



STATE OF THE UNION CITIZENS' RIGHTS 2021: ***MOVING TOGETHER BEYOND THE PANDEMIC***

January 21 - 22, 2021
Online event



State of the Union Citizens' Rights 2021: *Moving Together Beyond the Pandemic*



The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the EU and all EU citizens. The measures introduced by the Member States – lockdowns, quarantines and curfews – have had an unprecedented effect on freedom of movement in the EU.

Mobile EU citizens have been particularly affected, often unable to return home and left confused by various unilateral rules introduced by their home and host countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified the obstacles that mobile EU citizens have been facing in their host countries in recent years. Citizens' access to healthcare, social benefits and the job market, in addition to their entry and residence rights and fundamental right to family life, have all been put at grave risk as a result of the pandemic. Everyone has had to endure the crisis but the pressure placed on those exercising freedom of movement has been particularly high. Separated from both their host communities and their loved ones back home, mobile EU citizens have often felt as if they were under a double lockdown, according to ECAS research.

The conference *State of the Union Citizens' Rights 2021: Moving Together Beyond the Pandemic* will take stock of the challenges brought by the pandemic for mobile EU citizens in 2020 and discuss how to restore freedom of movement in post-COVID-19 times. As we unlock our homes, borders and economies, how can we start moving together towards a higher standard of protection of EU citizens' rights?

The first day of the conference will outline the main challenges and the consequences of COVID-19 on various aspects of EU mobile citizens' lives. During the second day, we will look towards the future, discussing with our panelists what we may expect, hope for and prepare for in the EU-rights field in the aftermath of difficult 2020 year, which comprised of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit and the debate on the EU's long-term budget for 2021-2027.

The conference will also feature the winners of the 1st edition of ECAS' HOME Awards (Hosts Open for Mobile Europeans). The aim of the competition is to promote initiatives aimed at fostering the inclusion of mobile EU citizens. Three winners competing in three different categories have been selected by citizens through a crowdsourcing process. An additional award (ECAS' Award) will be given to a practice which ECAS finds closest to its mission.

This event was funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) and the European Programme for Integration and Migration. The content of this conference represents the views of the organiser only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission and EPIM do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains



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Draft Agenda

Day 1

- 9:30 – 9:45 *Keynote speech*
Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Justice
- 9:45 – 10:15 *Panel discussion: State of play in the EU citizenship field*
Moderator: Assya Kavrakova, ECAS' Executive Director
- Petar Markovic, European Citizen Action Service
 - Patrycja Pogodzinska, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
 - Dr Sandra Mantu, Radboud University
 - Rasmus Benke-Åberg, Erasmus Student Network
- 10:15 – 10:30 Q&A session with the audience
- 10:30 – 11:00 *HOME Awards 2020* for the Most EU Mobile Citizen-Friendly Locations, presented by Jean Lambert, Vice-Chairperson of the ECAS' Board
Announcement of the two most voted initiatives by citizens in the categories "Practices aimed at alleviating the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak on mobile EU citizens" and "Practices aimed at improving the social and cultural inclusion of mobile EU citizens"

Day 2

- 9:30 – 9:45 *Keynote speech*
Irena Joveva, Member of the European Parliament
- 9:45 – 10:30 *Panel discussion: The EU and EU citizens' rights in 2021*
Moderator: Julie Bishop, Director, Law Centres Network, member of ECAS
- Dr Marek Benio, European Labour Mobility Institute
 - Agnès Leroux, Airlines for Europe
 - Marie-Hélène Boulanger, European Commission
 - Dr Anthony Valcke, EU Rights Clinic
 - Chrysa Psyllaki, Helping Hand
- 10:30 – 10:45 Q&A session with the audience
- 10:45 – 11:15 *HOME Awards 2020* for the Most EU Mobile Citizen-Friendly Locations, presented by Jean Lambert, Vice-Chairperson of the ECAS' Board
Announcement of the most voted initiative by citizens in the category "Practices aimed at improving the political inclusion of mobile EU citizens" and of the "ECAS' award"