

A high-angle, long-exposure photograph of a busy zebra crossing. The image is heavily blurred, capturing the motion of many people walking across the white stripes on the grey pavement. The colors of their clothing are streaked and smeared, creating a vibrant, multi-colored trail. The perspective is from directly above, looking down at the crossing.

European Citizen Action Service Work Programme 2017

Brussels, January 2017

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ECAS' Work Programme 2017

ECAS' work programme in 2017 is comprised of **38 activities**, almost half of which take place on a regular basis throughout the year and are related to ECAS' core mission of empowering citizens in relation to EU rights and democratic engagement and participation in EU policy-making.

In the framework of its **EU Rights focus area**, ECAS' work programme in 2017 envisages:

- The **Your Europe Advice** service, which ECAS manages on behalf of the European Commission. ECAS' 63 legal experts provide legal advice to over 22,000 citizens annually on their rights under EU law, covering social security, residence and visas, work issues, taxes, and more in all 24 official EU languages and all 28 EU member states.

Current trends with regard to obstacles to free movement and possible policy solutions will be presented and discussed with relevant stakeholders at a Brussels-based Free Movement conference on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome.

- Analysis on the **possible post-Brexit EU-UK relations** in terms of their impact on citizens' rights in order to:
 1. raise awareness of the different Brexit options and their implications for the nearly 4.5 million citizens who will be most affected by the outcome of the negotiations;
 2. inform associations working directly with citizens about the likely impact of Brexit under the different scenarios to enable them to help citizens to better assert their rights;
 3. advocate and campaign for a citizen-centric post-Brexit deal by organising an online campaign and discussion forums in London, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar.

Under its **Digital Democracy focus area**, ECAS will implement the following activities:

- The **ECI Support Centre** - a partnership between ECAS, Democracy International and the Initiative and Referendum Institute Europe - helps organisers of European Citizens' Initiatives and advocates for improving this tool for transnational participatory democracy in the EU
- Development of a **Knowledge Centre on crowdsourcing legislation** and participation in a series of **6 national conferences** in order to assess crowdsourcing experiences and to verify the findings of ECAS' study *Towards a Crowdsourcing Pilot at the EU level: Taking Decisions with Citizens and Not for Them*, with the aim of completing the framework for the future pilot on crowdsourcing at EU level.

- Testing the digital ecosystem for e-participation of youth in the framework of the **DEEP-Linking Youth project** and developing guidelines for decision-makers on how to engage with young people in the digital space where they are active.

The outcomes of all the activities in the Digital Democracy focus area will be presented and discussed at the annual **Digital Democracy Day conference** in October 2017.

Within its **Beyond the EU focus** area, ECAS will continue to provide guidance on the implementation of Quality Standards to the Triple A network of civil society organisations which provide information, advice and free legal aid to citizens in the Western Balkans and Turkey. It will also support the expansion of the Triple A Citizens pan-European network, open to any European organisation providing direct information and legal advice to citizens.

In 2017, ECAS will continue to provide support to its network of about 80 members in accessing EU funding through the development of an annual Funding Guide, monthly funding alerts and tailored advice. ECAS will also continue to develop its Training Centre targeting non-profit organisations.

In addition, ECAS will co-organise the **ECI Day** and the **Civil Society Days** with the European Economic and Social Committee and other civil society organisation and will actively participate in the work of the **REFIT Platform for Better Regulation** in order to contribute to improving EU legislation for the benefit of citizens.

EU RIGHTS

Services to Citizens

- Your Europe Advice (YEA): Free legal advice provision to EU citizens who exercise their right to free movement in the EU
- EU Rights Clinic: Problem-solving service of EU rights breaches. 60-70 cases addressed annually

Awareness Raising/Capacity Building

- Your Europe Advice legal experts' training seminar - 26 October 2017
- Outreach activities in 28 Member States to promote European Commission's assistance services to citizens including live chats for advising citizens and businesses on their EU Rights
- Legal updates on EU rights sent to YEA on a monthly basis. Also regular webinars
- Digital campaign on post-Brexit citizens' rights based on ECAS' research paper *5 Takeaways on Brexit* - February-July 2017

Research and Analysis

- Publication of the study *5 Takeaways on Brexit: Outlining Possible Scenarios for a New UK-EU Relationship and their Impact on Citizens* – January 2017
- Development of a BREXIT Observatory as an on-line resource for raising awareness on the post-Brexit impact on different types of citizens' rights, in collaboration with the University of Sheffield
- Your Europe Advice (YEA) Quarterly feedback reports outlining trends and interesting cases submitted to the European Commission

