

EVENT REPORT

Summer University on European Citizenship

Countering threats to European citizenship across
borders, reconfiguring its future



30 August - 01 September 2017

Maison des Associations Internationales

40 Rue Washington, 1050
Brussels

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Introduction

From 30 August to 1 September 2017, 75 participants met in Brussels at the Maison des Associations Internationales (MAI) for the second edition of the summer university on European Citizenship organised by ECIT Foundation (European Citizens' rights, Involvement and Trust).

The main objective was to bring together researchers, civil society representatives and officials to discuss the future directions of European citizenship in the context of the multiple crises facing Europe. The summer university not only raised significant questions about the state of art, but also proposed ideas about how to piece together and reconfigure a scattered European citizenship. This report is a summary of three days of intensive brainstorming, a public debate on the evening of the second day and a number of parallel events organized by partner organisations.

This report should be read alongside:

- the programme and partner events [which can be found here](#);
- the Google drive collection of the materials –the ECIT guidelines bringing together the scattered elements of European citizenship- reports by ECIT and contributions by speakers, the list of participants and speaker's biographies which can be [found here](#);

DAY 1, 30 August

Opening Plenary Session: Countering Threats

The opening session of the summer university introduced the issue of **Countering Threats to European Citizenship**. The guest speakers were **Marie-Hélène Boulanger** (Head of Unit "Citizenship rights and Free Movement", European Commission, DG Justice), **Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea** (MEP ALDE Group, Rapporteur on the report on EU Citizenship 2017), **Hanneke van Eijken** (Assistant Professor of EU law at Utrecht University/bEUcitizen Project) and **Ed Alvarado** (ECI Organiser "EU Citizenship for Europeans"). The session was moderated by **Dora Kostakopoulou** (Professor of Law at the University of Warwick)

Dora Kostakopoulou opened the panel pointing out that these are difficult times for Union citizenship and it is our duty to explore various options about the development of this transnational citizenship and what is going to happen following Brexit negotiations. In this context, **Marie-Hélène Boulanger** presented the [EU Citizenship Report 2017](#) *Strengthening Citizens' Rights in a Union of Democratic Change* underlying the Commission's commitment in strengthening Union citizenship. European citizenship is about rights, opportunities and opening

doors and education to European citizenship is a fundamental pillar in order to increase citizens' awareness of their rights. It is additional to the national one and it goes together with several rights (i.e. rights to free movement, to consular protection and to vote and stand as a candidate in municipal and European Parliament elections). As shown in the EU Citizenship Report 2017, the Commission is strongly committed to taking action in four main areas:

- promotion of EU citizenship rights and common values;
- promotion and enhancement of citizens' participation in the democratic life of the EU;
- simplification of the daily life for EU citizens with the introduction of a "Single Digital Gateway";
- strengthening of security and promotion of equality.

In order to make EU citizenship a reality on the ground and to put in practice the four priorities, a collective effort is needed: the Commission has to be supported by the other European institutions, Member States, local authorities and citizens themselves.

Beatrix Basterrechea reflected on the [Parliament's position on the EU Citizenship report](#) which was critical and on the Brexit negotiations. One of the key goals of the Parliament is to have the citizenship report adopted by the end of the year. This report comes at the right moment when citizens are becoming more and more aware of the rights that they enjoy and that they previously took for granted. It is 25 years since Union citizenship was first introduced in the Maastricht Treaty. Her Committee wanted to see 100% awareness of this status and one-stop shops in every Member State to help people enforce their European rights. In this context, her Committee was concerned that over the last 10 years there had been no major attempt to review and update EU legislation against all forms of discrimination.

Although the Commission did not mention Brexit in its report, the European Parliament considers it essential to explain what will happen to citizens' rights. This is a tremendous challenge for Union citizenship and it is essential to have a common approach from the EU institutions putting citizens and their rights before everything in the negotiations. According to Ms. Basterrechea, the ultimate goal of EU citizenship policies is to make citizens feel at home wherever they are in the Union and to enjoy the same status. Even if freedom of movement is a very appreciated right, only 20% of Union's citizens make use of it: it is essential to make it tangible also for the 80% of citizens who do not directly exercise it. Equally, a revision of Article 51 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which limits its scope of application, would guarantee the accurate treatment of fundamental rights without distinguishing between EU and national competences: this process has been developed by the Petitions Committee over the last 2 years. Brexit is a tremendous challenge for the EU and it underlined the need to improve citizens' participation in the policy of the EU and in order to increase it the first step is to revise the powerful tool of the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). Finally, she also supported the ECIT's proposal for a European

citizens' house in every region offering comprehensive help to EU citizens in order to reduce bureaucracy and increase citizens' awareness about their rights and their trust in the EU.

Hanneke Van Eijken presented the main results from the [bEUcitizen](#) project that ran from April 2013 to April 2017 and which looked at the obstacles facing EU citizens when they exercise their rights. There are different categories of EU citizens (i.e. workers, non-economically active people, students, minority groups) with different rights and different levels of protection. This creates huge gaps. One of the main threats to European citizenship is the link between nationality and the status of European citizen. Given that Union citizenship is additional to the national one, its scope is dependent not only on EU and international law, but also on nationality law and national law *on account of* EU law. Moreover, the loss of Union citizenship is dependent also on national law. For example, in the Netherlands you will lose your Dutch nationality if you live outside the Netherlands and the EU for more than 10 years. Concerning Brexit, UK nationals will lose their EU citizenship not because of the nationality law but because the UK will withdraw from the EU, so Article 20 will not apply. For EU citizens in the UK, Theresa May came up with a proposal that leaves open lots of questions especially concerning family reunion, the role of the European Court of Justice and the “cut-off date”.

Professor Van Eijken defined Brexit as a kind of Pandora's Box with many negative consequences. However, there is a positive effect: increasing of the debate on the European project in the public sphere (i.e. 'Marches for Europe'). The main threats to Union citizenship are the dependency of this transnational citizenship on nationality law, the refugee influx that is changing the conception of citizenship and future challenges in terms of climate change. It is time to reflect about what we have and how to become a stronger European Union actually protecting citizens and giving citizens a sense of belonging and not fear migration. Migration is an opportunity and not a threat.

Following up on the distinction between citizenship and nationality, **Ed Alvarado** touched on three issues: nationality, fundamental rights and taking action. In regards to nationality, he commented that nationality was something that was bestowed on people at birth and it created a division for the rest of people's lives even though there should not be much separating people from various nationalities, at least as far as rights are concerned. This led to the second issue of fundamental rights. In regards to Brexit, he stated that the whole discourse and negotiations had been too politicized and it ignored the core issue of basic and fundamental rights. He explained that he lacks the rights that all current EU citizens have and he commented that he knows what life will be like for UK citizens once they lose the status and rights tied to European Citizenship (he is a Mexican national).

The purpose of his European Citizens' Initiative (“EU Citizenship for Europeans”) is precisely to guarantee basic rights regardless of nationality, and that these rights which are already

guaranteed to all EU citizens (British included) under Article 20 TFEU should continue to be so.. Finally, he commented on the importance of taking action. Although he believed it positive that people come to these events and learn from each other, the most important step in his opinion was for people to start branching out and taking action. He reiterated that not many things would change and learning more about EU Citizenship would not make much of a difference if people did not translate this into action, so he invited all participants to use their experience at this summer university to start doing just that.

From the debate, it emerged that one of the main threat to Union citizenship is the link between European and national law and participants asked how this could be disentangled in the future. According to Van Eijken there is the need to push for more responsibility for promoting Union citizenship at local level, so that Member States cannot easily deprive their citizens from their transnational citizenship as it happened with Brexit, while Ms. Basterrechea pointed out that the first step is the alignment between Union citizenship and fundamental rights. Ms. Boulanger and Mr. Alvarado finally urged for a collective effort from the EU institutions that have to be able to respond to the main threats through effective concrete actions, as for example the revision of the ECI tool.

Session “Free Movement of Persons Across the EU”

The next session featured **Dr. Hildegard Schneider** (Professor of EU Law at the University of Maastricht), **Dr. Ruvi Ziegler** (Associate Professor in International Refugee Law at the University of Reading), and was moderated by **Suzana Carp** (Board Member of The New Europeans AISBL).

