

# Statute on European Citizenship

Draft — August 2021



European  
Citizens' rights,  
Involvement and  
Trust

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# I. INTRODUCTION

This Statute on European Citizenship builds on the achievement of the EU in creating the first transnational citizenship of the modern era a generation ago through the Treaty of Maastricht. Now, its potential must be fully realised, especially for the next generation.

The Statute has three levels of ambition:

- to bring together the existing European rights, policies and programmes which are scattered across different EU policy areas, so that EU Citizenship becomes more than the sum of its parts, clear and popular;
- to propose reforms to existing rights. For example, EU citizens have the right to vote and stand in municipal and European elections in their country of residence, but why not in all elections and referendums? The ECIT foundation is supporting the European Citizens Initiative (ECI) '[Voters without Borders](#)' demanding such full political rights. In other cases, it is a question of supporting rights with policy initiatives
- to recognise that Union citizenship was established as an evolutionary process by the Maastricht Treaty and that it is high time to add new environmental, health and social rights- this is one of a number of proposals.

Particularly in the first 10 articles, the Statute attempts to depict an inclusive and outward-looking European citizenship for future generations. The remaining 20 articles reflect more closely what exists but also propose new measures to place EU Citizenship in the broader framework of the three components of rights, participation and belonging which are common to any citizenship, and which stand or fall together.

A more ambitious European Citizenship would not require major EU Treaty change and is a realistic option which, astonishingly, the EU has not considered. Moreover, the potential of this unique citizenship to link together our different nationalities, cultures and languages will be realised only if it becomes truly digital.

The ECIT Foundation has worked on a set of guidelines since 2016. The transformation of the earlier draft to become a statute answers a call from the European Parliament in a report on the implementation of the Treaty provisions related to EU Citizenship of January 2019 (A8-0041/2019) demanding an "EU Statute of Citizenship" alongside the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Pillar of Social Rights.

**The next step should be for this draft to be open for comments and changes, and then promoted both by an emerging cross-party group of MEPs on European Citizenship, and by citizens, civil society and experts in the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE).**

## II. TOWARDS A EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP

# 1.

A European Citizenship in an EU which observes the principle of equality for all should be developed towards three objectives:

- the right to freedom of movement in tandem with the recognition that all European citizens have a portable right to equal treatment which can be supported by legislation and defended in court
- the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union through reform of the ways citizens can make their voice heard with the EU, the introduction of participatory democracy as a pillar of decision making and reforms of representative democracy
- the right for all citizens to be both informed and receive an education for European Citizenship should in turn be given meaning by the possibility to experience what Europe offers through an Erasmus for all.

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*These aspects of rights, participation and a wider sense of belonging are developed in each of the three sub-chapters under articles 11–30. They stand or fall together. For example, establishing a permanent process for citizens to participate in a European public sphere will not work*

*unless more people are informed and educated in the first place and experience what Europe has to offer.*

*This vision of a more coherent citizenship for all is not revolutionary and can take inspiration from existing provisions. For example, rights to good administration and access to justice are included in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. According to Article 10 TEU, “Every citizen shall have the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union. Decisions shall be taken as openly and closely as possible to the citizen.” How to give this aspiration more substance will be one of the challenges of the CoFoE.*

# 2.

European Citizenship is additional to and does not replace national citizenship. Within the EU, this first modern transnational citizenship is destined to become the fundamental status of nationals of Member States, enabling those in the same situation to enjoy the same treatment in law irrespective of nationality. The Union offers its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is guaranteed. The Union is one of States and citizens.

Persons from third countries who are legally resident in the Union should be given the opportunity to obtain the nationality of their host Member State. In this way, they become European citizens. Prior to obtaining Member State nationality, they should enjoy a set of European rights equivalent to those of European citizens.

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Article 2 repeats the reassurance made in the Treaties that EU Citizenship does not threaten national citizenship. The second sentence quotes a statement repeatedly made by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) (i.e. Grzelcyk C-184/99). The Court has established EU Citizenship as a 'real' status even though recently it has become more cautious in its judgements. The third sentence is taken from Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU).

*The Tampere Declaration of 1999 should be recalled. It stated that: "The European Council endorses the objective that long-term legally resident third country nationals be offered the opportunity to obtain the nationality of the Member State in which they are resident."*

## 3.

Since it was founded by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993, Union Citizenship is now part of the broader framework of rights, freedoms and principles in the Charter of Fundamental Rights (2007) and the Pillar of Social Rights (2018), the provisions of which can be invoked as constituting the core of European values on which a common citizenship should be developed.

