

# PUTTING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP ON THE EU AGENDA TO DEEPEN AND EXPAND

## Programme for the 7th edition of the ECIT Annual Conference

Tuesday, 29 November 2022

at Press Club Brussels Europe (Rue Froissart 95, 1000 Bruxelles)



## INTRODUCTION

This 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference will consider how European Citizenship can be strengthened and become more inclusive and outward-looking, if it is to be relevant and part of the architecture of the New Europe. This means adapting this first transnational citizenship of the modern era to the twin challenge facing the EU: how to strengthen democratic decision-making internally, whilst enlarging the EU to include new Member States from the wider Europe beyond its borders. The citizen dimension has been absent from the debate about how to secure a wider political union beyond the borders of the EU; it is therefore fundamental to remedy this, after the clear support European citizens have shown towards Ukraine.

Civil society activists, policy makers and researchers will come together with the task of confronting the challenge and setting an agenda. It is expected that 50 participants will meet on the spot and about 150 would join online, including people from EU countries but also from candidate and neighbouring countries.

The debate will focus on three main questions:

- ***Can a statute strengthen European Citizenship?***

ECIT's original idea for a statute has now been approved by both the European Parliament and the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE). This is a huge success. The ECIT draft aims to bring together and improve enforcement of scattered elements of European Citizenship across EU Treaties and policies, to reform and extend existing rights and introduce new rights. This proposal raises questions about what can be done without changing the status quo, what aims require legislative initiatives and where is Treaty reform necessary? The ECIT Statute proposes a European Citizenship based on shared values rather than fixed territory.

- ***How to make this status more inclusive within the EU?***

The current situation of 13.7 million EU citizens resident in another Member State and 23.7 million third-country migrants will be changed by the millions fleeing the war in Ukraine and given rightly the same advantages as EU citizens with rights to move and work anywhere in the EU. This is an opportunity to close the gap between EU citizens and third-country nationals to achieve freedom of movement for all and an improvement in political rights attached to mobility. Should the aim be a European Citizenship of residence for all?

- ***How to encourage a more outward-looking European Citizenship?***

The enlargement process, following the acceptance of Ukraine and Moldova and shortly Bosnia as candidates, has new impetus but will still take time. This creates obstacles to keep the commitment of the candidate country and public opinion. Could core rights attached to European Citizenship be extended ahead of membership to candidate countries and others in the EU neighbourhood? Could there be a basic enforceable statement on the lines of the statute on the core rights and values which define what it means to be a citizen of Europe?

For this event, the ECIT Foundation has prepared background reading material including:

- a new version of the 30-article Statute and a summary for students;
- a programme of activities for the implementation of the Statute;
- a comparison between the Statute and recommendations from the CoFoE.

This event with its packed agenda is particularly relevant for students of European Citizenship and all those involved with European affairs who want to discuss the follow-up to CoFoE and the opportunities in the run-up to the 2024 European elections. The programme is still preliminary – speakers are still coming forward or can be proposed.

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## OUTLINE PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 29 November 2022

**9.00 am - 9.30 am – Registration and welcome coffee**

**9.30 am - 11 am – Three parallel workshops**

### **1. Towards a Statute on European Citizenship**

**Chair: Tina Rajh**, ECIT Foundation

It has been a success to get this idea on the EU agenda with the support of the European Parliament and the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE), but that is only the beginning. For this workshop, the 30-article Statute, its comparison with the CoFoE recommendations and the programme of activities are relevant. A key question is how to involve citizens in claiming a traditionally top-down EU Citizenship.

Roundtable of introductions, followed by:

- i)** Origins of the idea of a statute, justification and approach (**Dora Kostakopoulou**, ECIT Board Member)
- ii)** Current state of discussions in the EU Institutions on the follow-up to CoFoE (Missions Publiques)
- iii)** Discussion of a campaign strategy leading up to the European elections (**Tony Venables**, Founder of ECIT)

### **2. The future of Voters Without Borders (VWB)**

**Chair: Martina Rubino**, ECIT Foundation

The ECI demanding full political rights for mobile EU citizens in their country of residence finished collecting signatures in June, but “Voters Without Borders” should not stop there. There are also opportunities in the run-up to the 2024 European elections.