In her opening comments **Suzana Carp** suggested that we are moving further away from a Europe of citizens, but that paradoxically there’s been an increase in pro-EU movements all across the European Union. There has been a noticeable increase in activity in the United Kingdom because of Brexit, but a number of other pro-EU groups, organisations, and movements have grown in other Member States that do not face the same threat of withdrawal from the Union. At the same time there is as a political closedown of freedom of movement where we now “seem to be aiming back towards a Schengen of freedom of movement”. In other words, there seems to have been a step backward which has to be corrected in order to reach the previous status quo.

Hildegard Schneider commented that there is a difference between “free movement” and “fair movement”. Free movement “is the right to move, buy, live, study and work easily ...If you’ve lived long enough, you remember the borders! We are now used to these rights and we do not realize that actually they are a privilege”. One interesting point that was brought up by Schneider was the talk of an “abuse of rights” from Member States. An explanatory example is a case of the Court of Justice about an Austrian citizen who went to Spain, studied law and became a lawyer-

the Kohler case. When he came back to Austria, his qualification as a lawyer was not recognized by the Austrian government. This case shows how Member States often asserts sovereignty when it comes to free movement of persons. The nationality issue played an important role also in the Brexit referendum, since Britons living outside the UK for more than 15 years were not allowed to vote (with the exception of Maltese, Cypriots and Irish EU citizens who were able to vote). This as a real violation of the right to free movement, even if cases have not reached the European Court of Justice.

Ruivi Ziegler focused on the two main groups affected by Brexit: EU27 citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU27. There was no symmetry between the two groups. In his view, protection of citizens' rights should not be based on reciprocity, but unilateral guarantees. EU27 citizens in the UK will remain Union citizens, and so “there is no reason why EU citizens in the UK should lose their rights to free movement or to vote in local and European elections”. Some of them will enjoy the same rights of other third country nationals living in the UK for more than a certain period. The EU Institutions' unified front on the protection of EU27 citizens' rights in the UK should be guided by some principles such as equity, symmetry and non-discrimination and it should demand the protection of the integrity of Union law, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and its enforcement framework: “These citizens remain European citizens!”.

However, there are some gaps between the UK government and EU institutions. In particular, in the [UK Policy Paper of June 2017](#), the UK seems obscure when it comes to the changing status of EU27 in the UK: EU27 citizens with 5 years' qualifying period at a cut-off date will be able to apply for 'settled status'. EU27 citizens who were in the UK before the cut-off date but will not yet have met 5 years' qualifying period will be permitted to stay to build up this period, while EU27 citizens who arrived in the UK after the cut-off date will be given a 2-year grace period and may be eligible for settled status. The cut-off date remained an open question and this creates a state of anxiety and uncertainty because it is not clear when this period will start. Another burning issue concerned voting rights in local elections that are granted to EU citizens residing in Member States according to the Union law. Brexit should be seen as an opportunity to extend voting rights also in local government and general elections for all EU27 citizens residing in the UK for more than 5 years.

The participants raised a point that two big ideas/solutions should be introduced in order to defend the right to free movement: a kind of a minimum income scheme (from the bEUcitizen project) and a free movement solidarity fund proposed by ECIT and funded by contributions from the local communities, the country of origin and the EU budget from within its cohesion policy.

Hildegard Schneider considered that there should be serious research regarding exploitation of social benefits and the real need for such expensive measures.

Ziegler agreed with the proposal for the introduction of such a fund, specifying that, paradoxically, in the UK still there used to be a Migration Impact Fund to assist areas affected by migration. Finally, there was a proposal to analyze how British communities in other Member States are mobilizing and engaging to keep and strengthen European rights: we have never seen UK citizens residing in other Member States so committed to EU Citizenship as today.

Session “Empowering Citizens and Making Their Access to EU Institutions More Effective and Participatory”

The third session focused on the various ways in which citizens themselves can take the responsibility to enact change. The panelists at this session were **Gundi Gadesmann** (Head of Communication Unit, European Ombudsman) and **Daniela Vancic** (European Program Manager, Democracy International). The session was moderated by **Hanneke van Eijken** (Assistant Professor EU law at Utrecht University/bEUcitizen Project).

According to **Gundi Gadesmann**, anti-EU movements and Brexit are the result of two misconceptions: (1) Brussels is opaque and no one knows what is going on there (2) citizens cannot participate anyway. Both conceptions are fundamentally flawed. EU citizens have the opportunity to complain to the Ombudsman free of charge and in 24 languages. The ombudsman has the main task of guaranteeing that European bodies meet the standards of good administration and transparency. ”. An example of “revolving doors” was Barroso’s appointment as senior advisor with Goldman Sachs. The European Ombudsman receives individual complaints and takes strategic initiatives. The European Ombudsman can act on the basis of complaints from citizens, NGOs or business associations and it can issue recommendations in response to complaints. The second pillar of the Ombudsman’s work is strategic inquiries in case of systemic failure, such as revolving doors, conflicts of interests, lack of transparency or lack of “lobbying transparency”. One third of the Ombudsman’s work deals with perceived lack of transparency, especially about the position taken by Member States in Brussels and *trialogue meetings*, which are too often held behind closed doors. In the last year the European Ombudsman’s office worked on Brexit and successfully proposed that there must be transparency in the negotiations.

Daniela Vancic emphasized too that there is a need to overcome the feeling that Brussels is too far from the citizens. One of the solutions could be the revision of the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI). This instrument has three main weaknesses: it is not very user-friendly, it is not very well-known and it is not binding and not legislatively effective since the Commission is not obliged to take actions on the ECIs that reached the signatures requirement. Out of 67 initiatives tried, only 4 have reached the 1 million signature threshold and none has led to any clear legislative proposal.

Mr. Timmermans, the Vice President of the European Commission, announced the revision process in April 2017 during the ECI Days and recently met with Democracy International. A public consultation on ECIs has been closed on 16 August 2017 and we will know more about the ECI revision process by the end of the year ¹. Democracy International presented some recommendations for the revision process and it is asking to lessen administrative barriers and streamline collection of signatures, use an app for smartphones and a regular ECI newsletter by the Commission that would also help to make citizens more aware. Her organisation collected over 83,000 signatures for a petition to save the ECI. Democracy International wants also to make ECIs more effective in terms of leading to legislation. This last point is the most difficult one: the ECI should not be fully binding but it is essential to make it more concrete.

Hildegard Schneider pointed out that ECIs were not always relevant for citizens. For example in the area of European rights, enforcement was more important than new legislation.

Participants considered the revision of the ECI as a necessary step in order to empower citizens' access to EU institutions. However, the introduction of help desks could help to increase their awareness about their rights and how to exercise them. In particular, **Ms. Van Eijken** closed the panel pointing out that people need not only to be more aware about the tools that they have to make their voice heard at European level, but also about the limits of competences of the European institutions. Participants agreed and considered that teaching these tools at school could be an effective way to increase their awareness.

Session "Education for European Citizenship"

The final session of the first day consisted of presentations by **Sigrid Steininger** (Representative of NECE Network – Networking European Citizenship Education) and **W.E. Bakker** (bEUcitizen Project), with the moderator being **Alexandrina Najmowicz** (Director, European Civic Forum).

Alexandrina Najmowicz opened the panel reminding participants that education for European citizenship is a tricky issue because it is not a field of competence of the European Union and there are no European guidelines. Nonetheless, at the Council of Europe, there is the Charter for Education for Citizenship and Human Rights (2010) that gives a definition of education to citizenship, but only 13 Member States have in their own legislation a specific mention about EU citizenship education. Her organization, the European civic forum, was campaigning for a long overdue civic dialogue at European level.

Professor Bakker considered civic education essential for empowering citizens to exercise their rights and to participate as active members of a political community. According to his view, EU

¹ On 13 September 2017 the Commission presented a [Proposal for a Regulation on the ECI](#).

citizenship education should focus on knowledge, attitudes, skills and competences emphasizing EU citizenship. He presented the findings of the bEUcitizen research that focused on seven EU countries: Germany, Hungary, Croatia, Ireland, France, the Netherlands and Spain. The research shows that there is a wide range of citizenship policies and practices across Europe with variation on the focus and number of hours devoted to civic education in schools. However, there are also some similarities when it comes to education: these practices have a clear focus on the national level, it is a highly neglected area within the national curricula and, when the EU dimension is addressed, the focus is dominantly on the factual and theoretical knowledge of the EU (Treaties, institutions).