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*Article 3 states that the two texts which this Statute accompanies are linked to Union Citizenship and that therefore everything they contain does not need to be repeated. Union Citizenship is moreover one of the six chapters in the*

*Charter, the others being dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity and justice.*

## 4.

EU Citizenship has been developed from the rights to freedom of movement, which have been gradually extended from workers to all categories of the population. This is primarily a citizenship of access to each other's territory and services on the basis of mutual respect and non-discrimination. The major challenges which Europe faces also cross borders so that EU Citizenship should be integrated in all policies of the Union and consideration given to adding new European environmental, health and social rights.

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*This article suggests that whilst EU citizenship has been developed from freedom of movement, it should now be linked to other rights to be more relevant to those who 'stay at home'.*

## 5.

EU citizens are entitled to protection against all forms of discrimination whether based on age, disability, race, sex or sexual orientation when seeking access to employment and services at home or in other Member States.

Special attention should be given to the most vulnerable in society and to members of minorities. The Union should update and strengthen its legislation effectively banning - and providing redress - against racism and all other forms of discrimination.

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*The aim is to ensure that whilst protection against discrimination on the grounds of nationality, and between women and men, can be guaranteed under EU law, the same is not true of all other forms, and that legislation needs to be updated and strengthened. The wording here is inspired by Articles 2 and 3 TEU.*

## 6.

Children must be accorded special status as a *sui generis* group of European citizens, who will inherit the challenge of defining and deepening the rights and responsibilities deriving from European citizenship for future generations.

A longer-term vision for Europe should be based on:

- the recognition that the rights of minors is an integral part of the EU's fundamental rights policy, and that the welfare and wellbeing of children and their future should be a priority in all areas of EU action
- child-friendly justice, including the cooperation among family courts specially to solve matters concerning transnational family law, as well as serving as a family

counsel with core/common European values to counter discrimination by Member States

- citizenship education in schools and other educational facilities
- expanding opportunities for child participation in European society, such as creating dedicated European children's panels or forums and lowering the voting age in European elections to 16.

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*The promotion and protection of children's rights is one of the key objectives embedded in Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). Moreover, Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU recognises that children are entitled to 'protection and care as is necessary for their well-being'. The same article recognises that the child's best interests should be the primary consideration for public authorities and private institutions. The Treaty of Lisbon gave the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, which also enshrines children's rights (notably in its Article 24, directly inspired by CRC provisions), the same legal status as the Treaties*

*EU law on children's rights nevertheless consists of a very complex system of primary and secondary EU law and also existing international legal frameworks, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).*

*Cooperation among jurisdictions or possibly the creation of a European family court could, for instance, rule on who gains custody of children during divorce proceedings where one or both of the parents is of a different nationality to the children.*

# 7.

European Citizenship must ensure a right to have one's rights enforced through rules of good administration, in a way that is understandable to citizen and uniformly applied by the Institutions and the Member States, in order to inspire confidence

The institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union and Member states have the obligation to act in a fair, impartial, timely and transparent manner, and to provide justification for their decisions to citizens, so that they may understand them

Any European citizen or natural or legal person shall have a right to lodge a complaint with the European Ombudsman against an EU institution or Member State acting on their behalf

In cases of maladministration where a Member State or sub-national authority has infringed upon fundamental or European Citizenship rights, or where they have misused EU funds, citizens must have avenues of appeal to national and eventually the European courts

This should include the right, when other remedies have been exhausted, to appeal to the Court of Justice of the European Union. Citizens and representative associations should have the capacity to demonstrate standing and have a fair chance of their claims to be accepted as admissible by the European courts. The criteria for this must be simplified and understandable to ensure equal access.

