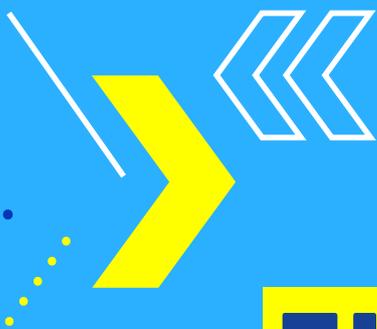




European
Commission



30TH
ANNIVERSARY



EU CITIZENSHIP

RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

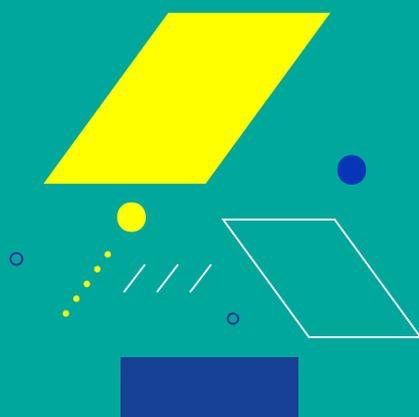
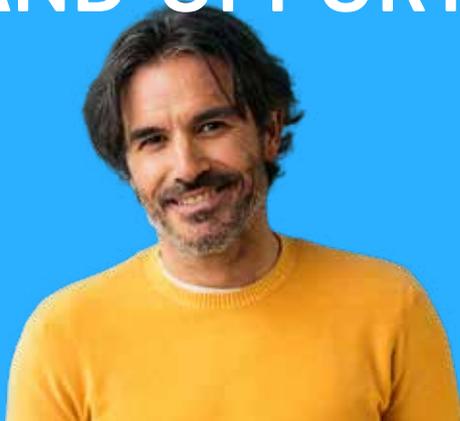


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“Being an EU citizen opens up a world of opportunities. Be it to travel freely within the EU, to work in another Member State or to get consular help when travelling abroad. In the past 30 years millions of Europeans have enjoyed the concrete benefits of EU citizenship. And they have made their voice heard through EU elections and in local elections when living in another Member State. We will continue to promote and strengthen these rights, because this is how we strengthen our Union, our values and the European way of life.”

Ursula von der Leyen,
President of the European Commission, 2023

WHAT MAKES EU CITIZENSHIP UNIQUE?

EU citizenship is a unique concept. If you are a national of one of the 27 EU Member States, then you are also automatically an EU citizen. This enables you to enjoy certain rights and benefits that are distinct from being a national of an EU Member State. What's more, these rights are valid in all 27 EU Member States.

What does this mean in practice? It means, for instance, that you can live and work in another EU Member State without the need for a visa, work or residence permit. EU citizenship also means that should you run into trouble in a place outside the EU where your EU Member State doesn't have an embassy or consulate, you can turn to another EU Member State present there for help.

EU citizenship is also about having an active role in the democratic process, shaping the rules that apply throughout the EU. You can vote and run for office in municipal and European Parliament elections, even if you are living in another EU Member State.

EU citizenship can open up a world of possibilities. This brochure provides you with what you need to know about your rights and explains how they can be used best as an EU citizen.



“EU citizenship is at the very core of the European project. The rights and opportunities granted to *all* citizens, of *all* EU Member States are there to improve their lives and strengthen communities. This is why it is important that EU citizens know exactly what rights they have, and how they can exercise these rights. This is how we build a stronger Europe for tomorrow.”

New EU citizens



827 300

In 2021, 827 300 people acquired citizenship of one of the EU Member States.

Of those acquiring citizenship of an EU Member State, 85% had previously been citizens of non-EU countries.

Source: Eurostat



4.09 M

In addition, 4.09 million babies were born in the EU in 2021.

Source: Eurostat

Feel like an EU citizen?



Almost 9 out of 10 citizens (87%) agree that they feel like citizens of the EU.

Source: **Eurobarometer 528, 2023**

EU citizens enjoy a range of rights* that are additional to the rights they enjoy as citizens of their EU Member State. These are:

- ▶▶ **You cannot be discriminated** on the basis of your nationality
- ▶▶ **You can move and reside freely** within the EU
- ▶▶ **You can vote and stand** as a candidate in European Parliament and municipal elections also when moving to another EU Member State
- ▶▶ **You enjoy consular protection** when you are in a non-EU country
- ▶▶ **You can launch or support** a European citizens' initiative, asking the European Commission to propose legislation on an issue that matters to you
- ▶▶ **You can petition** the European Parliament and complain to the European Ombudsman
- ▶▶ **You can contact and receive a response** from any EU institution in one of the EU's official languages.