Events

- Conference on Free Movement of Persons as a fundamental freedom enshrined in the Treaty of Rome, 60 years ago - 12 April 2017
- Series of national workshops in London, Northern Ireland, Gibraltar and concluding conference in Brussels to disseminate and discuss the findings of ECAS' research paper *5 Takeaways on Brexit*, with the support of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust – February to June 2017
 - Workshop focused on disabled citizens and Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) in London - February 2017
 - Workshop in Northern Ireland - March 2017
 - Workshop in Gibraltar – 25 April 2017
 - Final Conference in Brussels - June 2017

EU Projects Being Implemented

- Digital Ecosystem for E-Participation Linking Youth (DEEP-Linking Youth): this project explores how e-participation can foster young people's empowerment and active participation in democratic life. It is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme and implemented by a consortium of seven European organisations – Until November 2017
- European Citizens Crowdsourcing (EUCROWD): this project aims to raise awareness of the possibilities and to develop the skills at national and European level for using innovative channels of e-participation of citizens in politics and policy with a focus on the application of crowdsourcing in fostering a democratic debate on the future of the European Union. It is co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme – Until March 2018

Services to Citizens

- ECI Support Centre services: both online and offline advice, up-to-date information on European Citizens' Initiatives and other participatory democracy tools, proactively managing contributions on the revision of the Regulation, organising joint events on behalf of partners to present progress and achievements

Awareness Raising/Capacity Building

- European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) Watch on a bi-monthly basis

Advocacy and Networking

- 2 Partners' Steering Meetings for the implementation of the DEEP-linking Youth Project
- 2 online chats between decision-makers and young people on the subject of youth mobility – June 2017

Research and Analysis

- Development of a web-based Knowledge Centre on Crowdsourcing
- Study on EU consultation in the digital age commissioned by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) – June 2017

Events

- Launch event of a Digital Dashboard as part of the DEEP-linking Youth project - March 2017
- "ECI day" - Europe-wide conference organised in collaboration with the EESC- 11 April 2017
- Civil Society Days, organised in cooperation with the EESC and other partners of the Liaison Group with civil society - 26-27 June 2017
- Series of national workshops on crowdsourcing as a method for engaging citizens based on ECAS' research paper *Towards a Crowdsourcing Pilot at the EU level: Taking Decisions with Citizens and Not for Them* - February-December 2017
 - National workshop in London - February 2017
 - National workshop in Amsterdam - March 2017
 - National workshop in Paris - April 2017
 - National workshop in Athens - May 2017
 - National workshop in Helsinki - September 2017
 - National workshop in Riga - November 2017
- Digital Democracy Day conference – Brussels, October 2017

BEYOND THE EU

Awareness Raising/Capacity Building

- Support to the enforcement of quality standards for the provision of information, advice and free legal aid by the Triple A network members in the Western Balkan countries and in Turkey
- Expansion of the Triple A Citizens pan-European network, open to any organisation providing direct information and legal advice to citizens (more information at: <http://tripleacitizens.eu>)

FUNDING ADVICE AND TRAINING CENTRE

Services to members

- Monthly alerts on funding opportunities at the EU level
- Timely information on EU funding updates and networking opportunities organised by the EU institutions
- Dedicated promotional space in ECAS' newsletter
- Individual advice on EU funding programmes and calls
- Access to ECAS' European Funding Guide for the non-profit sector (also available for sale to non-members) - March 2017

Training Centre

- Training workshops for small groups on EU Fundraising, Project Management and Advocacy at ECAS' premises – Spring and Fall 2017
- Tailor-made workshops for organisations and groups upon request

CROSS-CUTTING ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

- ECAS' newsletter distributed to a mailing list of over 2,500 subscribers – bi-monthly basis
- Active participation in the Stakeholders' group of the REFIT Platform for Better Regulation
- Active participation in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) Liaison Group with Civil society meetings
- Active participation in meetings the Steering Committee of Civil Society Europe - a coordination platform of European Associations
- In 2017, ECAS will monitor in particular the following key dossiers falling under its focus areas:

EU Rights

- Revision of the Regulation on Social Security Coordination (Labour Mobility Package)
- Revision of the Posting of Workers Directive (Labour Mobility Package)
- Proposed Regulation for establishing a European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)
- Measures for a better enforcement of Single Market Rules including proposals for a Single Digital Gateway and a Single Market Information Tool, and an action plan on the reinforcement of SOLVIT
- Evaluation of Consumer's Rights Directive
- European Accessibility Act

