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ON EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP

SEPTEMBER • 21 • 22 • 2020

104 RUE D'ARLON 1040 AND SECO

53 RUE D'ARLON 1040 BRUSSELS

104 RUE D'ARLON 1040 AND SECO 53 RUE D'ARLON 1040¹

Cca 73% on average of people living in the EU see themselves as in some way “European citizens” (Standard Eurobarometer 91 Spring 2019, 16) - even higher figures are apparent among the young, whilst even in the most euro-sceptical countries the average is over half. This average has increased overtime and was reflected in the increased turnout in the European elections of May 2019. Freedom of movement of people within the EU appears consistently as the most popular of the EU's achievements. Practice of a more social and environmental European citizenship is apparent at local level and should be better connected and scaled up. The number of people living and working permanently in another EU Member State has doubled in the last decade to reach 18 million and millions more are experiencing Europe and networking across borders. Why is it then that more efforts are not being undertaken so that the development of European citizenship would follow these favourable societal trends ?

The summer university, like its previous editions, will bring together civil society activists, researchers and EU policy makers together to build consensus about how to support and develop this first transnational citizenship of the modern era. The aim is to put EU citizenship more firmly on the agenda of each of these groups and help forge a degree of consensus among them. The 2020 edition will be organised in cooperation with NECE (Networking for European Citizenship Education).

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- ★ How to educate for European citizenship, so that it captures the popular imagination?
- ★ How to make EU citizenship as relevant to those citizens who stay at home as to those on the move?
- ★ What are the boundaries of European citizenship?
- ★ What new political, social and environmental rights should be added to EU citizenship?

September 2020 will be one year on from the start of a new European Parliament, the appointment of a new Commission and the start of the planning of the Citizens' Conference on the Future of Europe. This is the right time to engage with the EU Institutions and impress on them the need to support programmes on education for citizenship and democracy. The Summer University will result in a declaration which will be taken to the NECE event in Berlin at the beginning of November.

¹ : Subject to change

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PLENARY SESSION - MORNING OF MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

SHOULD THERE BE A NEW IMPETUS TO EDUCATING FOR CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE ?

Questions for debate: To what extent will the new EU multiannual programmes for education, research and values offer opportunities for citizenship education? What could be the added value of the Council of Europe's reference framework of competences for democratic culture?

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WORKSHOPS - AFTERNOON OF MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

HOW CAN CIVIL SOCIETY RESEARCHERS AND POLICY MAKERS CONTRIBUTE TO EDUCATION FOR EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP ?

Participants will have a choice among three informal brainstorming workshops:

a a a ACTIVE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP

In the run up to the 2019 European elections there was an array of imaginative projects with young activists crossing borders in Europe. They were highlighting local struggles with a European dimension, reaching out in particular to minority groups and those likely to suffer discrimination and explaining to them that they had European rights and should vote in the European elections. A new generation is showing a willingness to take over the task of explaining and involving people in Europe and finding innovative ways of doing so and was largely responsible for the increase in turn out to reach over 50%. How to maintain the momentum and achieve better turnout in 2024? What role can non-governmental organisations have in educating for European citizenship?

b b b RESEARCH AGENDAS FOR EU CITIZENSHIP

The volume of research and publications related to European citizenship is impressive and has highlighted the importance of this spread of grassroots activity. Inevitably, findings are influenced by differences in perception as to how the EU might develop either in a more intergovernmental or more common European or federal direction. Perceptions of how this first transnational citizenship of the modern era might develop differ among researchers. On the one hand it has become more popular, whilst on the other providing no answers to the series of crises the EU has faced. What are the future perspectives for research on European citizenship and how should it be taught in and out of schools? Are there examples of best practice which can be scaled up?



EU POLICY INITIATIVES RELATED TO EU CITIZENSHIP

A basis for the discussion will be the latest Commission report on activities related to EU citizenship under Article 25 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the Union, which should provide an overview. There is though a difficulty in interpreting the policy on EU citizenship. Responsibilities are scattered across different Commission departments and in the other Institutions. There appears to be a shift from a rights-based citizenship for people moving around Europe towards one which focusses more on citizen participation in the elections and the EU decision-making processes judging from the initiatives for an action plan for democracy and the conference on the future of Europe. The aim of this session will be to bring together with the audience people working in different parts of the Institutions on education for European citizenship;

After the workshops participants will come together briefly in a plenary session to hear the results of each and suggestions for the debate on the next day.

*This will be followed by a reception and an **evening debate** :*

Who is a European citizen? Certainly, millions more than officially have this status. In the evening a public debate will be held at SECO on the theme of a European citizenship centred on the EU, whilst reaching out to the broader European neighbourhood. Should EU citizenship be based solely on nationality of a Member State. Could it also be based on residence within the EU as many civil society organisations and human rights lawyers have advocated since the Maastricht Treaty came into force? Could a form of European citizenship be available for those who identify with this status in neighbouring and applicant countries?



MORNING OF TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

HOW TO STRENGTHEN WHAT EXISTS AND FORGE A EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP OF RIGHTS, PARTICIPATION AND BELONGING ?