*Under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)

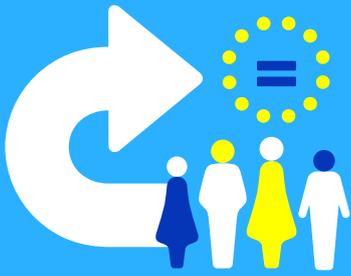
SHARED VALUES



Being part of the EU is not just about living in one of its member countries. It's about being part of a shared community, where everyone enjoys rights, protections and opportunities, and has responsibilities. This defines the European way of life, united in diversity.

This means, for example, ensuring that fundamental rights such as freedom of thought, conscience and religion are respected, and guaranteeing equal rights for all before the law.

Under the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, everyone in the EU has the right to be treated equally, irrespective of their sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation. These are some of the key values that underpin EU citizenship.



Respect for all

Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) sets out the values upon which the EU, and thus EU citizenship, are founded:

“The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”

Fundamental rights

Another important text reinforcing EU citizenship is the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**. This brings together personal rights and freedoms enjoyed by everyone in the EU. These rights include human dignity, the right to liberty and security, equality before the law, non-discrimination, and rights relating to solidarity with others. It also provides for specific rights for EU citizens.

The Charter ensures that these rights and freedoms are protected by the EU and by the EU Member States when they implement EU law. Along with Article 2 of the TEU, it provides the bedrock of values upon which EU citizenship is based and can flourish.

CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION



Highly prized EU values

In a recent survey, EU citizens identified the values that are of most importance to them.

82%

Independence of judges

82%

Right to a fair trial

81%

Freedom of thought, expression and religion

Key personal values

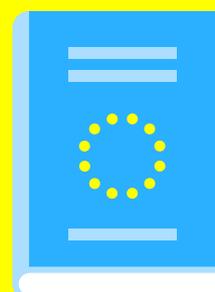
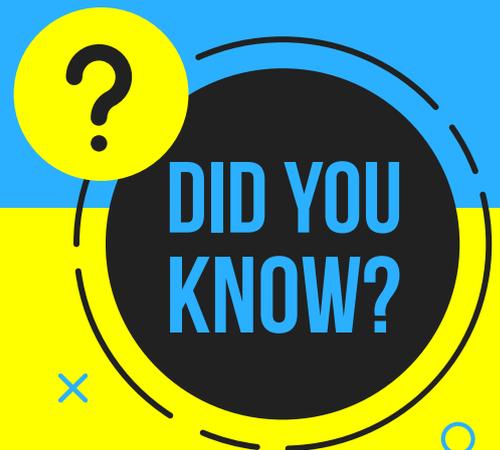
78%

Being in charge of decisions about their life

77%

Taking care of those close to them

Source: Eurobarometer 508, 2021



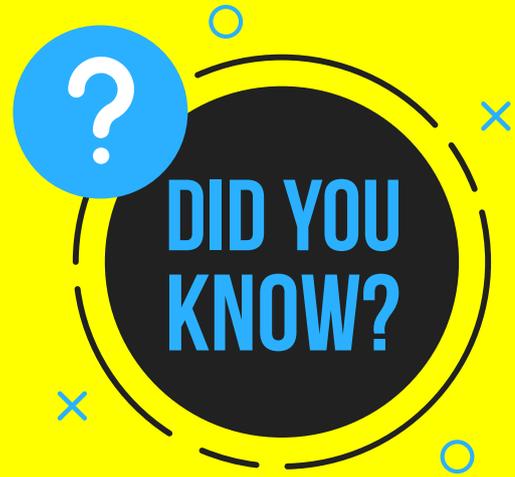
EU citizenship gives you rights that you can use to shape your life, and benefit your community. For example, it empowers you to move and reside freely within the EU should you wish to do so, ensures that you cannot be discriminated on the basis of your nationality, and obliges the EU institutions to reply to you if you have a question. It gives you the right to vote for your representatives in the European Parliament and to launch a European Citizens' Initiative on an issue you feel strongly about. These rights are enjoyed by all EU citizens.

EU CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS YOU CAN USE



“It is the moment to show to the young generation that we can build a continent where you can be who you are, love who you want, and aim as high as you want. A continent reconciled with nature and leading the way on new technologies. A continent that is united in freedom and peace. This is Europe’s moment to once again answer the call of history.”