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*This article echoes provisions on the principle of good administration in the Charter of fundamental rights whilst seeking to widen their scope by including not only the Institutions and agencies of the Union but also the Member states when acting on its behalf. The last paragraph is more innovative and raises the need for a more basic reform of the EU justice system: if EU citizenship has meaning should there not be access -under certain conditions- to the European Court of Justice*

# 8.

The rights and responsibilities entailed under European Citizenship must be applicable to the digital sphere. Given the extent of ever-growing convergence between material and virtual realms, citizens must, by extension, be digitally engaged and competent to participate, while retaining the right to free and fair access and to privacy. European digital citizenship shall entail:

- possession of a single European electronic identity card containing all the personal data and processes necessary to become an active EU citizen and to access citizen services across all the Member States
- online access to participatory mechanisms for citizens to contribute directly to the European democratic process, including voting in elections to the European Parliament and

the creation of a permanent interactive digital platform for policy proposals arising from civil society, based on the pilot platform of the Conference on the Future of Europe

- the right to digital literacy and citizenship education, which is required by the transfer of citizen services online. The European Commission must act on its commitment to provide high-quality learning content, user-friendly tools and secure platforms for citizen services
- adherence, by the EU institutions and EU Member States, with European values and the obligation to ensure trust and transparency in the roll-out and administration of future EU digital platforms and services; these must be bound by appropriate e-privacy rules, data protection and ethical standards

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*Digitalisation and the use of artificial intelligence increasingly influence almost every aspect of our everyday lives.*

*Digital solutions offer the potential to simplify or enhance some of the constituent parts of modern citizenship, such as increasing and diversifying political participation or ensuring ease of access to social security services.*

*An eID would allow one to connect with public administrations and private service providers not only at national level, but across borders in all the countries of the European Union. It is not a new idea, with the European Commission currently drawing up rules for an interoperable European eID. In the discussion of European citizenship, a digital equivalent to a physical ID card or passport would*

*nevertheless be a tangible signifier of European identity in the virtual world.*

## 9.

European Citizenship, with EU Citizenship at its core, must be inclusive and outward-looking, based on shared values rather than any fixed territory or borders. Where possible, the same European rights must be enjoyed now by European citizens and all those on the territory of the European Union and neighbouring countries, as a first step towards a more post-national citizenship which:

- welcomes refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in accordance with the requirements of international law
- supports European citizens living in the rest of the world
- is accessible to all those born in Europe, and to legally resident citizens from the rest of the world and in neighbouring countries
- fosters an active citizenship across borders to contribute to a better world.

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*European citizenship offers the potential to serve as a unique model of transnational citizenship, which could be taken up in different forms in other parts of the world.*

# 10.

European citizens and persons legally resident in the European Union benefit from rights and therefore have responsibilities:

- to safeguard their rights and those of others, whilst furthering a more inclusive and equal European citizenship
- to comply with each other's constitutions and laws, and uphold their shared values
- to recognise the right of other citizens to act autonomously within the law and to recognise their interests in their own claims
- to learn about and respect, as equal to their own, the languages and cultures of other nations
- to respect a general duty of sincere cooperation, based on mutual respect and assistance
- to act jointly in order to overcome the major challenges facing Europe and the planet which are beyond the capacity of national citizenship in small and medium-sized European states.

Such challenges include climate change, the threats of new pandemics, the growth of inequalities, the rise in racism and xenophobia, systematic human rights abuses, natural disasters and security threats within or outside Europe.

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*This article applies to citizens the responsibilities which are incumbent on Member States of the EU to cooperate together (Article 4 TEU). Since the Union is one of States and citizens, this is a logical addition to the concept of EU citizenship*

## III. DEVELOPING CITIZENSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EU

### III, a. European citizens' rights

# 11.

Union citizens have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States subject to the limits in the Treaties. Free movement is a fundamental right and its purpose does not need to be justified, whether it is used to work, seek work, study, train or retire. This right is extended to members of the family, spouses or recognised partners of the citizen, including those who are nationals of a third country.

To ensure the proper enforcement of this right, the Union will adopt an action plan binding Member States to:

- strengthen application of European law with preventative measures, including a requirement to notify the Commission of any draft national laws or administrative practices which could lead to barriers to free movement of persons
- set up, in each Member State, a 'one-stop-shop' for information, advice and problem-solving for European citizens on the move, whilst ensuring that the same standards of service and time limits apply to European and

- national assistance services
- ensure that if a Member State has clearly violated fundamental or European Citizenship rights, citizens can appeal to national and eventually the European courts, whilst the Commission can file for interim measures to put an immediate stop to such practices.

