU) in the past, as stated in the Schuman Declaration from May 9, 1950, and continue to support the EU in the present through current legal documents from which the President of the European Commission draws its guidelines. Despite these founding values, the EU has been frequently accused of a democratic deficit concerning how its institutions function, access to documents, and gender parity issues. However, being aware of all these questions, the European Union maintains the permanent organization structure to ensure that all citizens are informed and, consequently, to generate the best interinstitutional performance. As one method of encouraging democracy in Europe, the EU develops the strategies to create the conditions for citizen involvement in the decision-making process through legislative initiatives at both the national and European Union levels. This opportunity for citizen involvement is not only a democratic political right, but is also one of the major and most promising prospects for democratic action in the EU. The European citizenship initiative is a right that was introduced by the Lisbon Treaty as a new instrument for participative transnational democracy. It granted permission to one million EU citizens, from a minimum of seven member states, to present legislative proposals relevant to the European Union competence. In this way, the aim is to actively associate citizens with the decisions impacting the European Union and with the initiative process by giving the right to use the legislative initiative. Up to the present, more than six million Europeans have signed citizenship initiatives. Despite the 57 successful initiatives presented, only 36 were registered by the Commission. However, 54 of the 57 initiatives had more than one million of signatures, which indicates a growing involvement of the citizenry. There hasn’t yet been an initiative that has successfully become a new legislative proposal, despite, in some cases, the European Commission considering public opinion with regards to specific questions. Nevertheless, this is a future instrument with an important democratic meaning that must be considered. The question is based on the consideration of the EU rules of effective application as a critical component that ineluctably affects daily life. The problem is not always the absence of EU legislation but the efficiency of the law’s application, which isn’t always accomplished in the most effective manner. Thus, applying EU Law is a challenge that requires focus on the execution in order to serve the general concerns of the organization. Given the legal preconditions and the enumerated aims referred to above, as well as the incipient nature of this study, a methodology was designed that focused on a literature review of the different areas studied, specifically concentrating on the European democratic legal process in order to ensure European Union Law is being applied in an effective way. In an attempt to maximize the effectiveness of European Union Law, the EU legal texts should always be considered and highly valued. The art state, in theory and in the academic context, will be consolidated through normative and jurisprudential interpretation, and through the systematic and methodological selection of national legal texts in accordance with European Union Law.