Ursula von der Leyen,
President of the European Commission,
State of the Union 2023



Tackling all forms of discrimination

Everyone has the right to be treated equally, and the EU has taken action to combat discrimination on a range of grounds. In particular, EU law protects against discrimination based on sex and on racial or ethnic origin in the area of employment, education, access to services, social protection and social advantages. EU law also prohibits discrimination based on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation in the field of employment. In addition, a number of strategies have been adopted to build a Union of Equality.

Learn more about how the EU is

BUILDING A UNION OF EQUALITY



Protection against discrimination

Adam has a secondary education degree from his home country of Poland. Since early childhood, his dream has been to become a vet, and to study abroad. At the university of his choice however – situated in another EU Member State – he is obliged to pass an aptitude test to prove his qualifications. This test does not apply to citizens of the country he intends to move to.

Adam feels that this is unfair, and that he is being discriminated against on the basis of his nationality. He takes his case to the European Court of Justice, which rules that the aptitude test is indeed discriminatory on these grounds. The end result is that the rules are changed. Adam is able to study abroad at the university of his choice, under the same conditions as citizens of that country.



A key EU citizenship right is protection against discrimination based on your nationality in cases that fall within EU law. This is enshrined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The non-discrimination principle ensures fair treatment and equal opportunities for all EU citizens, regardless of the EU Member State which they are in.

Your right to move and live abroad



José is a Spanish software developer who receives a dream job offer in Germany. He is able to move to Hamburg without needing a visa, work or residence permit. He only has to find a place to live, and can start working immediately. What's more, he and his family members are able to access the local healthcare system, and his children can enrol in German schools. The family enjoys the same social advantages as German citizens, while maintaining their Spanish citizenship.

Views on free movement

90%

of citizens agree that this right personally benefits them.

80%

of citizens agree that the freedom of movement benefits the economy.

Source: Eurobarometer 528, 2023



As a citizen of the EU, you have the right to reside, work, study and travel freely within EU Member States. This means you don't need a visa, work or residence permit. Your family members also have the right to accompany or join you, regardless of their nationality. They may be asked to comply with certain conditions or formalities.

In order to stay in another EU Member State for more than three months, EU workers and self-employed EU citizens can reside without any other conditions. Other categories of EU citizens, such as students or economically non-active citizens, have to meet certain conditions (for example being covered by sickness insurance). Citizens may be asked to comply with administrative formalities, such as registration with the authorities. You can find out more about these conditions in this [Guide](#), as well as [here](#).



THE RIGHT TO FREE MOVEMENT



RESIDENCE RIGHTS

Help when you're abroad

Antonia, a Maltese photojournalist, is travelling through a remote region in a non-EU country where Malta does not have an embassy or consulate. After losing her passport, she desperately needs a replacing document, in order to make it back home.

Thanks to the EU's right to consular protection, Antonia is able to visit the Spanish consulate, where she receives an emergency travel document - the same assistance that she would have received if she was a Spanish citizen. With this emergency travel document, she is able to travel home.

Supporting EU citizens abroad

93%

of citizens agree that EU Member States should cooperate closely to help EU citizens who need consular protection outside the EU.

Source: Eurobarometer 528, 2023

As an EU citizen, you are entitled to seek help from any EU Member State's embassy or consulate when you are in a country outside the EU where your country does not have a consulate or embassy, or when that consulate or embassy is not in a position to help. This EU right is an expression of EU solidarity, with EU Member States helping each other's citizens in need.

In fact, EU consular protection can apply in a range of situations: if you are arrested or detained, find yourself a victim of crime, have an accident or fall seriously ill, lose your passport or have it stolen, or need help getting back home in a case of emergency.



