

Proposal for a Charter on European Citizenship

“European citizenship is the cornerstone of EU integration. It should be to political union what the Euro is to Economic and monetary union.”

Viviane Reding, Vice President of the European Commission, preface to the Citizenship Report of May 2013

INTRODUCTION

2013 is the European year of citizens. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the inclusion of Union citizenship in the Treaties of the European Union.

The creation of European citizenship coincided with steps towards an economic and monetary Union in the Maastricht Treaty. The objective was to place citizens at the core of a democratic and political Union in order to counterbalance the risk of a technocratic economic and financial centered Union. This objective has yet to be fully realised. In particular in times of economic hardship, citizens feel reduced to targets for public sector spending reviews, cuts in welfare and tax increases.¹

The gap between citizens and the EU institutions has never been wider. We are proposing a Charter to bridge this gap. The view that it is first necessary to create Europe, by solving the crisis and clarifying the institutional framework, and then create Europeans is patronizing and dangerous. To hold the Union together, we have to proclaim “Civis Europeus sum”!

ECAS envisages a Charter which would (i) increase understanding of what it means to be a citizen of the EU; (ii) put the citizen at the centre of European policies; and (iii) make Union citizenship an evolutionary process.

Increase understanding of what it means to be a citizen of the EU

A Charter would provide a focal point by gathering together all the different aspects of Union citizenship which are scattered across different parts of the EU Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. There is evidence of awareness of the term “Citizen of the European Union” but there are clearly continued uncertainties about what this really means.² A pocket

¹ This has also been recognised by Fondaca Active Citizenship Foundation “For a year of the Real European citizens.”

² Flash Eurobarometer 365, European Union Citizenship, 2013, European Commission, Brussels. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_365_en.pdf.

Acknowledgement: ECAS would like to thank all the experts in civil society, academia and the EU Institutions who were asked to give an opinion on an earlier version of this draft in a personal capacity. In particular, we are most grateful to colleagues at Freshfields, Bruckhaus, Deringer who did a final check on this Charter. Many sent in both general and detailed comments. We are alone responsible for the new draft which as a result of editorial scrutiny is, we hope, moving in the right direction although it is far from complete or easy for the normal citizen.

version of this Charter in all EU languages, alongside the handbook on EU rights to be published by the European Commission in the run-up to the June 2014 European elections will help provide a clearer definition of EU citizenship.

Put the citizen at the centre of European policies

A charter would place citizens alongside Member States and the EU Institutions at the heart of the European decision-making process. A Europe of lobbies and special interests is not a proper Europe. By putting together the EU's scattered citizenship, the charter would show that people are not just the passive subjects of EU decisions, but have the rights and means necessary to actively participate in their creation and implementation; from petitioning, complaining to the European Ombudsman and campaigning to launching an initiative to demand a new European law by gathering 1 million signatures (what is known as the European Citizens' Initiative).

Make Union citizenship an evolutionary process

A charter should also be about working together both to support Union citizenship and contribute to its development. The charter would codify the status quo but also propose changes. Union citizenship was originally conceived as an evolutionary concept.³ Bringing together what is scattered across Treaty texts reveals the gaps: European citizens have a right to be informed about the rights buried in 100,000 pages of European legislation and standards affecting their everyday lives. On the frontier of Union citizenship are issues concerning the citizenship rights of legally resident third country nationals or the ability for European citizens to vote and stand in national elections in another Member State'

A roadmap for a charter is set out below and begins with a general section, which seeks to relate European citizenship to the EU's core values and the fight against all forms of discrimination, which should be put on an equal basis. The text is then divided in three parts:

Rights – The aim is to close the gap between the fine principles of European law and the barriers to the exercise of European rights on the ground. The charter proposes more problem solving, more collective action and emergency powers whereby the Commission can order an immediate stop to clear violations of European rights and vet national law. There is no reason why powers of enforcement should be stronger when it comes to protecting companies from unfair competition or scrutinizing national budgets than when it comes to protecting European rights. New rights are proposed in the charter, but the main emphasis is on enforcement.