Roundtable of introductions, followed by:

- i)** The balance sheet of success and failure so far and the need for further ECI reform (**Saga Smith**, former VWB taskforce and **Philippe Cayla**, ESF)
- ii)** Cooperation between voting rights activists for electoral rights of EU citizens and third-country nationals; Projects in the pipeline: 1) our cities, our votes; 2) declaration by mayors; 3) organising a European symbolic election on transnational lists for a European constituency (**Clemens Hauser**, Coordinator VRAR)
- iii)** A roadmap towards universal suffrage in Europe

### 3. Making European citizens

**Chair: Daniela Vancic**, Democracy International

Organised by ECIT in cooperation with NECE (Networking European Citizenship Education). Launch of a new ECI for the EU to guarantee the freedom of Europe for every child. The actual proposal, an FAQ and a background research paper are available on our website. There is legal uncertainty for this ECI, therefore it is not sure it will be allowed to collect signatures.

Roundtable of introductions, followed by:

- i) Origins of the proposal in the NECE Declaration, campus and annual events (**Christoph Muller Hofstede**<sup>\*1</sup>, former NECE Coordinator)
- ii) Examination of the formulation of the proposal, composition of the citizens' committee and submission to the Commission
- iii) Campaign strategy for a successful ECI-fundraising, coalition building and communication (**Virginia Fiume**, EUMANS and Coalition of ECI Organisers)

**11 am - 11.30 am – Coffee break**

**11.30 am - 1 pm – Opening plenary debate**

Setting the scene for a stronger, more inclusive and outward-looking European Citizenship.

**Maite Pagazaurtundúa**, MEP (Renew Europe); **Kalypto Nicolaidis**<sup>\*</sup>, Chair in Global Affairs at the School of Transnational Governance (EUI); **Dora Kostakopoulou**, Chair of the Scientific Committee of Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union and a professor of European Union Law, European Integration and Public Policy at KU Leuven University; senior Commission spokesperson

Questions for debate:

Should there be a statute on European citizenship as recommended by the European Parliament and the Conference on the future of Europe? If so, to what extent should it bring together what exists, to what extent should it be aspirational? How to involve citizens and civil society in drawing it up? Could a statute provide a framework for a more inclusive and outward-looking citizenship? Could a statute be adopted under Article 25 TFEU or is Treaty revision necessary?

**1 pm - 2.30 pm – Lunch time meeting - the Cross-Party Group of MEPs on European Citizenship**

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<sup>1</sup> Speakers marked with \* are still to be confirmed.

## **2.30 pm - 5.30 pm – Three consecutive panels**

**Chair: Alberto Alemanno**, Founder of The Good Lobby

These three panels will investigate how to strengthen European Citizenship within the EU and make it more inclusive, whilst also reaching out to citizens in applicant and neighbouring countries:

### **• Rights (2.30 pm - 3.30 pm)**

*Speakers:* **Marie-Helene Boulanger\***, Head of Unit DG Justice; **Ruivi Ziegler**, Chair of New Europeans UK; **Jeremy Bierbach**, practicing lawyer; presentation of the Opportunities and MobileCIT research projects

Questions for debate: How is temporary protection working for Ukrainians taking refuge in the EU? What chance is there for proposals to increase rights of free movement for migrant workers and other proposals to reduce the gap between EU citizens and third-country nationals? To what extent is freedom of movement a reality or could become one for citizens in neighbouring and applicant countries?

### **• Participation (3.30 pm - 4.30 pm)**

*Speakers:* **Ophelie Masson**, Citizens Take Over Europe Coalition; **Damian Boeslager\***, MEP; **Thomas Peutz**, D66; **Tony Venables**, Founder of ECIT

Questions for debate: What to make of the follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe? Can citizens' assemblies become a permanent pillar of the EU decision-making process? What chance is there for transnational lists coming into force before the 2024 European elections? Can the EU take advantage of initiatives to involve citizens within the EU to reach out more to third-country nationals and citizens in neighbouring countries? Is the aim an EU public sphere or a broader European public sphere?

### **• Belonging (4.30 pm - 5.30 pm)**

*Speakers:* **Gilles Pelayo\***, Head of Unit CERV Programme; **Philippe Ternes**, European Democracy Rally; presentation by a representative of the new NECE; **Victor Negrescu\***, MEP

Questions for debate: To what extent can civil society cut across institutional divides and statuses to claim a broader, more inclusive European Citizenship? What lessons are there from EU research and civil society programmes? Can these programmes reach citizens in neighbouring and applicant countries? Citizens in the CoFoE made repeated calls for more European Citizenship education. Will the calls lead to action?

## **5.30 pm - 6 pm – Plenary session**

What next steps for a statute and a stronger, more inclusive and outward-looking European citizenship?

- Reports from each of the three working groups
- General debate
- Approval of a declaration addressed to the EU Institutions, Member States, applicant and neighbouring countries

## **6 pm – Closure of the conference and reception**