**CONSULAR PROTECTION OUTSIDE
THE EU**



EU EMERGENCY TRAVEL DOCUMENT

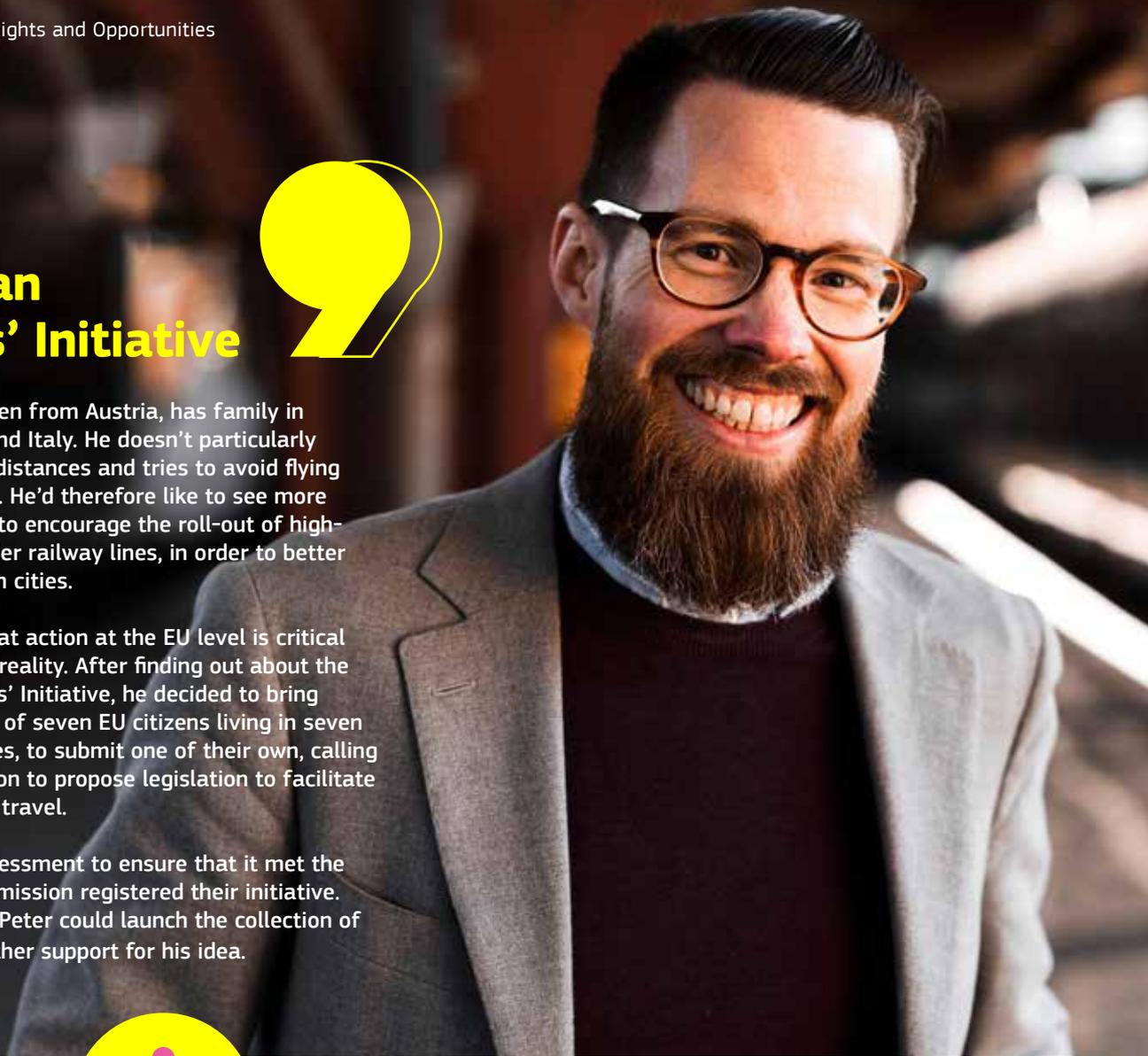
European Citizens' Initiative



Peter, an EU citizen from Austria, has family in Belgium, Spain and Italy. He doesn't particularly like driving long distances and tries to avoid flying whenever he can. He'd therefore like to see more European action to encourage the roll-out of high-speed cross-border railway lines, in order to better connect European cities.

Peter believes that action at the EU level is critical to making this a reality. After finding out about the European Citizens' Initiative, he decided to bring together a group of seven EU citizens living in seven EU Member States, to submit one of their own, calling on the Commission to propose legislation to facilitate cross-border rail travel.

After careful assessment to ensure that it met the criteria, the Commission registered their initiative. Once registered, Peter could launch the collection of signatures to gather support for his idea.



The European Citizens' Initiative gives you the opportunity to influence EU policy. If there is something that you too feel passionate about – and provided that this is an area where the EU has the power to act – then you also can put forward an initiative.

You'll need to follow the step-by-step guide, and ensure that your initiative fulfils certain criteria. The links below provide you with everything you need to know. Once registered, your initiative needs to collect, within 12 months, at least one million valid signatures (online or on paper) in at least seven EU countries. If successful, you'll meet with the Commission to discuss your objectives, and have the chance to present your initiative in a public hearing at the European Parliament. The Commission is obliged to respond to your initiative and indicate which actions it will take.

You can also support initiatives started by other EU citizens.