The bEUcitizen research shows that pupils are hardly educated in what their EU citizenship is, nor are they trained in competences to realize or enforce their EU rights. As a result, young adults leave secondary school without being taught the civic and political competencies to participate in the variety of political communities on different levels to which they belong. To improve civic education, teaching material should be flexible, with an interactive approach based on experiences and not on the knowledge of institutions. For this reason, bEUcitizen's researchers produced [five teaching packages](#) for secondary school pupils (age 14/15 to 17) on 5 different subjects and additional five workshop modules for older students of tertiary education and NGOs. A specific example was shown to participants.

Sigrid Steininger encouraged the use of the website, database and magazine by the [NECE](#) network. NECE is a European network (not an EU network) and in the recent years has widened the topics and its geographical area also to Northern Africa. European systems are very diverse and difficult to evaluate so there is a danger that comparative studies overlook the excellent work done by individual teachers and NGOs. To overcome the problems affecting citizenship education (i.e. implementation and accessibility to education, translation of European material mostly available in English) she considers both formal and informal education essential. Even if there are many committed and hard-working teachers they usually find it hard to deal with very complex subjects and topics such as the economic crisis, Brexit and European citizens' rights. Moreover, in the last 3-4 years the discussion on citizenship education focused almost only on the prevention of radicalization and fight against terrorism. This approach, of encouraging thinking that in our schools there are potential terrorists, is not positive.

Participants pointed out that another major problem at European level is a diversity in educational levels between rural and urban areas. There is also the need to educate the older generation who are currently tending to become more euro-skeptical. These two major problems showed themselves with the British referendum when elder citizens from rural areas voted in favour of the 'leave' side. Hence, fostering a synergy between formal and informal channels of education should be a way to face the major problems and challenges affecting citizenship

education at European level.

DAY 2, 31 AUGUST

The second day of the summer university adopted a more interactive approach. In the morning, participants had the opportunity to choose two of the five meetings organized by ECIT's partners, whilst in the afternoon, they could choose between two options: first, the workshops "Enacting European citizenship" and "Political European citizenship" and second, the Master Class in citizen lobbying organized by The Good Lobby. A public debate on Brexit and European citizenship followed in the evening.

Partner Meeting organized by CATCH EyoU 1

"Learning (Or Not Learning) About European (Active) Citizenship In School? What Teachers And Students Want"

This Partner Meeting, led by **Cinzia Albanesi** and **Elvira Cicognani** (University of Bologna) discussed some results of the Work Package 6 of the **CATCH-EyoU project** whose aim was to identify and analyse key discourses on the EU and youth active citizenship in school textbooks and among teachers and students. The research used a qualitative mixed methods approach, involving 5 countries, 26 schools, 101 teachers of different disciplines, 387 students and analysis of 34 textbooks. From the study it emerged that teachers consider the approach of textbooks regarding the EU, civic and political issues absent and superficial. In addition, teachers recognize their key role but they feel constrained by programmes and curricula/pressure on evaluation and everything seemed based on personal commitment. Moreover, teachers feel that they are not trained enough on the European Union and on citizenship education.

After discussing these results, the workshop participants made some recommendations in order to improve citizenship education in schools. In particular, they pointed out the need to make European and citizenship education a responsibility of the school at different levels and to include it in the curricula. Textbooks should be accompanied by other materials from EU offices and videos that would allow a full understanding of what the EU is and how it works. A more interactive teaching method should be introduced with the use of simulation games to experience democracy. A school trip to Brussels to see how EU Institutions work and other measures to enhance the critical thinking of students should be considered. Cooperation between formal, non-formal and informal education should be introduced. Another important step would be the inclusion of mandatory training for teachers on the European Union and on citizenship education when studying to become teachers and each 5 years afterward. It would also be useful to provide teachers with a mentor that may help them to access European funding more easily (establish networks, participate to Erasmus+ projects). Finally, participants proposed

that EU decision makers should go to schools to explain the EU policy-making process.

*Partner Meeting organized by New Europeans
:“What Does The Future Hold For British Europeans?”*

At this session chaired by **Roger Casale** , **Rui Ziegler** developed the ideas he had put forward the previous day and presented the proposals by New Europeans.. There was discussion of the idea that had been put forward in the European Parliament for some kind of associate EU citizenship for UK citizens post-Brexit.The idea that access to this status should be voluntary but somehow linked to an entry fee reflected concerns in the Parliament about the potential loss to the EU budget after the UK’s departure. The proponents of this approach in the liberal group of the Parliament had sensed however that there was not much support from other political groups for this approach.

There was discussion about the tendency of EU negotiators to put together the two groups of EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU and to insist on reciprocity. New Europeans objected to this approach on principle insisting instead that citizens should not be used as bargaining chips in negotiations and that there should be unilateral guarantees by each side to fully preserve existing rights. This position had achieved considerable support among opposition parties in the UK and even in government circles but had been turned down by Theresa May.

It was suggested that more groups representing European citizens should have a chance to put forward their views in open hearings-just the publication of negotiating positions was not enough to understand what was happening and that there should be more unity of purpose among the main protagonists such as New Europeans, the British in Europe and the 3 million.

*Partner Meeting organized by CatchEyoU 2
“Europe on Young People’s Mind. Does the Road lead to E(yo)U?”*

The aim of the meeting, led by **Elvira Cicognani** and **Cinzia Albanesi (University of Bologna)** was to share and discuss some preliminary findings of part of the **CATCH EyoU** project, including a large cross sectional and longitudinal study on about 10000 adolescents (15-18years old) and young adults (20-26years old) in all eight countries of the consortium (Italy, Portugal, UK, Sweden, Germany, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece). The study examined young people’s views on the EU and their role as active EU citizens, their various forms of social and political engagement and factors and processes of the construction of active EU citizenship. Moreover, it studied variations of processes of construction depending on subgroups as defined by country, gender, age, educational background and life situation.

Currently the first wave of the study has been completed (data collected after Brexit between

October 2016 and January 2017) and the second wave is planned for autumn 2017 (1 year after), so, only preliminary descriptive findings are available. Overall, the evidence indicates that:

- Young peoples' interest towards the EU is at average levels, with differences according to countries (e.g. the highest levels in UK, the lowest levels in Sweden), and increases between adolescents and young adults;
- Identification as European is overall above average levels, and generally increases with age (except for Greece, which scores lower than the other countries); UK young people obtain the highest scores;
- According to young people, the “good EU citizen” is seen as acting to claim social justice (e.g. challenging social injustice, supporting the worse off), is able to independently form his/her opinion of the EU, speak out about EU issues and votes at EU elections;
- The ideal EU is above all a community with shared responsibilities, a tolerant place where people share values, as well as a place where they can travel without borders;
- Participants consider youth unemployment and refugee issues as very important in the EU and the approach currently adopted to address them is seen as still insufficient. Most critical views come from young people in Greece and Italy (youth unemployment) and Italy and the Czech Republic (refugee issues). The problem of countries which may want to leave the EU is seen as an important issue to be addressed by young people from all the countries.
- In general, young people feel that they have little influence over the decisions that are taken by the EU, with some variations across countries; feelings of efficacy slightly increase among young adults.
- Around 30% of the participants have participated on issues related to the EU;
- Young people orientations toward the EU seem to improve among young adults vs adolescents, contrary to the pattern emerging from analyses on existing large European surveys in the public domain (e.g. ESS, PIDOP). Historical and generational factors need to be examined, amongst the other potential explanations.
- SES still discriminates in young people's responses (in favour of youth coming from more affluent backgrounds), indicating that action is needed to ensure equal opportunities for all European youth
- There is evidence that mobility experiences, even if short term, positively contribute to enhancing positive youth orientations toward the EU and their EU participation.

The findings raised several questions and comments from participants, some of which will be taken up among the analyses planned in the upcoming months, including comparisons between national and EU trust in institutions, identification with the EU and the national countries, the importance of considering the influence of socioeconomic factors, the need to have more precise measures of participation at the EU level capable to discriminate between different kinds of activities. It was clarified that the quantitative findings need to be complemented by qualitative findings that are provided by other work packages, and allow to better understand the processes and young people perspectives.

*Partner Meeting organized by IVY and Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)
“Interreg, Making EU Citizenship Real!”*

AEBR organised a “Partner’s Meeting” and provided a rather new and original contribution to the “EU citizenship” topic. Indeed, the aim of AEBR’s session was to show the tangible role of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC, also known as “Interreg”) in boosting EU citizenship with a particular focus on youth. In particular, speakers, among other relevant inputs, presented some concrete examples of projects (e.g. “people-to-people” projects and the ongoing “Interreg Volunteer Youth” initiative) that significantly contribute to make Europeans aware of the many benefits linked to their EU citizenship status.