Access – It is urgent to improve citizens' means of access to the EU and enhance standards of service by the EU and Member States and democratic participation in the Union. There is an emphasis on the rights to be informed and of access to documents which should become a European freedom of information act. Citizenship beyond the Member State means an end to governments blaming the EU and talking about European democracy at home while negotiating in secret in Brussels. Information rights are not, though, sufficient on their own. The charter focuses on the European Citizen's Initiative, which should become easier to use

³ Much of the wording of this charter is as close as possible to the spirit and letter of the Treaty. Where it is a question of introducing what are clearly new rights, article 25 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is very restrictive requiring a special procedure and unanimity in the Council. In the charter it is proposed that, next time the treaties are changed, this evolutionary clause should be modified to introduce majority voting and the normal legislative procedure between the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers.

and better supported. A stronger right of petition to the European Parliament is also proposed. A more open European Union would help restore trust in the EU.

Belonging – This section brings together ways of fostering a common European identity. The starting point is to encourage European citizenship in schools. The charter suggests ways an independent European public sphere for citizens can be underpinned by civil society. In the end collective European identity can only evolve through European democratic processes. The charter suggests a change to the organization of European elections which would allow for some Members of the European Parliament to be elected from transnational party lists. Political parties should put forward a choice of candidate for high office in the European Union. The European Commission President could be directly elected. There should also be a right for every citizen to benefit from an EU exchange programme at some time in their life.

ECAS has long advocated a more holistic approach to European citizenship. This proposal for a charter shows that this is a realistic objective. Bringing together rights scattered across the Treaties can increase awareness of European citizenship. The more holistic approach can also show that this first transnational citizenship of modern times has far more substance than generally thought and can therefore help mobilize European participatory and representative democracy. This would be true even without the articles labeled “new proposal”, but many of the suggestions to develop Union citizenship are, with political will, perfectly possible, even if others may be more controversial and connected to the debate about the future of the European Union.

Our objective is to gather support and ideas for change and additions. The charter should be taken up in the campaign for election to the European Parliament in June 2014 and by the new Parliament and Commission as well as by national governments. We should not forget that Union citizenship was added to the Treaties 20 years ago at the initiative of the Spanish government. Finally, throughout 2014, ECAS will be exploring the scope and chances of success for a European Citizens’ Initiative to support the charter as an example of how European citizenship can be defended and expanded.

SUMMARY OF KEY PROPOSALS FOR A CHARTER ON EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP

What exists

- Fragmented view of Union citizenship focused on articles 18-25 TFEU
- Every person holding the nationality of a Member State is a citizen of the Union
- Citizens of the Union have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States subject to the limits in the Treaty
- Citizens of the Union have the right to vote and stand as candidates in elections to the European parliament and municipal elections in their Member State of residence
- The EU provides information and implements rules on access to documents
- Whilst offering channels of communication with citizens, EU institutions respect principles of good administration and access to justice
- There is a right for over 1 million citizens to ask the Commission to propose a new European law
- The EU promotes exchanges, language learning and the European dimension in education
- EU institutions are encouraged to reach out to citizens and civil society.
- There are a number of lifelong learning programmes
- The EU and Member States are encouraged to use the European flag or anthem
- Citizens elect and are represented in the European Parliament

What we want

- Holistic approach to Union citizenship based on all rights
- Permanent residents from third countries should obtain the nationality of their host Member State
- An action plan, including a timetable, to remove the actual and perceived barriers to European citizenship
- The EU should adopt a law to extend these rights to national and regional elections, as well as referenda
- A right to be informed and a European freedom of information act
- Binding standards of accountability towards citizens, such as time limits for answering complaints for both EU institutions and Member States
- Make European Citizens' Initiatives easier to use and introduce other participatory democracy instruments
- Courses on European citizenship should form part of national civic education
- Provide citizens with their own public space, a European association statute and a pact between civil society and the EU
- Every citizen should have the right to access a European programme to study or train in another EU Member State in their lifetime
- Citizens to propose symbols of European citizenship
- Citizens have the option to vote for European lists; the President of the European Commission should be directly elected

General — Citizenship and the Union

1. Citizenship of the Union is the fundamental status of nationals of Member States. It is based on the values of the Union expressed in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and forms an integral part of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. This brings together

The opening phrase is taken from a reiterated statement by the European Court of Justice in its judgments related to Citizenship of the Union. The rest of this article seeks to place Union citizenship in the broader context of the values of the Union expressed in Article 2 TEU and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Like draft Article 7 (below), this reflects Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) but also attempts to express the dynamic of citizenship beyond the nation-state, rather than the cautious expressions in the Treaty of avoiding confusion between national and European citizenship.

traditional and more modern rights to dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity and justice.