64%

of EU citizens are aware of the right to participate in a European citizens' initiative,

with awareness ranging from just over 80% in Finland and Austria, to less than 50% in Romania (49%), Croatia (48%), Lithuania (46%) and Sweden (39%).

Source: [Eurobarometer 528, 2023](#)

- ▶▶ See the [database of published citizens' initiatives](#), and support initiatives you would like to succeed.
- ▶▶ Check out the [step-by-step guide](#) to how the European Citizens' Initiative works.
- ▶▶ Get practical information and advice for launching and managing your initiative on the [online ECI Forum](#).
- ▶▶ Join an [online course for organisers](#).

Your right to petition the European Parliament



Ana is an EU citizen living in an industrialised city. A river that runs through her neighbourhood has become polluted due to toxic waste from a nearby factory. After some investigation, Ana believes that European environmental regulations are not being enforced.

Concerned about the situation, she uses her right to petition the European Parliament, and brings the issue to their attention. The Petitions Committee of the European Parliament receives Ana's petition, does some investigating of its own, and can decide to take further action.



As a citizen or resident of the EU, you have the right to submit a petition, which could be a complaint or request, to the European Parliament. The Petitions Committee of the Parliament will consider your petition, and will reply and inform you of the outcome.

This right allows you to directly address the European Parliament to express concerns or request actions. The petition should concern an issue within the EU's fields of activity that affects you directly.

You can find further information here:



THE RIGHT TO PETITION



PETITIONS WEB PORTAL

Who can start a petition?

- ▶▶ any EU citizen
- ▶▶ anyone legally residing in an EU Member State
- ▶▶ any company, organisation or association with its headquarters in an EU Member State.

How does this work?

- ▶▶ The issue must fall within the EU's fields of activity
- ▶▶ The issue must affect you directly
- ▶▶ You can submit your petition individually or as a group – there is no minimum number of signatures
- ▶▶ This can be done online or by post.

Source: [Petition the EU](#)

Your right to turn to the Ombudsman

Sara has requested documents on a meeting between an EU institution and an agricultural association. She feels that the EU institution has mishandled her request, as she has not been given full access to the documents she requested. In this situation, Sara also has the right to complain to the European Ombudsman. The job of the Ombudsman is to investigate complaints about maladministration of EU institutions.



The European Ombudsman is an independent and impartial body that holds the EU's institutions and agencies to account, and promotes good administration. It is there to help citizens, businesses and organisations who feel that there has been mismanagement at the EU level.

As a citizen, you have the right to complain to the European Ombudsman if you believe there has been mismanagement within any of the EU institutions. This includes examples such as restrictions to your access to documents held by EU institutions, any ethical issues or the management of EU funds. You must make your complaint within two years of the date on which you became aware of the problem.

Who can turn to the European Ombudsman?

EU citizens, or NGOs, associations, businesses, universities and journalists with their headquarters in an EU Member State, can turn to the European Ombudsman:

- ▶▶ With complaints concerning an EU institution, office or agency
- ▶▶ On issues of maladministration by the EU institution, office or agency
- ▶▶ If they have already tried to solve the problem with the EU body concerned
- ▶▶ When the issue is not over two years old
- ▶▶ When there is no legal action underway.



EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN

MAKE A COMPLAINT

Dana is an EU citizen who is passionate about nature and is also an amateur beekeeper. She contacts the Commission to share her views and enquire about what the EU is doing to ensure the welfare of bees.

Dana receives a response in her own language, which is her right as an EU citizen.

Your right to a response



As an EU citizen, you have the right to write to the institutions in any of the 24 EU official languages, and to receive an answer in the same language. All institutions maintain online registers where you can find contact details and access documents and information, helping you stay informed about what is happening in the EU.

The Commission also regularly seeks the views of citizens when it develops policy and legislation. Feedback is taken into account before policy proposals are finalised, and published online.

You can find further information here:



Access information

An overview of registers of EU Institutions

Here are all the EU institutional registers that you can freely access:

- ▶▶ Public Register of Council documents
- ▶▶ European Parliament Register of Documents
- ▶▶ Public Register of Documents by European Central Bank
- ▶▶ Register of Commission Documents
- ▶▶ Access to Administrative Documents of Court of Justice
- ▶▶ European External Action Service Public Register
- ▶▶ Access to documents of European Court of Auditors.

CONTACT THE EU

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

EU LANGUAGES

Democratic rights are a core part of being an EU citizen. Your vote at European Parliament elections ensures that your voice is heard when laws are being discussed and adopted. Even if you move to another EU Member State, you can still vote in municipal and EU elections, and even stand as a candidate.