In particular, **Mr. Martin Guillermo Ramirez** (Secretary General, AEBR) explained how ETC and cross-border cooperation (CBC) are the very first and probably most concrete example of a true European integration process, which is the basis for an authentic EU citizenship.

Ms. Ana Nikolov (Coordinator for Balkans, AEBR & Director of Planning, CESC Balkans) continued by providing an interesting perspective on the Balkans area, focusing on the concept of European citizenship, beyond the EU and explaining that the Balkan population living in border areas tend to be more inclined to EU values and membership rather than the one not directly experiencing CBC.

Mr. Doede Sijtsma (Senior Adviser, Province of Gelderland, Netherlands) contributed by explaining the valuable role of small projects in CBC and especially focused on the so-called “people-to-people” (P2P) projects which are very much citizen-oriented. Mr. Sijtsma pointed out that the importance of this kind of project has been fiercely defended within the European Committee of Regions (CoR), which is the EU body where regions and municipalities from all Member States are represented to advise the Union. In particular, Mr. Sijtsma revealed that Mr. Pavel Branda (Member of the CoR) presented a report within the CoR in order to stress the important role of P2P projects and the challenges and risks these projects face: they are not anchored in the regulations, and bigger projects are often preferred by Managing Authorities as being more cost-effective and having a *measurable* impact. It is also difficult to link the soft effects of such projects to indicators related to the EU2020 strategy focusing on jobs and growth (which shows the lack of methodology and suitable evaluation indicators for P2P projects).

The session continued with **Mr. Gianluca Comuniello's** (Policy Officer, European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional & Urban Policy - DG REGIO) presentation of the "**Interreg Volunteer Youth**" (IVY) initiative which is co-financed by the European Commission's DG REGIO and part of the broader **European Solidarity Corps Initiative** launched by the European Commission in December 2016. During his intervention, Mr. Comuniello explained that this initiative is a clear example of a way to involve young Europeans in experiences that make them feel true and active EU citizens.

Last but not least, AEBR's session concluded with a testimonial by **Ms. Birgit Sandu Gociu's** (former IVY volunteer) on her experience as a volunteer at the EURAC Research Center in Bolzano where she was involved in the GaYa project (funded by the Interreg Alpine Space Programme). Birgit not only shared her enthusiasm in participating in IVY but also in the project itself as GaYa aims to increase the quality of democratic processes in the Alpine space by enhancing the involvement of young people in regional governance and by developing new approaches for decision makers – which is again in line with the topic of the Summer University – i.e. boosting EU citizenship!

As it appears from all the speakers' interventions, the aim of AEBR's participation in this event was to make CBC/ETC/Interreg issues more visible in the EU arena and broader public as well as to stress its crucial and tangible role "EU citizenship".

*Partner Meeting organized by Flock Brexit
"All Citizens created Equal? The ECI and its Obstacles"*

This partner meeting focused on the importance of citizen participation and the way that regular citizens can take action and become the catalysts for change. **Ed Alvarado** (creator of ECI "**EU Citizenship for Europeans**" also known as "Flock Brexit") described the step-by-step procedure through which any EU citizen can gather a committee of seven other citizens in order to start a European Citizens' Initiative.

To begin, he stressed the importance of doing legal research before trying to register the idea. The European Commission takes two months to review any submission for an ECI, and it has refused to register almost half of the European Citizens' Initiatives that have been submitted. Many of these rejections have taken place because the Commission could not establish that it had the power to act, which is why Alvarado said it is important to have a sound legal basis as well as a strong political argument. He then explained the timeline that it takes for the ECI to be registered on the Commission's website, as well as the procedure and timeline to prepare the system for online collection of signatures. Regarding the online system, Alvarado suggested that participants take the time to think and decide which online system they want to use. One option is a free system that the European Commission provides for organizers of ECIs. It is a standard pre-approved system that they can implement for their initiative, but this system takes a while

to set up because of documentation that has to go through Brussels and Luxembourg. This free system also requires organizers to agree to provisions that use very technical language, so it's important that one of the ECI organizers is familiar with technological terminology. The other options that organizers have is to create their own system, but Alvarado warned that this process can take a very long time since it must meet various security standards which need to be approved by the national authority where the servers of the online system would be located. Participants were then able to get an insider's look into all the components of the Flock Brexit ECI, including the website, social media accounts, and online system for signatures.

During the Q&A part of the workshop, participants were interested in the campaigning aspect of taking on an ECI. Alvarado stressed the importance of establishing partnerships with interested organizations *before* registering the ECI because one of the challenges that he faced was the time it took to explain the idea to the organizations and their unawareness as to how the ECI would fit with their ongoing campaigns. Other questions were focused on the financial aspect of campaigning, and Alvarado highlighted research that suggests each signature requires a one euro investment, therefore one million signatures would require one million euros, which is why he again stressed the need to have partner organizations. In order to give participants some positive food for thought, he showed that the most recent initiative to reach one million signatures had accomplished this with roughly €327,000 of contributions, so perhaps strategic campaigning as well as the clever use of technology could compensate for any lack of funding.

Workshop "Enacting European Citizenship"

The workshop presented different experiences of practical local activism networked across Europe and explored how Europeans are enacting European Rights. The guest speakers were **Gilles Pelayo** (Head of Unit "Europe for Citizens Programme", EACEA, European Commission) and **Marie-Hélène Caillol** (President of Franck Biancheri Network and Cofounder of iCAN), moderated by **Niccolo Milanese** (Chair of European Alternatives).

Gilles Pelayo opened the workshop pointing out that citizenship is already real beyond formal aspects in ways that do have impact on our daily lives (e.g. roaming). In order to improve this transnational citizenship, the European Union promotes different kind of projects which aim at making changes on the ground as well as promoting the involvement of citizens who would like to be active, discuss and reflect their own reality in order to make proposals. Many of the current European projects focus on euro skepticism and how to counter it.

Marie-Hélène Caillol began her presentation by describing life and work of Franck Biancheri. He was the founder of the first European student association (AEGEE Europe), he spent his life introducing, launching and managing projects and organizations in order to create a more democratic Europe. When he passed away in 2012, Franck Biancheri was the director of research

of the Laboratoire européen d'Anticipation politique (LEAP) and the founder and president of honour of Newropeans, a trans-European political party. M.H. Caillol, his companion and closest colleague, founded the association «Les Amis de Franck Biancheri» (AAFB) in tribute to him. In July 2017, the Franck Biancheri network and iCAN launched Citizen Route 73 in order to develop a common political offer for the 2019 European elections. The number represents the potentially vacant seats left free by UK MEPs after Brexit and that could be used for the creation of a transnational list.

For **Gilles Pelayo** EU citizenship is real already in many aspects. Implementation of the treaties does have a direct impact on citizens. During the summer, citizens exercise their freedom of movement, carry euros, cross the Schengen area and enjoy free roaming. They also have EU travellers' rights which they can call on.

The majority of citizens have an understanding of EU-level governance. Through the Europe for Citizens Programme, we see an involvement and commitment from around 1 million citizens – this is not reflected through the media, but does reflect a strong vitality.

We deliver two types of projects:

- from more of an abstract angle, through policy-oriented projects at local, national and EU level
- more on-the-ground initiatives.

Such projects shed light on the complexity of certain ongoing issues, such as the immigration crisis. The best projects allow citizens to 'put their name' on the EU and its realities; making abstract seeking institutions accessible is important for offering a useful alternative narrative to the simplicity of populist movements. Such projects break silos, mixing perspectives and experience and expert knowledge from the local to the EU level. These projects allow us to spread cutting-edge democratic innovations at EU level.

Other projects which help enact European citizenship include:

- volunteering across the EU
- the Erasmus Project which boosts European culture and heritage.

Culture is useful, but it is important to avoid the trap of supporting only cultural/'folkloric' projects; a focal point must be politics.

Niccolo Milanese agreed that one can mix projects debates and initiatives (which can be innovative and even disruptive) – imagination is the only limit.

For **Marie-Hélène Caillol** Europe can go nowhere without its citizens – and the Erasmus Programme is a great example of change driven by its citizens.

EU democratization lies at the heart of what we do. We can't simply recycle, but need to keep up with the times. At present, we are faced with very specific challenges, so we know where to focus: Russia, the Eurozone, Brexit. In the last 10 years, issues have become much more European. We need to focus on EU citizen training.

