

DRAFT DECLARATION FOR THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF EU CITIZENSHIP

URGENT: The next 30 Years of European Citizenship – A Call to Action

Introduced in the Maastricht Treaty on 1 November 1993, Union Citizenship has enriched the lives of over 15 million EU citizens by offering freedom to live, study, and work across the continent. It has proven to break down barriers, and to foster a sense of unity and shared values beyond national borders. It has worked on the ground especially for the young generation but why has more not been made of this unique transnational citizenship at the level of the EU Institutions? It is even more relevant today than 30 years ago.

The question needs answering since the European landscape has become darker and more complex due to economic crises, migration challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic and the return of war. The EU plays a more geopolitical role which should be underpinned by a sense of shared citizenship. Yet, there has been a noticeable decline in the commitment of the Institutions, with the exception of the European Parliament, to advance the cause of European Citizenship.

A 30th anniversary is a time for reflection and action. This milestone, along with the upcoming European elections, should bring in a statute for a more inclusive and outward-looking European Citizenship. The aim must be to ensure that all citizens feel equally included, address legislative gaps, strengthen participatory and representative democracy at European level and extend the benefits of European Citizenship to all residents. The ECIT Foundation proposes the following seven policy objectives to strengthen and expand EU Citizenship over the next 30 years:



Adopt a Statute to explain what European Citizenship is and what it could become by bringing its scattered features together



Enforce European rights to freedom of movement effectively and create a Free Movement Solidarity Fund



Europeanise the European elections and support the introduction of cross-border universal suffrage



Make participatory democracy and Citizens' Assemblies a permanent pillar of the EU decision-making process



Introduce a European Citizens' Card



Create a new European right to European citizenship education for all



Foster a more inclusive and outward-looking European Citizenship

As we venture into the next three decades of European Citizenship, we urge all Institutions to heed this call to action. While EU Citizenship has made significant strides in practice, it is now imperative that the EU Institutions align themselves with this progress.