Citizens are an integral part of the democratic process in between elections as well, for example through having a say on proposed legislation or participating in European citizens' initiatives. You could be selected to take part in citizen panels. You may contact the European institutions for information or to share your views.



**SHAPE YOUR
OWN FUTURE**



Your democratic rights

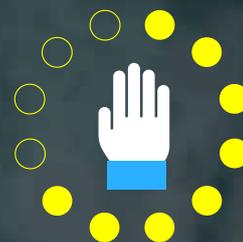
Maria is a Portuguese citizen who has lived in Belgium for over a decade. She is a member of a political party, a passionate advocate of road safety, and wishes more could be done to make her town centre more accessible to pedestrians. With municipal elections fast approaching, Maria decides that she wants to do more than just vote – she wants to stand for election. She is selected as a candidate by her party, impresses many of the voters, and finds herself a proud member of her local town council.



All EU citizens have the right to vote for and stand as a candidate in European Parliament elections in their country of origin. What's more, if they live in another EU Member State, they may choose to vote and stand in European Parliament elections there, under the same conditions as the nationals of that country. EU citizens who live in another EU Member State can also vote and stand as candidates in municipal elections in that country, again under the same conditions as the nationals of that country.

Get out and vote

66%



Around 66% of citizens know that a citizen of the EU living in their country has the right to vote or stand as a candidate in European Parliament elections.

55%



Just over half know that such a citizen has the right to vote or stand as a candidate in municipal elections.

Source: Eurobarometer 528, 2023



FIND MORE ABOUT PARTICIPATING
AND VOTING IN THE EU

Have your say

Democratic participation is not just about voting and elections. As an EU citizen, you have lots of opportunities to get involved, to have your say, and to help shape the future of Europe.

First of all, you can **share your views** on the Commission's initiatives and contribute to the decision-making process. The Commission is committed to hearing citizens and stakeholders' views on EU laws and policies when these are being both prepared and implemented.



The **European Citizens' Initiative** is another way for citizens to help shape policy. If you want the EU to take action on a particular issue, you can bring together a group of seven EU citizens and call on the European Commission to propose new EU legislation on that issue. You can read the section on the European Citizens' Initiative in this brochure to find out more.

You can also access the interactive Citizens' Engagement Platform where you can discuss with other Europeans your ideas and solutions for future policies.

There are also the **European citizens' panels**, which bring together randomly selected citizens from all 27 EU Member States to discuss key proposals and to make recommendations. Topics have so far included virtual worlds, food waste and learning mobility. After gathering ideas and deliberations, recommendations are put forward to the European Commission to take into account when preparing policy initiatives.



The **Have your say portal** is the 1-stop-shop portal for online citizens' engagement. It combines the gateways to the public consultations, the European Citizens' Initiative website, and the interactive Citizens' Engagement Platform. You'll need to register to contribute, but the process is very straightforward.

...and there are of course plenty of opportunities to get involved at the national and local level - including running for municipal office.



DID YOU KNOW?

European citizens' panels are becoming a regular feature of democratic life in the EU. A number of panels have already taken place, enabling citizens to deliver recommendations on a range of issues directly to policymakers.

How can we reduce food waste?

One citizens' panel that focused on tackling food waste put forward 23 recommendations for action. These included measures to forbid the destruction of safe surplus food, the need for legally binding targets for EU Member States, and better education.

The recommendations have since been shared and discussed with the **EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste**, and will help inform EU policymaking going forward.

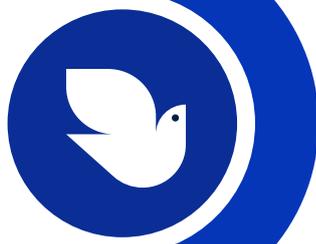


EU CITIZENSHIP: AN EVOLVING PROCESS

The roots of EU citizenship can be charted back to the immediate post-war era when a new vision of a unified Europe emerged out of the ashes. From the very beginning of the European project, the rights and opportunities for citizens have been front and centre. Today, EU citizenship is recognised as the fundamental status of nationals of EU Member States, and every citizen has the right to participate in the democratic life of the EU.

1945

Peace in Europe is declared.



1957

The Treaty of Rome is signed. The six founding members grant the right of free movement to all workers, self-employed citizens and their families. Over the years, this **European Economic Community** expands, welcoming in new countries.

2009

EU Charter of Fundamental Rights comes into force, further reinforcing EU citizenship rights.