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*This states simply that free movement is the first right of the European citizen. The limits relate to imminent threats to public order or security, and the requirements to have comprehensive sickness insurance and sufficient resources not to be a burden on the host Member State (cf. Directive 2004/38 on free movement and residence of EU citizens and their family members).*

*The aim should be to close the gap between the fine principles of European law and enforcement on the ground.*

*The phrase "prevention is better than cure" is apt here: lengthy negotiations or court action to ensure that Member States comply with European directives are unhelpful. It is also important to prevent new barriers appearing.*

*There is a European one-stop shop with Europe Direct, Your Europe Advice and Solvit. There should be an equivalent service for citizens in each Member State, operating to European standards of service.*

*The Commission already has such power under the Treaties. The EU is considering how the Charter of Fundamental Rights can be enforced effectively.*

# 12.

Create a European free movement solidarity fund to provide:

- emergency help to vulnerable EU citizens and support for their integration in the host society
- A European unemployment benefit scheme to allow jobseekers to find employment in another Member state taking into account differences in the cost of living
- Support to regions to avoid both a 'brain drain' in countries of origin and adapt public services in countries of destination to new arrivals.

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*This is a new idea. Such a fund should be based on contributions from the country of origin, the host country and EU cohesion policy with its social and regional funds.*

*In particular, a European unemployment scheme could be used to compensate for national differences in unemployment benefits and the cost of living, which are barriers to freedom of movement. This could also be an opportunity to introduce a European universal basic minimum income (UBI) scheme.*

*The current solutions in the European Social pillar, the 13th principle (unemployment benefits) and the 14th principle (minimum income), make the safety net conditional on incentives to reintegrate into the labour market.*

# 13.

Citizens of the Union have the rights to vote and stand as candidates in elections to the European Parliament and municipal elections in their Member State of residence. Reforms to the exercise of European electoral rights are necessary so they are more widely used and extended to regional, national elections and referendums.

EU citizens should have the right to choose whether to vote in their country of residence, or in their country of origin, for all elections and referendums. Arbitrary barriers to the registration of EU citizens to vote and stand in elections in either their country of residence or origin should be removed and a help desk set up to foster Europeanisation of voting rights.

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*European citizens should have full political rights and should not be deprived of the right to vote in national elections, for example, because they have exercised their right to free movement. If the 3.7 million EU citizens and the 1.3 million UK citizens in the EU had been able to vote in the 2016 referendum, Brexit might not have been.*

# 14.

The European Parliament, elected by direct universal suffrage, represents European citizens and is the main advocate of their concerns in the

decision-making process of the Union. In particular:

- each European political party should put forward its candidate for President of the European Commission to give voters choice
- citizens should have the choice also of voting for candidates on transnational party lists, to enhance the European character of the elections
- the European Parliament should propose how EU-wide referendums could be introduced to allow citizens to choose vital options for Europe's future
- All EU citizens whether resident in the EU or in the rest of the world have the right to vote in the European Parliament elections.

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*This article is based on Article 14 TEU whilst supporting reforms to make the European elections more European. This can be achieved through more competition among candidates for Commission President and other high office functions as well as taking a step towards a European constituency. The Parliament could also at least study the issue of EU-wide referendums.*

## 15.

European citizens have a fundamental right to the highest standards of protection of their personal data, which in a more digital economy must be regularly updated and strengthened

The protection of personal data and the right to privacy must be maintained in relation to technological progress, and should be guaranteed in any

policy measures introduced by the EU which may pertain to the use of the personal data of individual citizens.

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*Article 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights gives a high priority to data protection. The General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR') also regulates the processing by an individual, a company or an organisation of personal data relating to individuals in the EU.*

*Given the expansion of the internet and data available to commercial enterprises and public authorities, the protection of privacy must keep in step with technological progress (and should be guaranteed in any measures taken by the EU, i.e., to protect public health against pandemics).*

## 16.

European citizens have a right to receive diplomatic and consular protection from the European Commission or any Member State in a third country in which their state or country of residence is not represented. The EU will also:

- develop a European diaspora policy with Member States
- ensure that EU citizens living in the world are represented in consultative bodies and an annual forum or citizens' panel in Europe.

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*This article seeks to place the right to protection outside the EU in the broader context of a European diaspora policy. There are over 70 million EU citizens throughout the world whose interests are often overlooked but who could be its soft power.*

### III, b. Involvement and participation — your voice in the EU

# 17.

Citizens of the Union and any natural or legal person residing or having their office in a Member State have the right to:

- send a request to the EU in their own language, submit an individual or collective complaint of a violation of European law or rights and be informed of the action taken
- A right to be heard by the competent European Parliament committee if their petition or European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) receives more than 100,000 signatures from a minimum of 7 Member States
- make a complaint regarding an instance of maladministration by the Union authorities or the Member States acting on their behalf to the European Ombudsman
- and, where individual interests are directly affected, to appeal to the European Court of Justice after other remedies have been exhausted.