The 2019 EP elections need to be trans-European. The future challenge is the far right. It is especially important to have a trans-European counter to this, since the far right is itself trans-European.

Citizens Route 73

The objective of this new project – launched last July – is to organise trans-organisationally, i.e. to contribute to current movements led by other organisations. There are currently 73 British seats in the EP which could become vacant. We would like to fill them with trans-national representatives but how do we avoid people voting along national lines (e.g. Germans vote for German-led transnational groups)?

Tony Venables said that establishing links among the networks and across the different geographical levels has depended on just a few charismatic individuals, but that needs to evolve because they do hit a glass ceiling. The solution may not be to continually support new projects so much as the existing initiatives by providing them with the infrastructure of a European public sphere. Bridging the local with trans-national projects, like Citizens Route 73, is a big ask, but is needed.

Tony Simpson put forward a different vision: the nuclear disarmament movement was a trans-national effort. Self-mobilisation was very locally focused but spread naturally and contributed to the fall of the Berlin Wall. When the moment is there, there can be an extraordinary surge of mobilisation. EU citizenship needs something of the same kind. Should one base though a campaign on accepting the negative fact that the UK will withdraw from the EU ahead of the 2019 European elections?

Eduardo Alvarado like Tony Simpson is running an ECI focused on Brexit and citizenship. He highlighted the dilemma for campaigning that citizens appear to become active only when there is a looming external threat, and this seems to be the case too for the European Institutions – it is a human reaction. People have protested and died under the EU flag, but once in the EU, it is underestimated, whilst often being overestimated by non-EU members looking in.

It is harder to motivate people to come together when they are not faced with a threat. How can we mobilise from a positive angle? A possible solution may be to suggest a solution to a risk, thus creating a positive story: raise awareness of the risks without creating an idea of a full-on threat.

The challenge of maintaining momentum between potential threats – this isn't just a European issue. It exists at every level. Should we look at involving cities much more when creating an initiative? How can we make the European Parliament more participatory?

Other suggestions were made in the discussion:

Why not create one YouTube multi-lingual channel engaging each individual? The people interviewing politicians makes for good media. It would be a citizen-led initiative and be a very concrete project. Additionally, it is important to reach out to the citizens and raise awareness of current issues but also of their own responsibility in the current landscape.

Trans-national parties must be team-lead, not individually-led. The European Parliament will require a strategy of insurgency. Instead of reforming the current political groupings, there is a big role for outside players to force the change. Political change does not come by talking about formalities, but rather by focusing on inequalities and injustice. Citizenship could well put a veil over such threats, creating a new one. One needs to avoid apocalyptic sentiments.

Workshop “Political European Citizenship”

The second workshop focused on political European citizenship and consisted of presentations by **Roger Casale** (Founder and CEO of New Europeans) and **Eric Edman** (DiEM25 Belgium), moderated by **Benjamin Hulme** (PhD candidate at University of Warwick).

The presentation of **Roger Casale** focused on four main points: with Brexit, citizens are as children in the divorce, who need to speak with one voice and to break the link between citizenship and nationality; concern for the future of British Europeans (who have not exercised their right to freedom of movement); the need to challenge the EU on why they are playing the reciprocity game and not providing unilateral guarantees; the need for groups such as New Europeans to gain the edge in pushing the EU

Eric Edman explained that **DiEM25** is based on the idea that either the European project will be democratised, or it will disintegrate and fall apart. The EU is currently struggling to face its current issues and threats, being often very authoritarian against alternatives. DiEM25 saw the need for a grass roots movement, offering an alternative; a space for those between the nationalists (who want to leave the EU) and the people who think the status quo is good enough. The idea is not to return to nation-states, but to reform the current EU level. DiEM25 is team-led, horizontal and democratic, despite the media very much focusing on a ‘leader’. Members can express their stance on all issues, both local and national, as well as at EU-level, by voting online.

For **Roger Casale** recent years have seen major and epic change. The UK referendum was driven top-down, with people being told what to think. The LibDems, SNP and Greens were the only parties that campaigned against Brexit in the last UK elections. Only citizens can drive change, including a U-turn on Brexit. Trans-national EU citizens can be the vanguard of citizenship, through practical experience. It is a social justice project. Europe is the added value (1+1=3 – British & Italian & European).

How can we get existing parties to behave more like movements? There is also a need for a transnational party. The change needs to be led from the bottom up. How can individuals contribute to the process of grass root movements becoming political?

The answer is that DiEM25 will take a Swiss knife approach – we will be whatever our members want us to be, taking whatever approach they support.

Tony Venables referring to the paper written by Eleonara Eposito commented that there is little research about the relationship between social movements and political parties, but growing interest in different forms this can take. Civil societies can adopt theoretically 1 of 3 positions vis-a-vis European elections:

- Hands-off: the traditional approach from long-standing NGOs- i.e. questionnaires are sent to political parties and candidates – trying to influence existing political parties from the outside (e.g. demand particular legislation)
- Hybrid approach: unholy alliance between civil society movements and political parties in which parties would use civil society representatives as candidates. This would need to happen on a large scale to have an impact. However, this is rarely successful with a danger of tokenism. But, it is a good idea in that civil societies are often more 'Europeanised' than the political parties themselves.
- Full-on approach: become a new transnational, transformist and radical political party, which is very attractive with a European statute and the creation of an EU foundation to benefit from public funding

For **Roger Casale** having transnational parties will be necessary towards creating a United States of Europe.

Values and a sense of common identity bonds us as Europeans. We don't currently have a Union of the citizens, but rather a Europe of the states or business. The EU has found itself on the wrong side of the globalization debate. There's a real PR problem, making it easy for politicians like Farage to find issues to criticize. There needs to be more solidarity.

Migration is the big opportunity for Europe. It's not an issue in of itself – it's an issue in solidarity. How do we shift perspective? The new Europeans are those that need to be welcomed – they help us understand who we are – like the Africans, Syrians, etc. The immigration crisis offers the chance to improve European solidarity and give us a moral cause to unify behind. Europe is about diversity; individual identity is based on our EU rights, and these rights need to be protected and strengthened.

The window of opportunity to creating a United States of Europe may lapse in the next 30 years. International nationalism is ahead of the curb in putting their messages forward. Criticism can be constructive though – observing inadequacies of the EU is not the same as euro-scepticism. We should offer EU citizens a dream of solidarity. The Union would take care of all of its citizens. At the moment, you only feel European when you leave home and cross a border, making use and

enjoying your rights. Those who stay home are those that we need to reach out to finding a way to make them feel more European.

A number of questions were raised in the discussion.

What is EU citizenship based on? Do we not need a constitution to really cement the European project?

One participant suggested the EU should become less visible again in people's day to day lives. Many do not want to see it and do not feel a need for it – they want to be involved on a more local level.

This encouraged the counterargument:

Europe is created through emotional opportunities – people who stay at home need to make the link between progress made in their countries and the EU as the creator of such progress.-ie raise awareness of the funds for example that are made available to them. The EU should not be made invisible to such citizens, but made 30 times more visible, but in the right way. Indeed, it is vital that the EU can say what it has done for those who stay at home (including those who never even leave their home town); if not, it has failed. The EU cannot be made invisible. Even if we choose not to see it, it does not mean it does not exist. More local action and stronger symbolism could increase awareness about the EU.

What story can the Union tell to the stay-at-home citizen? Anti-migration rhetoric, as was used in the Brexit referendum, is very dangerous to the EU. We have a need for European-focused individuals to run in upcoming elections, bringing in their values and principles.

Full political rights for EU citizens should be sought maybe via an ECI – so that EU citizens living abroad can vote in regional and national elections, as well as partake in referenda (See paper by Benjamin Hulme). The obstacle will be to convince those Member States that currently disenfranchise their citizens, not to do so. European Citizens Abroad raised awareness and made comparisons from one Member State to another. There is a gap between practical reality and political willingness. The internet has expanded horizons, giving citizens the chance to be kept up to date on daily news back home – allowing them to stay politically involved and vote. Migration is also changing and evolving, it is often temporary and shifting, so it is important to keep citizens engaged – both stay at home and visiting citizens. The EU could lead the way in showing the world what such a kind of mobile citizenship could look like in terms of political participation.