This first half of the second day follows on from previous events and the conception of European citizenship in the ECIT guidelines around rights, participation and belonging, the three components of any citizenship and which stand or fall together. The participants divide in three workshops :

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a RIGHTS

The basis of the debate will be a report on the current state of freedom of movement across the EU. Intra-EU migration is uneven and heavily concentrated on certain trajectories and almost absent on others. Only 1% of Germans live outside their country in the EU but the figure for Romania is 19%. Such a picture is important to assess a number of policy recommendations as well as changes brought about as the UK leaves the EU. The emphasis should be on enforcement of rights especially for those affected by Brexit, minority groups such as the Roma, third country national family members and EU citizens who have insufficient resources to support themselves in the host country, fall through the safety nets and risk expulsion. A test of any citizenship should be how far it protects the most vulnerable. Another gap between the fine principles of European law and what happens on the ground occurs in advice deserts outside the reach of EU and even civil society support. Awareness of the rights to freedom of movement is as uneven as its geographical spread. How to make access to European rights more equal and develop capacity in neglected regions?

b PARTICIPATION

The session will cover both existing participatory mechanisms and new initiatives by the Commission. Starting with the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) which, according to the new Regulation coming into force on 1 January 2020, should be easier to use, as well as access to documents, consultations, petitions and complaints procedures with the Commission and European ombudsman will be examined. A working paper will be produced by ECIT with proposals on how to improve these existing governance mechanisms to bridge the gap between the EU and the citizen. Another focus will be on the conference on the future of Europe and in particular the experience of the citizens who are to be given an equal role to that of the EU institutions and civil society. It should not be too early to discuss reforms such as the introduction of transnational lists and improvement of the Spitzenkandidaten system for elections to the European Parliament in 2024.

c BELONGING

Unless there is a more critical mass of young European citizens sufficiently well informed and motivated to participate in EU decision-making, reforms at the level of the Institutions will not achieve their aim. Every EU citizen should have a right to be informed of their rights and the EU as well as receive the necessary civic education from an early age and then be given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to part in an Erasmus exchange programme. The consensus exists to treble the budget for education which is a step towards an Erasmus for all. Once the new programmes are in place will they offer new opportunities for European citizenship education? How can awareness and popularity of EU citizenship be increased? What is the role of EU institutions and relevant CSOs in popularizing the new Multiannual Financial Framework which makes huge leaps towards a more inclusive Erasmus and how can these improvements become better known? One of the participants in this workshop ought to be the representative of the EP's together.eu permanent campaigning unit the focus of which in 2020 is spreading word on the MFF.

AFTERNOON OF TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

It is a myth that EU citizenship only concerns rights which are triggered by leaving one's country and does not concern those who stay at home. Notwithstanding this misconception, however, will EU citizenship really become relevant to the majority of the population until new rights are added? After 27 years since this status was introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, is it not high time to consider this possibility? Representatives of the EC Citizenship Unit could introduce the subject with the presentation of the new EC Citizenship report, followed by a brief pitch by the moderators of the three thematic sessions that follow. We already have the first drafts of background discussion documents for these three sessions ready [here](#).

The participants will divide in three groups to consider an agenda for :

agenda

FULL POLITICAL RIGHTS FOR CITIZENS ON THE MOVE

It is a paradox that EU citizens resident in other EU countries can vote and stand in municipal and European elections, but not in regional and national ones. Nor are they able to vote in referenda with some exceptions. The fact that there are some EU citizens who have never been able to vote in any national election just because they have used their right to freedom of movement is a stain on European democracy. ECIT plans to launch an ECI "Voters without borders" with a task force of young people. The aim will be to link the ECI to regional and national campaigns for extending the franchise to EU citizens and other migrant communities and examine ways of meeting the threshold in at least 7 countries and the target of over 1 million signatures.

bbb

SOCIAL EU CITIZENSHIP

The perception of EU citizenship is that it is a somewhat elitist status. There is some justification for such a prejudice since freedom of movement is not an absolute right but conditional on having sufficient resources and medical cover so as not to be burden on the host country. There is no European system of social security but only the coordination of national ones for people on the move, whilst access to social assistance can be a lottery. Differences in unemployment rates and the cost of living make job seeking from a poorer to a richer EU member state challenging and a prey to exploitation by unscrupulous employers. The aim will be to look in depth at proposals that have been made in the past by researchers and civil society groups: emergency social assistance and a safety net for homeless EU citizens, a European minimum wage scheme, a free movement solidarity fund a more legally binding EU pillar of social rights.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZENSHIP

When the Spanish government first proposed Union citizenship other new citizen concerns were being added to the Maastricht Treaty too- an environment chapter, public health, education, youth and culture with which a link to citizenship was proposed but never materialised. Should the right to a healthy environment which is now included in many national constitutions be added to EU citizenship? This is generally interpreted as a right to clean air, soil and drinking water. In article 37 of the EU charter of fundamental rights a high level of environmental protection is called for placing an obligation on the EU to act rather than giving citizens rights they can invoke directly in a European court. Rights can and are invoked stemming from EU legislation on the environment and there is an important body of case law in the European court of human rights making environmental protection a fundamental right linked to the rights to life, health or property. This event will be designed to bring together proponents of EU citizenship and environmental NGOs.

Participants will then come together in a final plenary session co-chaired by ECIT and NECE to hear reports from each of the 3 working groups in the morning and the groups in the afternoon, consider the overall conclusions and approve the declaration on European citizenship education.