The European Union will adopt a law to establish time limits for response to citizens' requests and complaints and set binding other standards of good administrative practice for all EU Institutions and agencies. These time limits and standards will also apply to Member States' administrations and

agencies when dealing with European citizens.

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*The aim to strengthen the accountability of the Commission towards complainants.*

*This article also seeks to fill a gap between a normal petition, which can be signed by a single individual, and a Citizens' Initiative with the collection of one million signatures by providing that if a petition receives 100,000 signatures, the petitioners should be heard.*

*A number of points of access for citizens to the EU exist, free of charge. In some cases — not in all — time limits exist for answering citizens' appeals or handling complaints. Legislation should be introduced or revised to provide for more uniform standards, and apply them to service run by the Member States, not just the EU Institutions.*

# 18.

Freedom of information is essential to the practice of EU Citizenship. Any citizen of the Union and any natural or legal person residing or established in a Member State will have the right to access documents subject to the limits established, whatever their medium, from the Union's Institutions and agencies, and in particular:

- to know the position of their government in EU negotiations
- to access all documents of a legislative nature or which could lead to legislation
- to access documents relating to international agreements or treaties which have an impact on European standards.

The EU Institutions may appoint an independent information commissioner to assist citizens in their search for documents.

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*Like the proposal above on data protection the aim is to give more prominence to the right which exists. The text builds on and strengthens Article 15 TFEU and Article 12 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.*

*Here, “subject to the limits established” refers to the mandatory and optional exemptions in the regulation 1049/2001 on access to documents. There is a need for more transparency in trade negotiations and “trialogue” meetings when representatives of the EU Institutions negotiate legislative compromises behind closed doors.*

## 19.

European citizens have a right to know which organisations, whether public or private, are making representations to the EU Institutions on which specific issues and with what resources. A European law should:

- make inclusion on the transparency register mandatory for all organisations seeking to influence the European Institutions
  - ensure that entries are accurate, complete and up to date by regular checks and appropriate sanctions for non-compliance
  - provide for the register to cover all Institutions, bodies and agencies of the EU.
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*Transparency of the legislative and decision-making process can be achieved if transparency is applied not only to the EU Institutions, but also to lobbying practices.*

*The current voluntary register of organised interests is incomplete and entries often inaccurate, giving citizens only a general idea of the extent of lobbying practices which have expanded in recent years. There are at least 30,000 lobbyists around the EU Institutions.*

*These objectives have been endorsed by EU leaders, but not yet implemented.*

## 20.

European citizens have a right to be heard by the Institutions. Public consultations are a means to reach the majority of citizens’ interests and ensure the widest possible input to decision-making. The Commission’s standards for consultation should become mandatory and apply to the other Institutions and to Member States when they develop their responses to European initiatives. In particular:

- consultations should be widely advertised in a more friendly way, in particular to engage with minority interests and hard-to-reach groups
  - the aims and questions should be formulated to be accessible to lay persons and available in all official languages
  - there should be appropriate feedback and explanation as to why certain views expressed were accepted and others rejected.
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*The aim here is to make consultations less technical and more accessible to the general public as well as available in all the official languages, as the European Ombudsman has recommended.*

### **III, c. Trust and living together in Europe**

## 21.

All citizens of the Union, and all natural persons residing in a Member State, shall be informed about their European rights and activities of the European Union, so as to be better able to participate in European policy-making. The Union Institutions and Member States will:

- listen to citizens
- produce factual and objective information about European Union activities, expressed in clear and understandable language
- provide and disseminate this information by all available means in a socially balanced way in all official languages
- give every European citizen of voting age a handbook about European rights and how to find out more about the European Union.

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*A right to be informed was first proposed when the Commission on the Future of Europe was considering the draft Constitutional Treaty. The proposal was supported by the Commission and European Parliament at the time, but has yet to be included on the agenda for Treaty reform.*

## 22.

Participatory and deliberative processes should become a pillar of the European Union's policy-making, so as to give citizens an effective voice both in setting priorities and ways to improve the quality and enforcement of legislation. Participatory budgeting should be introduced across EU funds as a guarantee that they are transparent, properly used and respond to citizens' needs.