Master Class in Citizen Lobbying

The Master Class in Citizen Lobbying was held by **Alberto Alemanno** (Co-founder of The Good Lobby). During the three-hour workshop participants gained practical skills to speak up in the policy process and learned how to foster a culture of pro bono collaboration to the benefit of

NGOs. In the first part of the Master Class participants discovered the 10 steps to devise a successful lobbying strategy:

1. **Pick your battle** and choose your issue;
2. **Do your homework** focusing your research on hard facts, data and figures. This will help you to give credibility to your issue;
3. **Map your lobbying environment** and identify who your possible “allies” (who share with you similar ideas) and “enemies” are;
4. **Draw up a lobbying plan**;
5. **Pick your allies** and encourage them to join your cause;
6. **Raise money**;
7. **Plan your communication** addressing to at least policy makers, the general public and the media;
8. **Face-to-face meetings**, especially with policymakers, are a key moment of citizen lobbying;
9. **Monitor progress and delivery**;
10. **Stick to lobbying rules** keeping an eye on the law.

After assimilating these main rules to become a citizen lobbyist, participants took part in a role-play and tested out the concepts just learned. Each participant prepared a pitch answering to three simple questions: “Who are you?”, “What you care about?” and “Why?” Finally, they were divided into 5/6 different groups, each of which prepared its own lobbying strategy about a specific issue (e.g. tax justice, make the process of public consultations more citizen-friendly, make citizens more informed) and explain it to the others participants. The presentations of the lobbying strategies were followed by a short debate

Public Debate

“Brexit: Decoupling European Rights from EU Citizenship?”

Tony Venables welcomed everyone to the MAI and introduced the panel for the debate which was being held almost one year one from that at the first summer university. Over that time very little had changed with over 3 million EU citizens in the UK and over 1.3 million UK.citizens in the EU still in a state of uncertainty with questions about their status and planning their future life still unanswered .He hoped the panel would be able to provide some insights into a confused

situation. This would be followed a debate. A further chance to explore the issues round European rights would occur at the end of the summer university on the following day when there would be a dialogue with the chief negotiator of the European Commission on European citizens' rights, Marie Simonsen.

Rosita Hickey – Head of Strategic Enquiries Unit, European Ombudsman said that there is still a lot of uncertainty around Brexit with “how does it affect me?” unanswered. Many different personal situations: employed, unemployed, part-time, disabled people, etc. Even when things are agreed between the EU and the UK, there will be questions remaining for individuals. Coupled with the uncertainty, there is also a degree of risk. How easily will part-time workers, or those who have interrupted their residency, for example, be able to apply potential new rights?

European citizenship is a crucial angle of attack for the European elections which must improve solidarity and engagement. Brexit is an opportunity for NGOs, civil society organisations, and citizens to make their engagement known to politicians.

The European and national ombudsmen will act as watchdogs – upholding citizens' right during this period of transition. They will gather evidence and report on any problems brought to their attention. The European Ombudsman wrote to the Institutions highlighting the need for full transparency, even ahead of any requests. Such transparency allows for active engagement and scrutiny from experts, as well as general public knowledge. How will civil society organisations and interested citizens be able to interact with the Institutions and participate in the ongoing debate? That remained to be seen. There was more transparency as a result of the European ombudsman's initiative with the publication of negotiating positions, but questions about how Brexit affects different groups in the population are still unanswered.

For **Richard Corbett** a British MEP, from the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, there are signs of shifting public opinion on Brexit in the UK, so there is a small chance that it may not happen. Grass roots movements in the UK could try to stop it, but they are unlikely to succeed. Movements elsewhere can also mitigate its effects, e.g. by proposing associate citizenship, but this is also not likely to succeed. By definition, EU citizenship is granted to nationals of Member States – the removal of such citizenship has not yet been pin-pointed. Could we redefine EU citizenship in the treaties? This would not be an easy task. Or could UK citizens be given a partial citizenship or retain their full rights? This would have to be reciprocal with EU citizens in the UK.

The European Parliament is not a negotiator in the negotiations but is involved, keeping up to date with developments and technicalities. The Parliament can say no to ratifying the separation deal, or refer the matter to the European court of Justice to make sure it is compatible with the treaties. If the question is asked to the Court, the Parliament cannot vote until the judgement is handed down.

Delphine Bourgeois, President of the Consultative Council on EU Affairs of Ixelles said that the first reaction to Brexit was an emotional one of shock – the shock of loss – but then a more strategic approach followed. To date, in Ixelles, 73 British citizens have gained Belgian citizenship, 20 additional citizenship requests are pending and there are on average 5 requests for information per week. European citizenship must be a principal focus in the run up to the next elections.

Andrew Duff – Visiting Fellow, European Policy Centre said that the European parliament should push for an electoral reform vis-à-vis the 73 (ex-) British seats by creating a transnational list, a reform he had promoted in the last Parliament. He was however not too optimistic that the European parliament under its new leadership was being sufficiently bold to push through such reforms. He explained at some length the divergence between the EU which was insisting on the continued jurisdiction of the European court post-Brexit and the UK for which this approach was anathema. A possible solution could be to create a special tribunal made up of EU and UK judges.

Jérémie Charles – Senior Associate at Herbert Smith Freehills and a member of the Good Lobby said that from a legal perspective, Brexit raises an increasing number of challenges. What is its impact on citizenship? EU citizenship is additional to national citizenship, and comes with a series of rights, including freedom of movement, right to vote, to be assisted in a third country, to petition and to organise an ECI. He explained these rights in some detail.

There is no legal basis to suggest that UK citizens will continue to enjoy their EU rights after Brexit. There is a real risk that no trade agreement between the UK and EU will be set up before Brexit – a surely disastrous position for the UK.

There are currently two ECIs asking for UK citizens to retain EU citizenship. It is noteworthy that these were allowed to be registered by the European Commission, but what will happen to ECIs with British signatures after Brexit?

The involvement of the ECJ is key and its opinion should be sought.

The UK will not accept ECJ jurisdiction post-Brexit, but the EU will not trust UK courts to apply rights for EU citizens remaining in the UK. A combined court? That was tried before and struck down by the European Court. The special EFTA court was set up as a result.

Discussion

Participants and panellists found more questions than answers:

What will the European court do if there is no agreement for the UK citizens living abroad? Will UK citizens be treated like third country nationals? Will UK citizens residing in an EU Member State at the point of Brexit receive a European health card for example?

The UK government position in response to House of Lords report was a little disappointing, but in some senses went along with it: EU rights were to be, in large part, written into UK law. The EU position paper took a strong stance, demanding a lot of rights for EU citizens in the UK and also for their descendants.

Whilst the Institutions will not be looking to penalize UK citizens, it is logical that they will try to favour EU citizens. Otherwise, a dangerous precedent will be set. If no agreement is set, each member state will have to agree on a bilateral system with the UK regarding their citizens. No agreement would be the worst outcome, despite what the UK government is saying about that outcome being more favourable than a bad agreement.

On the status of UK citizens in the EU and EU27 in the UK: it would be easier to keep citizenship and rights as they are rather than waste a lot of time probably over a generation with people applying for new citizenship/residency statuses. We need to confront the authorities with the alternatives – the idea of 4 million individuals having to register for a new status is a huge task, practically more so than the bolder idea of just allowing them to retain their current status and rights. Citizenship is now on the political agenda – the idea of citizenship linked to EU residency needs to be highlighted.

One participant proposed to ask the EU to extend the franchise of rights for UK citizens living in the EU to vote and stand to the next European Parliament elections. This would be symbolic of faith in fellow citizenship. Similarly, EU citizens in the UK should be able to keep the rights to vote in local elections.

One reason given for the delay in settling the question of citizenship rights is immigration. The UK should be taking the high road – the EU's negotiating position is for obtaining the best possible outcome for its citizens.

People can make a difference by signing and supporting all the Petitions to the European Parliament and ECIs relating to European citizenship. A proposal was presented to make this easier by **Eduardo Alvarado** which can be found [here](#).

17 million UK voted to remain – could they be stripped of their EU citizenship just like that? This loss will be damaging to national citizenship as well – it is demoted to a second-class citizenship compared to EU Member State citizenships. Absolutely, unless Brexit is retracted, according to **Andrew Duff**. Otherwise the UK can apply for re-entry under Article 39.

For **Claudia Delpero**, editor of Europe Street, there is currently misinformation on an enormous scale in the UK. How can we counter this? It is one of the main reasons why the referendum went the way it did. Tabloids are read by a significant proportion of the population, the BBC is seen to

give equal time to the facts and the lies. Can NGOs and social media be an answer? The weekly *New European* newspaper is trying to counter this. It is also a question of challenging others' misconceptions in daily conversations and reaching beyond the highly educated circles.

