EU Citizenship Report 2020

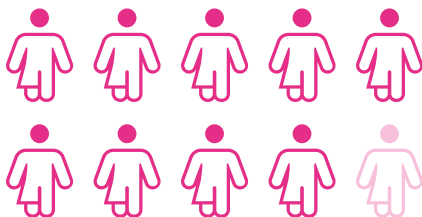## FACTSHEET

15 December 2020

Empowering citizens and protecting their rights

EU citizenship is a significant achievement of the European project. It does not replace national citizenship: you are a European citizen if you are a national of any of the 27 Member States. As an EU citizen, you enjoy for instance free movement in the EU as well as political and democratic rights, such as the right to participate in elections to the European Parliament.

The EU Citizenship Report

Every three years, the Commission reports on how EU citizens can enjoy their rights in their daily lives, when working, travelling, studying or participating in the democratic life of the EU. The 2020 Citizenship Report clearly shows that EU citizens are more often making use of their rights, visible for example in higher voter turn-out. At the same time new challenges have emerged, not least in the context of the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. Being aware of the fact that you are a citizen of the EU is a first step towards making better use of your rights.

Figure 1 – Degree of familiarity with the term "citizen of the European Union" (% – EU)
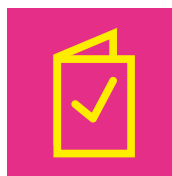
Over 90% of respondents to a Eurobarometer are familiar with the term "citizen of the European Union".

EU actions to ensure your EU citizenship rights

Strengthening democratic participation, citizens' empowerment and inclusion of citizens in the EU

Facilitating free movement and simplifying daily life

Protecting and promoting EU citizenship

Protecting EU citizens in Europe and abroad, including in times of crisis

Justice and Consumers

Democratic participation, empowerment and inclusion

Democracies depend on their citizens' participation. Europeans are increasingly making use of their electoral rights, as demonstrated in the 2019 elections to the European Parliament.

Year	Turnout
2004	45,47%
2009	42,97%
2014	42,61%
2019	50,66%

Source: European Parliament in collaboration with Kantar

To further strengthen democratic participation and inclusion, the Commission will...

- Update EU rules on voting rights of mobile EU citizens in municipal and European elections.
- Work closer with the European Cooperation Network on Elections.
- Support independent election observation.
- Support deliberative democracy and innovate citizens' participation in the EU legislative process.
- Support the inclusion of EU citizens in EU society.
- Raise awareness about the important link between cultural activities, tolerance and democratic participation.
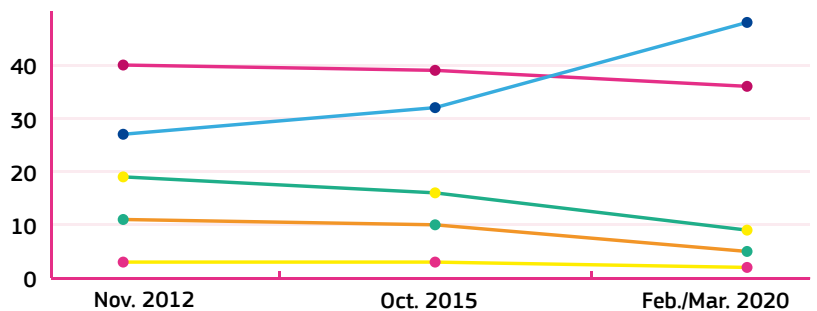
Facilitating free movement and simplifying daily life

The freedom of movement, which allows any EU citizen to live, work or study in any Member State, is the right that is most cherished by EU citizens.

Legend:
- Totally agree
- Tend to agree
- Tend to disagree
- Totally disagree
- Don't know

Source: Flash Eurobarometer 485

Figure 3 – Free movement of EU citizens within the EU brings overall benefits to the economy of (OUR COUNTRY) (% - EU)

Axis labels: Nov. 2012, Oct. 2015, Feb./Mar. 2020; values 0, 10, 20, 30, 40

To facilitate free movement and simplify daily life, the Commission will...

- Update EU guidelines on free movement taking into account measures introduced due to public health concerns as well as the diversity of families ("rainbow families").
- Promote the inclusions of cross-border e-government and e-business solutions into newly issued ID cards.
- Protect the rights of EU citizens residing in the UK, in line with the withdrawal agreement.
- Support the development of journey planners involving several modes of transport.

Protecting and promoting EU citizenship

EU citizenship is a symbol of our shared European identity – based on equality, non-discrimination and inclusion. Promoting and protecting the values and integrity of EU citizenship is of special importance.

Over the last three decades, more than 10 million people have participated in Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes, building links and shared identity across the EU.

To protect and promote EU citizenship, the Commission will...

- Continue to monitor 'golden passports schemes' for EU citizenship and act as necessary.
- Propose new equality and anti-discrimination measures.
- Foster the sense of European identity among young people through the ERASMUS+ programme, the European Solidarity Corps and the Jean Monnet Actions.
- Keep monitoring the impact of restrictive measures put in place during COVID-19 crisis on EU citizenship rights and a fair democratic debate.

Protecting EU citizens in times of crises

The COVID-19 pandemic affected all of us, though in different ways. The pandemic also highlighted existing inequalities in our society. Europe has responded on many levels, involving national governments, industry and civil society.

Between February and May 2020, Member States, supported by the European Commission and the European External Action Service, brought home more than 600 000 European citizens affected by travel restrictions across the world.

To protect EU citizens in times of crises, the Commission will...

- Continue building a strong European Health Union and implement together with the Member States the EU strategy for COVID-19 vaccines.

- Review EU rules on consular protection in order to improve the EU's and Member States' capacity to protect European citizens in times of crisis.