A European law should ensure that there is regular use of such practices and that they meet fair and democratic standards at all stages of design, implementation and follow-up. Such standards should relate to impact, making sure that participation is representative and inclusive and that deliberations are fair and supported by independent experts.

A permanent European Citizens' Assembly and House should be created.

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*The EU is moving in the right direction. Before the 2019 European elections, citizen dialogues were held across Member States. Citizen Assemblies will be organised during the Conference on the Future of Europe. It is now time to put such experiments with European participatory democracy on a more permanent footing.*

# 23.

European Citizens' Initiatives (ECIs) for which over 1 million signatures are required from a minimum of 7 Member States should be easier to use. The EU Institutions should:

- launch an awareness raising campaign so that all EU citizens know of their right to launch and sign an initiative
- simplify and harmonise the requirement for signature collection across Member States, name and address being sufficient
- encourage the setting up of an independent European fund to which applications can be made for start-up grants, reimbursement of a share of the costs for successful ECIs and continuation of the action after the period of signature collection
- allow all European citizens and legally resident third-country nationals to sign an initiative from the age of sixteen.

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*In the light of the experience of ECIs and the high failure rate (94%), reforms are essential to make the regime better known, simpler and more uniform. [An opinion poll commissioned by ECI organisers](#) found only 2.4% were aware of this right of initiative. The underlying concerns of registered ECIs must still be recognised as relevant by the European Commission, even if the ECI does not reach the one million signature threshold required to instigate legislative action.*

*For ECIs to become a genuine citizens' right, and avoid its capture by lobbyists and powerful interests, financial support is necessary. In this way, ECIs would make more of a contribution to the European public sphere and their social capital will not be lost. Access to this first ever transnational agenda setting instrument should be as wide as possible.*

# 24.

In order to develop European Citizenship as a way to connect different languages and cultures, the European Institutions shall:

- make available e-participation tools and facilities for face-to-face dialogue among citizens and civil society
- encourage citizens to play their part in the building of Europe, through the adoption of a European association statute and a pact for open dialogue between the European Institutions and civil society
- further develop the programmes for transnational exchange of ideas, best practices and projects in the areas of culture, environmental, health, consumer and social protection and also territorial cohesion policies which are closely linked to European Citizenship.

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*This is close to the wording of Article 11 (TEU), which calls for the creation of a European public sphere. The rest of this article relates to long-standing demands for the "Europeanisation" of civil society,*

which is essential to the development of European Citizenship.

## 25.

A full-scale European Citizenship cannot be achieved without education. All European citizens have a right from a young age to education about European Citizenship and the EU. The Commission will propose:

- a model teaching manual for use in schools and out-of-school activity on European Citizenship
- recommendations to Member States to add a European dimension to their own programmes for citizenship education
- the creation of a centre of excellence or agency for the exchange of best practice and training of educators
- monitoring of the quality of European citizenship education across all Member States.

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*The European Commission's mandate is limited when it comes to education, but it does have competence to recommend European Citizenship to be added as a theme to national civic education. A focal point is needed to give European citizenship education a far higher profile.*

## 26.

All European citizens should be given on an equal basis, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate in a European educational training or youth programme in another European country. The Commission should propose:

- how to develop such an entitlement on the basis of the Union's Erasmus plan and life-long learning programmes
- the conditions attached to such an entitlement and the timetable for putting the necessary resources in place.

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*A right to be informed and educated for European Citizenship does not mean much if there appears to be little chance to put it into practice. A universal entitlement may have some support in the Commission which first called its new programmes "Erasmus for all" and some support among Member States which increased the budget. However, such an entitlement could only be phased in gradually, with additional resources, in conjunction with a European citizens' card.*

## 27.

A permanent European citizens' card should be introduced. Such a card must meet data protection requirements for a secure European Citizenship and should cover:

- access to emergency health treatment when travelling in the EU as currently provided for but extended to other social security entitlements for more permanent residence
- a European-wide social security number to facilitate the rapid

verification of their social security rights and insurance coverage status

- proof of skills and professional qualifications which should be recognised as equivalent for working in another Member State
- proof of personal and family status to facilitate the process of residence in another Member State
- signature of European Citizens' Initiatives, petitions to the European Parliament and voting in European elections
- entitlement to participate in an exchange programme under Erasmus.