DAY 3, 1 September

In the morning of the third day participants could choose between three two-hour Partner Meetings organized by FRAGOMEN, CUBE, Your Take on Europe and MAI & ETH Zürich. Then, the Final Plenary Session was followed by a Lunch – Time Discussion with the representative of the Article 50 Task Force on the state of play in the Brexit negotiations.

Partner meeting organized by FRAGOMEN

“The impact of Brexit on UK nationals with special ID cards: are there any solutions?”

This partner meeting focused on the particular issues faced by UK nationals with special ID cards when applying for Belgian nationality. Many ‘communes’ refuse to count the years spent in Belgium with a special ID card towards the five and ten years requirements. Although many special ID card holders have been living in Belgium for many years, they do not qualify for Belgian citizenship because of this legal provision.

The workshop was moderated by **Christine Sullivan**, Attorney and Manager Worldwide Private Client Practice at Fragomen. The other speakers on the panel were: **Rimma Abadjan**, Associate, Attorney at Law at Fragomen, **Amelie Bovy**, Legal Adviser Welcome Desk, Brussels Commissioner for Europe and **Nivard Bronckaers**, Associate, Attorney at Law at Fragomen.

Christine Sullivan started the session by highlighting how Brexit has forced many British nationals to look for solutions to maintain their EU rights. One of these solutions is applying for the nationality of another EU state. In Belgium, where large numbers of British citizens are employed by European and international institutions, the demand for Belgian nationality has increased considerably. But now British officials are faced with Belgian bureaucracy as well as complex and often inadequate Belgian legislation, making it impossible for many to acquire Belgian nationality.

Nivard Bronckaers then gave an overview of the Belgian legislation in the field of nationality and explained the general conditions a person must fulfil to qualify for Belgian nationality as well as the different routes that exist in practice.

Subsequently, **Amely Bovy** took the floor and emphasised that the mission of the Brussels Commissioner for Europe is to develop a host region policy and welcome all international organisations and their staff on the Brussels-Capital Region territory. More specifically, they

provide administrative assistance to the international community in Brussels. **Amely** also explained why Belgian authorities do not take special ID cards into consideration because those who apply for nationality are supposed to prove a stable residence in Belgium and this is not compatible with the nature of the special ID cards which is supposed to be temporary. Another issue for EU institutions staff is that they do not pay social security contributions in Belgium and therefore they cannot prove they are economically integrated in the Belgian society.

Nivard took the floor to explain that there have been recent Court cases in Belgium in which negative decisions on nationality applications for special ID cards have been successfully appealed. He briefly presented the facts of these cases and the judges' reasoning. In one of these rulings it has been stated that no restrictive character can be assigned to the summary of residence documents which grant access to nationality and that thus the special ID card should be taken into account in the nationality application.

Finally, **Rimma Abadjan** addressed the situation of minor children of special ID card holders who, in general terms, fall under the same status as their parents. She also explained that parents of Belgian children have other routes to Belgian nationality, although this does not mean that it would be easier for them to obtain it.

During the Q&A session many practical and questions specific to individual cases have been raised. The main elements of the discussion were: dual nationality (especially the situations when this is not allowed), the attitude of Belgian *communes* who refuse to send nationality applications of special ID card holders to the Crown Prosecutor's Office and the importance of appealing negative decisions.

One of the most important conclusions of the seminar is that applicants and their legal representatives should use EU law arguments in their applications more. In the end, EU civil servants move to Belgium, they exercise their freedom of movement and they serve the European Union. They cannot be discriminated against because of their special residence cards as this can also be seen as a violation of their fundamental freedom to move freely within the European Union, integrate in their host country and eventually acquire the citizenship of this country.

Partner Meeting organized by CUBE

*"Your Take On Europe "How Can Youth Participation Channels Become Accessible To All?
Fostering Inclusiveness Of European Youth Participation"*

The workshop examining the question "How can youth participation channels become accessible to all?" was organized by the social project **CUBE. Your Take on Europe** (cubeyourtake.eu). CUBE

has the goal of transforming youth participation into the EU into a more inclusive, more intersectional and more qualitative channel.

The project pursues this goal by facilitating workshops all over the EU region through a trainer network. In the workshop the young participants are asked: “what are your personal problems concerning participation in the European context?”. As a next step, the participants create their Utopia of how participation should look like to fit their needs. These ideas are then presented by them to local politicians, discussing what can be done locally to make these utopias become reality. CUBE gathers all these ideas, extracts the political demands and lobbies for them in a campaign in the upcoming 2019 elections. CUBE aims at changing youth participation on the one hand and on the other hand, the project presents a qualitative, scalable model of participation.

The session was designed in order to identify the puzzle of exclusivity in youth participation. What are the experiences, the trials and the challenges of the side of civil society and the European Commission? With the goal of phrasing clear answers to the problem obvious to all, the workshop was meant to be discursive. After a short input by the youth activist **Umesh Mukhi**, the invitees were asked to give a short statement on the question:

“Why are certain young social groups underrepresented in European participation channels?”

Céline Guedes, junior officer at the **foundation for European progressive studies (FEPS)** presents her statement with the project “Millennial dialogue” (<https://www.millennialdialogue.com/>). Her four main points are:

Firstly, youth engages in a different way: Instead of engagement in the traditional system young people tend to get active for global issues in a more activist manner. Secondly, the research finds that they have trust in the system, however, hardly in so-perceived career politicians. Thirdly, the disenchantment with politics arises from the frustration with not being able to see deliveries. They are growing up to a grey looking economic future as one of the most excluded groups, not expecting change from the side of politics. Fourthly, the youngsters are to be found in group actions rather than political parties. However, the high interest in politics does not necessarily mean action. This brings Céline to her statement that there is a need to harness this existing will to participate and find ways to catch the youngster’s engagement institutionally as well.

Valentin Dupouey-Sterdyniak is the secretary general of the **young european federalists (yef)**. As a first hand experienced young activist he brings in a more practical viewpoint adding to the research. The art of meaningful interaction in times of growing individualism and disconnection between the manifold social groups has to happen at the local level. He points at the solidarity corps as a mean to be evaluated, in terms of building trust among citizens. In order to build trust and social cohesion in the societies in the European Union, he emphasizes the importance of civic education and local participation structures. In order to disseminate the policies youth councils, students councils and alike are needed to spread information and build bottom-up channels. He argues that the NGO networks are doing their share, however within policies the situation looks more challenging concerning inclusivity.

Yannick Le Guern, President and Founder of the company B1-AKT Leading Sustainable Strategies and Paragon Communication offers a perspective on the role of identity concerning participation. He brings into consideration that millennials are not a representative group and the notions differ widely according to the socioeconomic background. The feeling not being in the role to participate and the little interest in the idea of a European identity needs to be countered by education and the development of a dialogue on values. The young vision needs to present in the agenda setting process. Key projects like a European identity, Intergenerational dialogues, young leader development and communication can be and should be approached through methods of social entrepreneurship and innovation labs.

Laura Petrache, Founder of Migrant Sustainable Integration Lab & Director of AKT AS 1 – Leading Intercultural Training Institute, focuses on the role of language and the skills to participate. She makes clear that there needs to be communication and an information flow about best practices building a common archetype. In order to enable participation the challenge of language, rhetorics and linguistic competences needs to be addressed. The project of bringing people into dialogue has to be built on hybrid identities and new ways of exchange. These new ways have to be explored by networks and the invitation on the side of politics to create policies. Global sustainable networks are named as a solution, as well as lab and agile structures.

Michalis Moschovakos, policy officer in European Commission's Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sports and Culture with a focus on social inclusion and participation of young people with fewer opportunities explains the status quo of the activities of the European Commission and the challenges. The youth report, structured dialogue and eurodesk multiplier network are named as success in order to meet the question of inclusive structures. He points to the fact that we need to work towards a global identity and refrain from identity politics. The challenges lay in the lack of harmonization and the little competences the Commission is able to work with concerning this topic.

Discussion outcomes

The session was able to summarize ideas and point at certain challenges

Best practices:

1. The youth organisations involved in the management of the solidarity corps and erasmus serve as a best practice example and should be build onto.
2. The advisory board in the Council of Europe can be taken as an interesting strategy to be adopted.
3. The focus should be on unorganized youth, which can be reached through agile project structures investing in capacity building.