Digital Democracy

- Follow-up measures by the Commission of REFIT proposal to simplify the ECI implementation
- New e-Government action plan 2016-2020

Beyond the EU

- Evaluation of the Instrument for Pre-accession assistance II (IPA) in support of the mid-term review

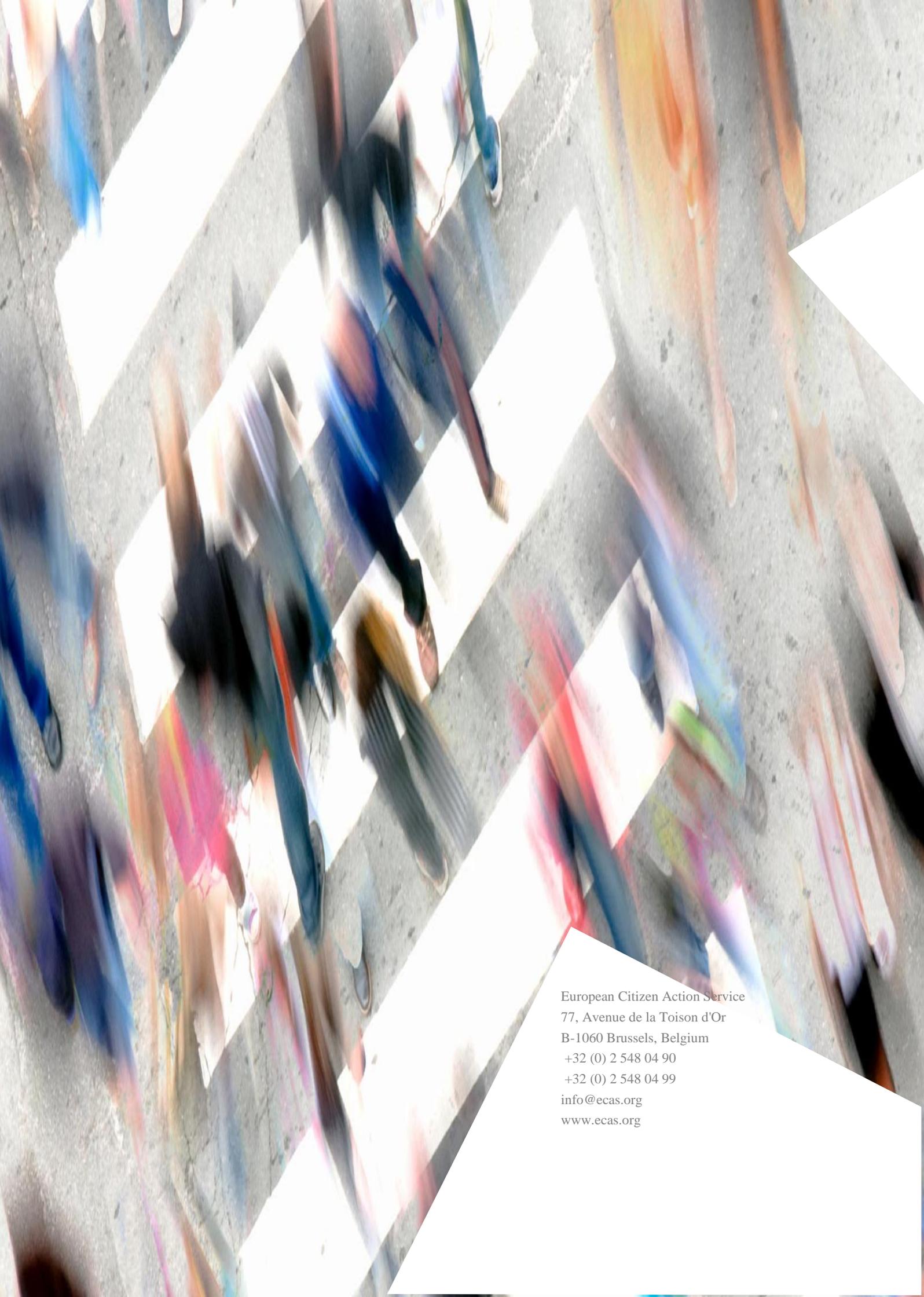
- Evaluation of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) 2014-2020 in support of the Mid-term review

Others

- White Paper on the Future of Europe
- Mid-term evaluation of Erasmus+
- Mid-term evaluation of Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020
- Proposal for an inter-institutional agreement on a mandatory transparency register for lobbyists

ECAS' GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- 4 meetings of ECAS' Board of Directors – quarterly
- ECAS' Annual General Assembly meeting - 26 June 2017
- ECAS' staff retreat - September 2017



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