2. Every person holding the nationality of a Member State is a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union beyond separate national citizenships is a status shared in common.

3. All those from third countries who are legally resident in the Union should be given the opportunity to obtain the nationality of their host Member State. In this way, they become European citizens. Prior to obtaining Member State nationality, they should enjoy a set of European rights equivalent to those of European citizens. [new proposal]

This is in the spirit of the Tampere Declaration of 1999 which states that: "The European Council endorses the objective that long-term legally resident third country nationals be offered the opportunity to obtain the nationality of the Member State in which they are resident."

European citizenship does not mean creating a fortress Europe.

4. The Union guarantees European citizens an area of freedom, justice and security whilst not excluding citizens in neighboring and applicant countries, who should benefit from a visa-free Europe. [new proposal]

This article brings together and seeks to give the same legal force to the Treaty bans on different forms of discrimination (see Articles 18 and 19 TFEU, Article 3(2) TEU and Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights). There is no reason why, through successive Treaty revisions, different forms of discrimination should be treated differently. Article 2 TEU mentions protection of minorities. This article seeks to simplify rather than innovate.

5. Citizens of the Union have a right to equal treatment in all walks of life, which means:

- **Prohibition of any discrimination based on nationality;**
- **Equality between men and women;**
- **Protection against any form of discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation;**
- **Protection against discrimination for those who have a disability;**
- **Protection against discrimination for those who belong to minorities.**



Measures should be adopted to combat all forms of discrimination.

This article recognises that, whereas Union citizenship is a holistic concept, to treat everyone equally special attention has to be given to those less able to protect themselves. The source is various Treaty articles and particularly Article 3 TEU and Article 34 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which relates to social and housing assistance.

The provision for a decent existence within the EU context is closely connected to the right of free movement to work and seek work as suggested below in Article 8. A strengthening of free movement rights as proposed in Article 8 will be a step towards ensuring a decent existence for all and combating the social effects of the current crisis.

The aim is to use cohesion policies to solve problems which arise as a result of vulnerable citizens exercising their right to free movement. This is a proposal to make the EU, the country of origin and the host country co-responsible. The aim is to strike a balance between free movement and the duty on the part of European citizens not to be a burden on the host Member State by providing a new form of social assistance.

6. To ensure equal treatment of all European citizens, and all natural persons residing in a Member State, the Union must pay special attention to the impact of its policies on and the rights of all those who are most vulnerable in society. This includes the rights of children, elderly people, persons with disabilities, migrant workers and their families and those suffering or at risk of social exclusion.

Each host Member State and the country of origin share responsibility with the European Union to ensure that European citizens on the move receive emergency support and social assistance. [new proposal]

7. Beyond their Member State, European citizens:

- **Share a common set of specific European rights in the broader framework of the Charter of Fundamental Rights;**
- **Have access to open and accountable European Institutions;**
- **Are able to develop a sense of belonging to Europe by forming alliances with citizens from other Member States and participate in negotiations regarding the future direction of the Union in their own European public sphere.**

[new proposal]

This sets out a framework for Union citizenship and introduces the following sections on Rights, Access and Belonging.

This article does not come from the Treaties, but rather explains the structure of this charter.

I. RIGHTS

This article seeks to improve enforcement of existing European legislation with the adoption of an action plan. It also enlarges the scope to include not only professional but also academic qualifications.

This seeks to prevent new barriers emerging and to limit the power of Member States to expel European citizens. Mass expulsions of EU citizens are prohibited by Directive 2004/38/EC and Article 45 of the Charter on Fundamental Rights.

8. Citizens of the Union have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States subject to the limits in the Treaties. Free movement is a fundamental right and its purpose does not need to be justified, whether it is used to work, seek work, study, train or retire. This right is extended to members of the family, spouses or recognized partners of the citizen, including those who are nationals of a third country.



The European Union will adopt an action plan, including a timetable, to remove the remaining barriers to the exercise of Union citizenship, particularly in the areas of:

- Entry and residence;
- Employment;
- Social security;
- Recognition of academic and professional qualifications;
- Family law within the competence of the Union.

This action plan will be binding on the Institutions and Member States.