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*All citizenships need symbols as the EU has recognised by adopting a flag and an anthem. This is not enough. Such a European citizens' card would be not just a symbol but also of daily practical use. The card would reduce the burden of red tape both on the citizen and the administration by a single digital alternative to providing authenticated copies of documents proving personal, professional or health status. The card should also be extended to citizens from the rest of the world living in the EU and citizens of neighbouring countries. It should be introduced as the reverse side of national identity cards or as a separate card in countries without national IDs.*

### III, d. Implementation

# 28.

Union Citizenship is an evolving concept.

To implement this Statute, a senior European Commissioner should be appointed with responsibility for communication and all aspects of Union Citizenship, rights and participation in the EU Institutions and policies to encourage a sense of belonging to Europe in the EU and beyond.

The aim should be to encourage the EU Institutions to support this statute, which should eventually become legally binding.

The statute should be supplemented by easily accessible and understandable guides to European citizens' rights and standards which make an impact on people's everyday lives.

Such guides may be developed also in areas of policy, such as economic and monetary governance, the internal market, the environment, services of general economic interest and cohesion policy, as well as for particular social groups and minorities.

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*A special Commissioner for Citizenship is needed. He or she should be well known, responsible for communication and backed by a strong legal team which can receive requests and complaints, and help coordinate the response across specialised departments. They would also have a coordinating role to ensure European citizenship is accounted for in all policy areas that fall under EU competence.*

*Within the college, the Special Commissioner should have the rank of Vice-President.*

*This is based on the observation that many day-to-day issues covered in EU legislation may be covered by more specialised guides. Examples include*

guides for 1.) travellers, 2.) consumers of goods and services 3.) particular groups in society, and 4.) the rights of European citizens living outside the EU. It could make sense to have guides targeted at particular groups. For example, there is a need for greater clarity about the rights of some 70 million EU citizens living outside the internal market.

## 29.

Participatory processes should be launched in all countries and across borders to involve citizens in the shaping of their own European Citizenship.

On this basis, the European Commission should present a report representing citizens' views and demands, whilst taking into account the activities of the European Union in all policy areas and those of other European Institutions in particular the Council of Europe.

Every three years this participatory process leading to the citizenship report is repeated. This report may lead to the addition of new European rights and programmes, which shall be adopted according to the ordinary legislative procedure.

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*This is a stronger version of the current revision clause (Article 25 TFEU), which does not require either citizen involvement or even a proper legislative role for the European Parliament. Moreover, unanimity is required for decisions in the Council of Ministers instead of qualified majority voting under the ordinary legislative procedure. This is one of the few proposals in these guidelines, which involves a revision of the EU Treaties.*

## 30.

'Europe Day', or the annual anniversary of the Schuman Declaration on 9 May, should be observed as a symbolic public holiday across all EU Member States. This would bring Europe to the fore of public consciousness, while EU-wide observance would serve to instil a sense of commonality among citizens.

Europe Day should also take on a more 'participatory' character or function. Quinquennial voting in elections to the European Parliament should take place on Europe Day across all Member States, with the intention of increasing voter turnout by giving citizens a dedicated day to participate in European democracy.

Other means of participation in the European democratic process - making submissions to an online platform, or signing European Citizens' Initiatives and petitions, should be facilitated and encouraged on this date. European citizens panels could also be convened for Europe Day.

Europe Day should also be an opportunity to expand opportunities for citizens to participate in visits to cultural or political institutions, debates, cultural pursuits and other large-scale, European-themed civic activities to mark the day and raise awareness about the EU and European citizenship.

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*The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union includes a declaration by sixteen EU Member States recognising 'European' symbols, including the observance of Europe Day on 9 May. The European Constitution of 2005 would have legally enshrined Europe Day in the EU treaties, but was subsequently not ratified by the Member States, and hence Europe Day is observed unevenly.*

*In the current observance of Europe Day, the EU institutions open their doors to the public on or around 9 May. Local EU offices in Europe and the rest of the world also organise a variety of activities and events. As of 2021, Luxembourg is the first and only EU Member State to make Europe Day an official public holiday. An EU-wide public holiday would function not only as a symbolic declaration of common allegiance to the values and achievements of the Union, but would also serve as an opportunity to foster civic and political participation in European-level decision-making.*



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