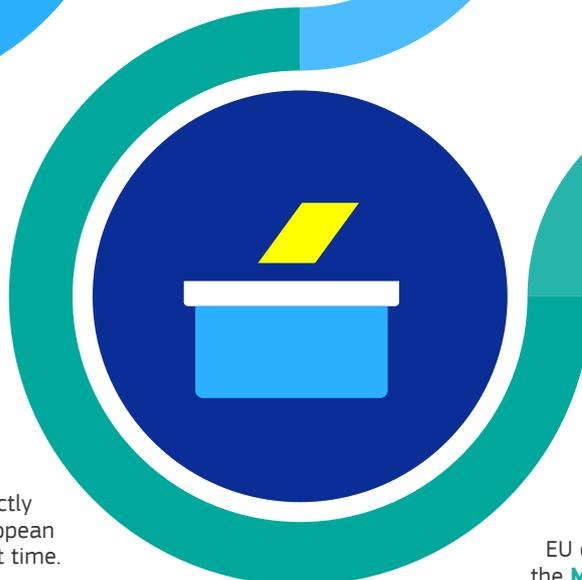
1951

A first milestone: The free movement of coal and steel workers is introduced across six European countries – Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Germany. **The European Coal and Steel Community is born.**



1979

European citizens directly elect members of European Parliament for the first time.



1993

EU citizenship is established by the **Maastricht Treaty**. Citizens now have a list of specific EU citizenship rights beyond the original right of free movement to engage in an economic activity.



2020

At the **Conference on the Future of Europe**, the biggest participatory exercise in the history of the EU, citizens ask for, among other things, more information on EU citizenship.



2012

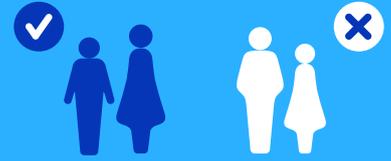
A new citizenship right is added. EU citizens are given a stronger voice in policymaking through the launch of the **European Citizens' Initiative**.

2023

30th anniversary of EU citizenship.



Know your rights?



50%

of EU citizens do not feel well informed about their EU citizenship rights.



64%

of EU citizens do not feel well informed about what to do when these rights are not respected.

Source: Eurobarometer 528, 2023



Find out more about the history of EU citizenship [here](#).

PROTECTION EVERY DAY

Living in the EU brings with it a lot of benefits, which can be enjoyed by both citizens and residents alike. These benefits, which are the result of EU law, include for example workers' rights or access to healthcare in another EU Member State. These protections and policies are in place to ensure that citizens and residents are able to enjoy a high standard of living, have access to essential services, and are treated with dignity and respect.



As an employee in the EU for example, you are protected against discrimination in your job, and have the right to a safe workplace, reasonable hours and breaks.



If you travel to another EU Member State, you don't have to pay any additional charges to use your mobile phone. Your calls, text messages and data use are charged at domestic rates, i.e. the same price as calls, texts and data within your home country. And if your flight is delayed or cancelled, the EU has made it simple and straightforward to claim compensation.

These are just some of the rights and benefits guaranteed to citizens under EU law – but there's much more.

The EU also puts citizen interests front and centre of its policies. Moving forward, key priorities include the European Green Deal, which strives to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent. The EU has also taken action to ease the burden of energy costs on citizens and industry.

In this brochure we dive deeper into two specific benefits as examples: as a consumer, you are protected against unfair marketing and unsafe products. Online, you have the right of control over your personal data.



Find out more about all your rights and benefits



WHAT EUROPE DOES FOR ME



HOW IS THE EU RELEVANT TO YOUR DAILY LIFE?

Your rights as a consumer

After buying a food blender online, Daniel was disappointed to discover that the machine did not include several functions as advertised, nor was it as powerful as advertised. Despite initial resistance from the online store, Daniel asserted his rights as an EU consumer, and was given a choice between a full refund or a replacement.



As an EU consumer, you have rights that protect you when you shop, wherever the seller is in the EU. You are entitled to clear information about products and services, and you have a right to cancel and return most online purchases within 14 days. If what you buy is not as described or doesn't meet quality standards, you have the right to a repair, replacement or refund. You are protected under EU consumer legislation only if you buy from a trader; online marketplaces must therefore warn you about this when choosing an offer from a private individual.

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW TO USE YOUR CONSUMER RIGHTS



You can also contact **ECC Net** to get assistance on exercising your rights as a consumer.



