

# EU CITIZENSHIP



European Year of Citizens 2013  
[www.europa.eu/citizens-2013](http://www.europa.eu/citizens-2013)

**It's about Europe –  
It's about you!**



The year of 2013 is the European Year of Citizens dedicated to the rights that come with EU citizenship. 2013 also marks the 20th anniversary of EU citizenship, and preparing for the elections of the European Parliament, taking place next year. At this crucial juncture in the move towards a stronger Europe, it is a fitting time to dedicate 2013 to EU citizens and remind them of their rights and at the same time through events and involvement of all citizens and sectors from business to NGOs, to build a vision together on how Europe should be in 2020.

Socrates once said, 'I am not an Athenian nor a Greek, but a citizen of the world'. To some 503 million of EU citizens the EU citizenship gives a set of special rights which lie at the heart of their everyday lives. Every national of one of the EU's 27 member countries (as of July 2013, 28 with Croatia) is automatically a citizen of the European Union. Although rights it confers are reserved for Member States' citizens only, it is an attractive perspective for all candidate countries. Once Serbia becomes an EU member, its citizens will fully enjoy the same rights without renouncing national citizenship.

The status of EU citizen was created by the Treaty on European Union or popularly known as Maastricht Treaty that entered into force in November 1993. The Amsterdam Treaty (1997) and the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) state unequivocally that citizenship of the EU 'shall complement and not replace national citizenship'. The rights enrooted in the EU citizenship are those guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The rights given by EU citizenship are spelled out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (into force since 2009, [http://europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text\\_en.pdf](http://europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf)) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (into force since 2008, amended Rome Treaty).

Find out more: [www.euinfo.rs](http://www.euinfo.rs)

IT'S ABOUT EUROPE  
IT'S ABOUT YOU

Join the debate



European Year of Citizens 2013

[www.europa.eu/citizens-2013](http://www.europa.eu/citizens-2013)



## RIGHTS DERIVED FROM EU CITIZENSHIP

### 1. The right to move and reside freely within the EU and not to be discriminated against on grounds of nationality

EU citizens have the right to travel throughout the 27 EU (soon 28) countries and settle in any of them or work, study or even retire. However, some conditions apply. For example, when entering another EU country, an EU citizen may be asked to show identification. To live in another EU country for more than three months, s/he must meet certain conditions depending on whether s/he is working, studying, etc.

### 2. The right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections

Every EU citizen has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections for the European Parliament or in municipal elections in whichever EU country s/he lives, **under the same conditions as nationals.**

### 3. The right to petition

The right to petition allows EU citizens to raise concerns or complaints in any of the official languages of the EU with the European Parliament, being the most democratic institution, since their members are directly elected. They can ask the Parliament to address either a personal need or grievance, or a matter of public interest. The subject must fall within the EU's sphere of activity, and must directly concern the citizen who is filing a complaint.

### 4. The right to complain to the Ombudsman

For grievances concerning mismanagement by an EU institution or body, a complaint can be addressed to the Ombudsman. EU citizens can also contact EU institutions and advisory bodies directly, and they are entitled to receive a reply in any of the EU's official languages.

### 5. The right to consular protection

When in a non-EU country and in need of help, EU citizens are entitled to consular protection from the embassy or consulate of any other EU country. Assistance is provided in situations including death, accident or illness, arrest or detention, violent crime and repatriation. This can be especially useful when a smaller member state does not have an embassy in the given country, but can still turn to any other present Member State embassy.

### 6. The right to ask the Commission to propose new legislation

As of 2011, EU citizens have an additional right: the European Citizens' Initiative enables them to ask the European Commission to prepare a proposal for a legal act. The petition must be signed by at least one million citizens from at least one quarter of EU countries, which is now 7 countries.

### Fundamental rights

The EU is based on the values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union brings together into a single text all the personal, civic, political, economic and social rights enjoyed by people within the EU. It became legally binding in 2009, with the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon.

### Other cross-border rights

EU citizens are entitled to other cross-border rights, which are firmly anchored in primary EU law and substantially developed in secondary law. Since 54% of EU citizens are not well informed on their rights (Eurobarometer 77, 2012), the European Year of

Citizens aims to help inform the general public, in particular about recognition of academic and professional qualifications, passenger and consumer rights, access to cross-border health-care and social security, consumer's right to safe, secure and affordable energy.

The Stockholm Programme provides a roadmap focusing on the interests and needs of citizens in the area of justice, freedom and security for the period 2010-2014. One of its priorities, **Europe of rights**, aims to ensure that European citizenship confers on EU nationals the fundamental rights and freedoms set out in the EU Charter and in the European Convention on Human Rights (<http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/treaties/html/005.htm>).

## ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP THROUGH EU PROGRAMMES

The EU encourages all citizens and organisations to play an active role in the development of the EU with funding support from a variety of programmes and initiatives.

- The **Europe for Citizens** programme funds local initiatives seeking to encourage citizens to become actively involved in the process of European integration, to develop a sense of European identity and to enhance mutual understanding between European citizens. **Since November 2012, Serbia actively participates in it. Government's Office for Cooperation with Civil Society is national Contact point for the Europe for Citizens programme [europoforcitizens@civilnodrustvo.gov.rs](mailto:europoforcitizens@civilnodrustvo.gov.rs)**

- The **Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme**, for the period 2007-2013, focus on the protection of the rights of the child; combating racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism; the fight against homophobia; active participation in the democratic life of the Union; data protection and privacy rights; training and networking between legal professions and legal practitioners. Accessing and candidate countries (including Serbia) and the Western Balkan countries included in the Stability and Association Process may participate in the actions of the programme.

- **Youth in Action** programme is open for Serbia and 2012 was its most successful year, with 60 international youth projects approved, worth more than one million euros.

- European Year of Citizens projects could be eligible for funding within **Lifelong Learning, Erasmus, MEDIA, Science in Society 2013** programmes that are all open for Serbia.

To allow better make use of and defend their rights, the EU citizens have at their disposal **Your Europe** web portal ([http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/index_en.htm)), as well as multilingual **Europe Direct Service**, a free phone and on line service that offer answers to all EU-related questions) and **SOLVIT** (<http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/>) –an on-line network in which Member States solve legal problems caused by misapplication of EU law by public authorities. Another useful tool is **PLOTEUS** ([http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/home\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/home_en.htm)) - on Learning Opportunities that inform on studying in Europe.

In Serbia the EU Information Centre is there to answer your questions related to this issue or anything else of your interest.

**Mon - Fri: 10:00 - 19:00**  
**Sat: 10:00 - 15:00**



**EU Info Centre**

Dečanska 1 (Dom omladine)  
Belgrade, Serbia

T: +381 11 322 9922

E: [info@euinfo.rs](mailto:info@euinfo.rs)

W: [www.euinfo.rs](http://www.euinfo.rs)

Facebook: [euinfo.rs](https://www.facebook.com/euinfo.rs)

Twitter: [euicbg](https://twitter.com/euicbg)

YouTube: [euicbg](https://www.youtube.com/euicbg)



**Delegation of the European Union to Serbia**

19a Avenue, Vladimira Popovića 40/V,  
New Belgrade, Serbia

T: +381 11 308 3200

E: [delegation-serbia@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:delegation-serbia@eeas.europa.eu)

W: [www.europa.rs](http://www.europa.rs)