Member States must notify the Commission of any draft laws, specific provisions or administrative practices which could lead to barriers to free movement of persons within the Union, in order to prevent their emergence.

If a Member State has clearly violated fundamental or European citizenship rights, the Commission can file for interim measures to put an immediate stop to such legislation or measures being applied.

Refusal of entry or expulsion can only be justified in very exceptional circumstances if the European citizen concerned represents an immediate and serious threat to public health or security. Mass expulsions of European citizens are forbidden.

Article 20(2)(b) TFEU limits the voting rights of citizens to local and European elections. Like the ECI "let me vote", this proposed expansion of political rights is based on the principle that it is not acceptable that European citizens cannot participate in the elections which count most. This question is also raised in the Commission's Citizenship Report of May 2013. A revision of the law in this area could be achieved by using Article 25 TFEU but the procedure is more cumbersome than the normal legislative process, which we would suggest utilising. This change would require a revision of the Treaty.

9. Citizens of the Union have the right to vote and to stand as candidates in elections to the European Parliament and municipal elections in their Member State of residence.



The European Union should adopt a law to extend these rights to national and regional elections, as well as referenda.

This article is based on article 8 of the Charter on Fundamental Rights and attempts to give a higher priority to data protection.

10. European citizens have the right to the highest standards of protection of their personal data. The level of personal privacy protection must be equivalent to its status as a fundamental right, given the expansion of the internet.



The European Union will adopt laws to ensure that data protection keeps in step with technological progress.

11. European citizens enjoy a set of civic, economic, social and political rights connected to free movement, and therefore acquire a corresponding set of responsibilities:

- **To comply with the law of other Member States while on their territory, as well as EU level measures;**
- **To respect the rights and freedoms of others and assist each other in solidarity beyond the nation state;**
- **To learn about and respect, as equal to their own, the languages and customs of other Member States in a culturally diverse Union;**
- **To join forces in the Union to promote its values for the enforcement of human rights, the eradication of poverty, and maintenance of peace in its policies towards the rest of the world.**

This article introduces ideas for a responsible European citizenship. The Union is a union of states and citizens. Therefore the drafting is close to similar obligations called for in the Treaty whereby member states should collaborate and respect each other. By joining forces, European citizens can make a difference in the world. The plea is for an outward-looking Union citizenship.

[new proposal]

II. ACCESS AND DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

12. All citizens of the Union, and all natural persons residing in a Member State, shall be informed about their European rights and activities of the European Union.

Properly informed citizens are better able to participate in European policy making by Member States and the Union Institutions.

A right to be informed was first proposed by ECAS when the Convention on the Future of Europe was considering the draft Constitutional Treaty. The proposal was supported by the Commission and European Parliament at the time, but has yet to be included on the agenda for Treaty reform.



The Union Institutions and Member States will:

- Listen to citizens;
- Produce factual and objective information about European Union activities, expressed in clear and understandable language;
- Provide and disseminate this information by all available means in a socially balanced way in all official languages of the Union;
- Give every European citizen of voting age a handbook about European rights and how to find out more about the European Union.

[new proposal]

Like the proposal above on data protection, the aim is to give more prominence to this right. It builds on and strengthens article 15 TFEU and Article 42 of the Charter on Fundamental Rights on access to documents.

In response to the financial crisis, the European Council (the regular meeting of the Heads of state or Government) has nevertheless taken decisions which do lead to legislation and new Treaties. Such European Council deliberations and documents should be in the public domain.

13. Freedom of information is essential to the practice of EU citizenship. Any citizen of the Union and any natural or legal person residing or having its registered office in a Member State will have the right to access documents, whatever their medium, from the Union's institutions and agencies.

European citizens have a right, subject to the limits in the Treaties and the applicable Transparency Regulation:

- **To have access to any files or data that are held by the Institution or Agency;**
- **To know the position of their government in EU negotiations; [new proposal]**
- **To access all documents of a legislative nature or which could lead to legislation and which should, therefore, be in the public domain.**



Each Institution or Agency will appoint an Information Commissioner to assist citizens in their search for documents.

Moreover, the European Union will adopt a European freedom of information act.