Your right to data protection

Jana was concerned about the amount of personal information being stored by the social media platform she uses. She decides to take action and exercise her rights, first by requesting access to all of her personal data. A review of this data revealed a number of inaccuracies and outdated information about herself. Jana asked the company to correct the incorrect data, and to permanently delete several old posts.



In the EU, you have rights over your personal data. You can access your data, correct errors in your data, erase it, limit its use, move it to another service, object to its use, and avoid being subjected to automated decision-making processes. These rights, which are part of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), give you control over your data and require companies to respect your choices. There are certain circumstances where the right to erasure might not apply. This could be, for example, archival purposes, or research and statistical purposes, where data might be deemed to be in the public interest.

LEARN HOW TO PROTECT YOUR DATA, USE YOUR RIGHTS



WHAT IF MY RIGHTS HAVE NOT BEEN RESPECTED?

If you think that your rights as an EU citizen have not been respected, either in your home country or in another EU Member State, there are actions that you can take.

You should first try to resolve the matter at the national level of the country where the problem occurred, either by going to court or through other ways of settling disputes. **Find out more about national judicial systems or going to court.**

If you are a victim of discrimination and are looking for help, you can also contact the **national equality organisation** in your country. EU anti-discrimination legislation provides that each Member State shall have (at least) one such equality body with the power to, among others, give independent assistance to victims of discrimination.

If these steps haven't resolved the problem, the next step would be to take this to the EU level. Here you can:

- ▶ Lodge a complaint with the **European Commission** if you believe your rights as an EU citizen have been infringed by a measure or practice of your country which goes against EU law. The Commission complaint form is easy to understand and fill out. You can find it **here**.
- ▶ Lodge a complaint with the **European Ombudsman** about maladministration by EU institutions, bodies and agencies - see p. 12 of the brochure to find out more.
- ▶ Submit a petition to the **European Parliament**.
- ▶ Report EU-related fraud to the **European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)**.

Problem-solving services at your fingertips



Call or contact one of these organisations:

Your Europe Portal guides you to the most relevant EU and national websites.

The Europe Direct Contact Centre is there to answer any question you might have about the EU, via phone or email, in all 24 official languages. Contact them for free at 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11, or **online**.

If your rights are being infringed in another EU Member State, then submit your problem to **SOLVIT**.



How the EU supports your rights

This is just some of the key legislation that underpins the rights of EU citizens.

To move, live and work freely in the EU

- ▶ The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ([Article 21\(1\)](#))
- ▶ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([Article 45](#))
- ▶ [Directive 2004/38/EC](#) on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States

Consular protection

- ▶ The Treaty on European Union (TEU) ([Article 35](#))
- ▶ The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ([Articles 20\(2\)\(c\), 23](#))
- ▶ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([Article 46](#))
- ▶ [Directive \(EU\) 2015/637](#) on the coordination and cooperation measures to facilitate consular protection for unrepresented citizens of the Union in third countries
- ▶ [Directive \(EU\) 2019/997](#) establishing an EU Emergency Travel Document

Petition the institutions and contact the European Ombudsman

- ▶ The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ([Articles 20\(2\)\(d\), 227](#))
- ▶ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([Articles 43 and 44](#))
- ▶ [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2021/1163](#) laying down the regulations and general conditions governing the performance of the Ombudsman's duties

Non-discrimination

- ▶ The Treaty on European Union (TEU) ([Article 2](#))
- ▶ The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ([Article 18](#))
- ▶ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([Article 21](#))

European Citizens' Initiative

- ▶ The Treaty on European Union (TEU) ([Article 11\(4\)](#))
- ▶ The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ([Article 24\(1\)](#))
- ▶ [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/788](#) on the European citizens' initiative

Your right to a response

- ▶ The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ([Articles 15\(1\), 24](#))
- ▶ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([Articles 41\(4\), 42](#))
- ▶ [Regulation \(EC\) No 1049/2001](#) regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents

Voting and standing in elections

- ▶ The Treaty on the European Union (TEU) ([Article 10\(3\)](#))
- ▶ The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) ([Articles 20\(2\)\(b\), 22](#))
- ▶ The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([Articles 39 and 40](#))
- ▶ [Directive 93/109/EC](#), also known as the 'Electoral Rights Directive'
- ▶ [Directive 94/80/EC](#) on the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in municipal elections

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Did you know that EU citizenship gives you rights and benefits that are in addition to the rights you enjoy as a citizen of an EU Member State? Not only that, but EU citizenship gives you a voice to shape the future of Europe. Here you'll find everything you need to know about the rights you have, the ways you can use them, and how they can benefit you.

