Implementation of the Treaty provisions on EU citizenship

2023/2085(INI) - 17/01/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 437 votes to 158, with 41 abstentions, a resolution on the implementation of Treaty provisions on EU citizenship.

Members believe that EU citizenship comprises the shared and common European democratic identity and the specific rights, civic duties and freedoms attached to it, and that the exercise of those rights, both online and offline, strengthens citizens' link with the EU and its democratic legitimacy, as well as offering them additional rights.

The potential of EU citizenship has **not yet been fully exploited**. Members noted that all too often, EU citizens are not sufficiently aware of, and do not fully understand, the rights, civic duties and freedoms deriving from their citizenship of the Union.

In addition, there are still **major shortcomings** in the practical application of Union citizenship and in the full exercise of the rights and freedoms deriving therefrom, some of which are due to the non-uniform implementation of Union legislation by the Member States. Parliament is concerned about the specific difficulties hindering the full exercise of the rights and freedoms deriving from Union citizenship, in particular as regards **political rights, freedom of movement and residence, consular protection and discrimination**.

The resolution pointed out that the construction of EU citizenship must move forward to address the needs and challenges of the EU in the 21st century, recognising the potential of **digital innovation** and the need for a balanced approach to address the complexity generated by globalisation and new technologies. Members also considered that **multilingualism** within the EU institutions and in their interaction with citizens is an essential aspect to reinforce the notion of EU citizenship.

Recommendations

Parliament called on the Member States and regional and local authorities to fully **implement the existing directives on mobile citizens' rights** and to promptly address the different existing shortfalls in the light of the upcoming European elections. It called for the creation of targeted awareness campaigns in the country of residence to inform mobile EU citizens about their right to vote and run for office in European and municipal elections in that country. It reiterated its call to expand mobile citizens' rights to national and regional elections and called for the uniform application of the right to vote in the European elections for EU citizens residing outside of the EU.

The EU and the Member States are invited to:

- promote the adoption of a binding **European Charter of Digital Rights**, including digital citizenship rights;

- **put an end to "golden visas" and investor schemes**. It should be possible to adopt common provisions in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, with a view to preventing the sale of passports or other abuses concerning the acquisition and loss of EU citizenship by third-country nationals;

- adapt **school curricula** to teach the history of Europe and the European Union and how it works, in order to promote active citizenship and common European values, and to raise awareness of the added value of being a European and a citizen of the Union.

Parliament suggested : (i) creating a **one-stop shop** for all EU participatory tools, such as the European Citizens' Initiative, petitions to Parliament, complaints to the European Ombudsman; (ii) creating a permanent citizens' consultation mechanism allowing citizens, especially young people, to deliberate on EU priorities and policies; (iii) considering the introduction of a **European citizens' card**; (iv) resuming negotiations on the revision of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 with the aim of ensuring that EU citizens are able to fully exercise their right to **access documents** and scrutinise the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies.

Members reiterated the need to draw up an **EU citizenship statute** that compiles existing and future citizenship rights. They called for a horizontal non-discrimination clause to be included in the EU citizenship statute as an additional safeguard of equality in the exercise of citizenship rights.

Parliament suggested that, in the area of **participation and political rights, freedom of movement and digital citizenship**, and in line with existing and future EU legislation, citizens should have, in particular:

- a gender-balanced democratic representation on electoral lists;

- permanent interactive digital platform through which citizens can submit their proposals and ideas in all official EU languages;

- the recognition of periods of study, not only qualifications and professional competences, as equivalent to be able to work in another Member State;

- universal internet access;

- the management of one's own digital identity;

- the development of AI systems that are safe, transparent, traceable and overseen by people.

The Commission is called on to run targeted awareness-raising campaigns around rights and civic duties deriving from EU citizenship and the statute, including by introducing an EU package to provide information about EU citizenship, and to dedicate more resources to EU citizenship.