Ideas:

1. The ideas discussed were among others to implement a co-creation policy with the European Parliament through hearings in the committee and yield power on funding decisions to the EP.
2. In order to build a new narrative for Europe we need ERasmus for younger people and funding structures for internships for non-students and students.
3. Student parties could be used in order to connect student groups with political parties.

Challenges:

1. There is a need to collect best practices and establish a coherent strategy.
2. There needs to be a social paradigm in policy making concerning approaching youth as a diverse group.
3. And very concrete the structured dialogue needs to be re-evaluated and progressed

Partner Meeting organized by MAI & ETH Zürich
“Optimism – Building For Europe! A European House of Citizens?”

This meeting chaired by **Tony Venables** was attended by 15 participants-delegates at the summer university and representatives of “visit Brussels”, the Royal Commission on monuments and sites and the board of MAI .Opening the session Tony Venables explained that in the past he had worked on a proposal to create a European citizens’ house which was enthusiastically seen as necessary outside Brussels and supported by a budget line in the European Parliament. The project however came up against resistance from EU insiders who claimed that they already performed the functions of such a house. He was glad to see that this idea was nevertheless still being considered.

An Fonteyne, explained that along with her architecture students at ETH Zurich university she wanted to create a strong European identity with such a house as a place where people can gather, learn from each other and demonstrate .The assignment the students had to carry out was to design such a house. She had chosen as the location the skyscraper near the Sablon in Brussels, often described as the ugliest building in the city, and built on the site of the “Maison du people” which was created for the socialist party by Victor Horta and demolished in 1965.The students would undertake a study visit to Brussels, inspect the site and have a number of meetings with EU and city representatives before coming up with their designs at the end of the year. A number of points were made in the discussion:

-the destruction of the Horta building remained traumatic for many in Brussels and although even its remnants were scattered it was still remembered -a good example of the power of architecture linked to a mission;

-the house should not only exist in Brussels but also across Europe. Why not Manchester for example? It should be very multi-functional offering services, different spaces, and be accessible from anywhere thanks to a strong IT component;

-traditionally EU symbols have been low key in order not to challenge national sovereignty but in times of crisis stronger symbols are necessary and a place where citizens can come together;

-the project for the students was not entirely new with a number of locations such as visit brussels and the MAI itself seeing themselves as welcoming structures for citizens.

In closing the session **Tony Venables** said he thought it had been a good example of how necessary a multi-disciplinary approach is to European citizenship -architects have a role too!. Participants would be kept informed of the follow up.

Final brainstorming session: How to Defend and Reconfigure European Citizenship?

The final brainstorming session was led by **Niccolo Milanese** (Chair of European Alternatives) and **Tony Venables** (Director MAI and Founder of ECIT).

The summer university had shown in the main sessions but also in the partner meetings that there was a critical mass of initiatives now of different kinds-spontaneous, more organized relating to spreading active EU citizenship This was new and encouraging, but not enough...There was also a sense that resources-or rather the lack of them, dispersal and uncertainty were preventing these initiatives from making as much impact as they should. Hence the value of coming together at events such as this.

Tony Venables stressed that this mixed picture had been shown in the difference between the two previous days. If the first day was light (with the presentations of positive reports on citizenship research, free movement, empowering citizens and citizenship education), the second was shade because the discussion underlined that there is still lot of work to do if European citizenship is to become more political. The main emphasis had been on the single issue of transnational bill for the next European elections.

Niccolo Milanese requested comments and remarks about the event and it was suggested that ECIT Foundation should issue an appeal to European citizens to defend and promote Union citizenship, whilst urging them to [sign all the ECIs and petitions](#) that are currently in the Commission and in the European Parliament.

Then, participants joined four **roundtables** to consider the future agenda of ECIT and the future challenges.

1. **A more coherent approach to European citizenship.** Looking at the ECIT 12 Point Agenda and Guidelines, participants proposed:

- The introduction of a **European citizens' house** in every region to provide information, education and advice;
- A **citizens' card** to reduce bureaucracy, make it easier to claim European rights and sign appeals to the EU;
- A **change of EU Treaties** to introduce a European citizenship based on residence;
- A **free movement solidarity fund** funded by contributions from the local communities, the country of origin and the EU budget.

2. **A more locally based approach to European citizenship.** In order to link community action across borders, participants proposed to reinforce different types of networks:
 - **Cities – villages networks** in order to reduce the gap between rural and urban areas;
 - **Faith networks;**
 - Make use of **local libraries** to reinforce networks across borders and educate citizens.

3. **EU reforms necessary to connect citizens.** Participants proposed some essential changes in order to empower citizens and make their voices heard at European level:
 - Revision of the **ECI Regulation** in order to make this tool more citizen-friendly and better known;
 - Reform of the **education system** with more EU engagement in promoting European civic education and with MEPs going to schools and teaching pupils about the institutions' work. European civic education should be mandatory and evaluation should focus more on skills and critical thinking.
 - **Communication reform** improving institutions' websites and creating a new common online platform.

4. **A more political approach to European citizenship.** In the run up to the 2019 European elections, European citizenship should be on the agenda. Participants asked for the following reforms:
 - The introduction of **two houses in the European Parliament**, one based on national and the other on transnational/European lists;
 - **A single European asylum system;**
 - Recognition of **full political rights** that allow citizens living in another European Member State to vote in all national elections and referenda.

Lunch-time Discussion with Task Force Article 50

“The State of Play in Negotiations on European Rights Between the EU and the UK”

The three-day Summer University coincided by chance with the third round of EU-UK negotiations. The representative for the Task Force Article 50 **Ms. Marie Simonsen** (Legal and Policy Officer at the European Commission, Task Force Art. 50) accepted the invitation for a lunchtime discussion on the state of play in negotiations on European rights.

Suzana Carp in opening the session stressed that it was being held under Chatham house rules. Recently the two sides in the Brexit talks had focused on recognition of professional qualifications, social security and frontier workers. Both sides agreed on including frontier workers in the scope of the withdrawal agreement and in recognizing for them the same rights they enjoyed before the referendum. An accord has been reached also on the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) issue, recognizing the rights to the EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU to be covered in their health expenses by their own State. However, there has been little progress on some burning issues where disagreement still persisted.

The two sides had not reached an agreement on residence rights of EU nationals in the UK before the cutoff date. Disagreement persists on important issues such as family reunification. Regarding family members' reunification, the UK would like to apply the same rules applied to non-EU nationals joining British citizens. The UK is also wanting all citizens to re-apply for "settled status" even if they have already obtained permanent residence. On the other side, the EU wants to avoid this type of approach and recognize to future family members joining EU citizens in the UK after the withdrawal the same rights of residence as current family members.

Recognition of professional qualifications has also been discussed. The UK government wants to protect the right of UK professional qualifications to be accepted in all EU Member States. On the European side, students who will obtain diplomas after Brexit will not be included in the agreement. Their professional qualifications will be recognized applying the same rules enjoyed by third country nationals. The main goal of the EU is not to discuss what people may decide for their future, but to protect life choices they already made.

The biggest question discussed during the third round of negotiations and still open concerned the application of the final agreement. If the UK wants to transpose the final deal into national law, the EU is pushing for direct effect of the final deal and the role of the European Court of Justice. It was highlighted that the Commission is confident to be able to conclude negotiations.

Participants worried about the possibility of a "no deal scenario", for which it was explained that both UK and EU are engaged in reaching an agreement but this scenario cannot be excluded. The Commission's approach is basically centered on protecting the rights of all groups of citizens who are currently covered by EU law (EU27 living in the UK, UK nationals living in another Member State).

What should we do? Steps to be taken after the Summer University

At the final session of the summer university on 1 September it was suggested and immediately accepted that the ECIT Foundation should issue an appeal to European citizens to defend and promote Union citizenship. This appeal has been formulated under the acronym "[CLAIM](#)" to

make it easy to remember. Participants, speakers and partners of the summer university to send us their feedbacks and comments as well as put it on their website, spread it via social media, or attach it to e-mails. This includes a campaign for European citizenship called “Sign, Sign and...Sign!” encouraging citizens to support as many ECIs and petitions as possible.

Finally, the summer university left ECIT to push for:

- A free movement solidarity fund;
- A citizens’ card;
- Recognition of full political rights that allow citizens living in another European Member State to vote in all national elections and referenda;
- A European citizens’ house in every region to serve as an open space for information, advice and debate.