

State of the Union Citizens' Rights

Towards the European Elections 2019

25 September 2018, BIP, Rue Royale 2-4, 1000 Brussels



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Freedom of movement is one of the most cherished fundamental freedoms of the European Union. Together with the right to political participation they constitute the main building blocks of the EU Citizenship.

According to the Spring 2018 Eurobarometer, trust in the EU is on the rise and the majority of Europeans are optimistic about the future of the EU. Free movement is advocated by 82% of the respondents. Yet, as the European Citizen Action Service's (ECAS) research has proved, free movement of persons is being increasingly challenged across the EU, particularly with regard to the right of entry and residence, as well as family reunification.

At the same time, political and civic participation of mobile EU citizens in both local and European elections remains limited. To further strengthen people's identification with the EU, we believe it is necessary to create a truly citizen-centric and citizen-owned Europe, in which citizens' rights are protected and promoted.

Building on the pre-election momentum, this event will bring together decision-makers, civil society organisations and civic campaigners to explore potential solutions to the main challenges faced by EU citizens, and elaborate recommendations to the upcoming legislature and the new EU Leaders.



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EUROPEAN PROGRAMME FOR INTEGRATION AND MIGRATION

AGENDA

- 9:00 – 9:30 Registration
- 9:30 – 9:40 Keynote speaker: Jaume Duch Guillot, Director General for Communication and Spokesperson of the European Parliament
- 9:40 – 10:00 Opening remarks
- Marie-Helene Boulanger, Head of Unit, Union Citizenship Rights and Free Movement, European Commission
 - José Antonio Moreno Diaz, Chair of Group on Fundamental Rights and Rule of Law, European Economic and Social Committee
- 10:00 – 11:15 *Panel 1: State of Play: current challenges faced by EU citizens*
- Moderator: Lisbeth Kirk Iversen, Founder of EUobserver and member of ECAS' Board of Directors
- Dr. Richard Youngs, Senior Fellow, Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program, Carnegie Europe
 - Assya Kavrakova, Executive Director, ECAS
 - Mauro Striano, Migration & Participation Policy Officer, European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA)
 - Dr. Alina Ostling, Researcher, European University Institute
 - Dr. Dominik Hierlemann, Senior Expert, Program Future of Democracy, Bertelsmann Stiftung
- 11:15 – 11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30 – 12:45 *Panel 2: Grassroots action for citizens-centric Europe*
- Moderator: Elisa Lironi, Digital Democracy Manager, European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)
- Dr. Anthony Valcke, Founder and Supervising Solicitor, EU Rights Clinic
 - Paolo Vacca, Secretary General, Union of European Federalists (UEF)
 - Niccolò Milanese, Director, European Alternatives
 - Teresa Buczkowska, Act4Free Movement, 'Bloody Foreigners' Campaign
 - Bledar Feta, Act4Free Movement, 'KnowRights' Campaign
- Launch of You Vote EU – the online platform for the 2019 European Parliament Elections!*
- Doru Peter Frantescu, Director, VoteWatch
 - Priscilla Robledo, Project Manager, Riparte il Futuro
- 12:45 – 13:00 Concluding remarks: Dr. László Andor, Former Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Senior Fellow at Hertie School of Governance and Visiting Professor at ULB University, member of ECAS' Board of Directors
- 13:00 – 14:00 Lunch