14. Citizens, who will receive equal attention, have the right to expect that Union decisions are taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen. Every person has the right to have his or her affairs handled impartially, fairly and within a reasonable time by the Institutions of the Union and Member States when they apply European law. This right includes:

- **The right of every person to be heard before any individual measure which would affect him or her adversely is taken;**
- **The obligation of the administration to give reasons for its decisions.**

This article is based on Articles 9 and 10 TEU and Article 41 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. We have however, suggested a deliberate extension to Article 41 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights insofar as citizens should be able to expect good administration from both the Institutions and also Member States when they apply European law. This corresponds to the full scope of application of the charter (see Article 51 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights). Citizens should have access to EU decision-making in their own country and with their own government.

This seeks to fill a gap between a normal petition which can be signed by a single individual and the collection of one million signatures to demand a proposal for a European law.

In the 2011 case of Tegebauer, the ECJ held that when the Parliament lists a petition as inadmissible, this must be done with a reasoned decision in order to uphold the effectiveness of the right to petition. This ruling suggests that there is now a general right to obtain a reasoned decision.

The ECI Regulation will be reviewed in 2015. This will be an opportunity for the Union and Member States to take on board the suggestions of organisers and civil society. To extend this agenda setting right to legally resident third country nationals requires a Treaty change.

15. The European Union will also help develop a more participatory active European citizenship:



- Carry out regular citizens' consultations, juries and town hall meetings and take the results into account in European policy making.
- Introduce a new super petition which, with a minimum of 100,000 signatures from a minimum of 7 member states, will lead to public debate and a reasoned response from the European Parliament. The European Parliament should become more accountable to all petitioners. **[new proposal]**
- Support the right of one million citizens from a minimum of 7 member states to invite the Commission to take an initiative within its powers (the European Citizens' Initiative). The conditions for exercising this right should be simplified and made more user- friendly

The right to sign an ECI should be extended to legally resident third country nationals. **[new proposal]**

This article is based on article 24 TFEU which refers to the right to petition and the European ombudsman.

However, there is a deliberate extensions to Article 24 TFEU envisaged here. In particular, we propose extending these rights to (non-citizen) residents of the Member States.

Second bullet point seeks to strengthen the accountability of the Commission towards complainants. Article 11 TEU concerns third bullet point.

16. Every European citizen and any natural or legal person residing or having its registered office in a Member State has the right to:

- **write to any of the institutions, agencies and bodies of the Union in one of the official languages and receive an answer within a reasonable time in the same language;**
- **submit, individually or in association with others, a complaint of a violation of European law or rights and to be informed of the action taken;**
- **be heard by the institutions, and in particular the Commission, which should carry out far-reaching consultations before proposing new legislation or policies;**

- **petition the European Parliament individually or in association with others on any matter within the competence of the Union;**
- **make a complaint regarding any instances of maladministration by the Union authorities to the European ombudsman or, where individual interests are directly affected, to the Court of Justice of the European Union;**
- **receive diplomatic and consular protection from any Member State, in the territory of a third country in which their state or country of residence is not represented.**



The European Union will adopt a law to establish time limits for response to citizens' complaints or requests and other standards of good administrative practice for all EU institutions and agencies. It is essential that this law also applies to Member States and their respective agencies, when they enforce European rights and legislation.

A number of points of access for citizens to the EU exist, free of charge. In some cases, not in all, time limits exist for answering citizens' appeals or handling complaints. Legislation should be introduced or revised to provide for more uniform standards (see ECAS report – Mind the gap: towards better enforcement of European rights to free movement). It is very important that such standards apply at national, not just EU, level.

This article reflects Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Rights of redress should apply to all Institutions, agencies and bodies of the Union and to member states when they implement European law.

17. Everyone whose rights and freedoms, guaranteed by the law of the Union, are violated has the right to an effective remedy, which includes:

- **First level advice free of charge and access to rights of appeal and effective representation; [new proposal]**
- **A fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal;**
- **Legal aid shall be made available to those who lack sufficient resources to ensure effective access to justice.**

III. BELONGING AND DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

18. The Union is based on the principles of participatory and representative democracy. Decisions are taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen.



In order to develop European citizenship as a way to connect different languages and cultures, Union Institutions and Member States will:

- Develop Union citizenship as an additional educational dimension of their national civic and citizenship material and courses. The Commission will provide materials and incentives for Member States;
- Promote European languages being taught and the European dimension in education;
- Encourage the right for every European citizen to have access to a European educational or youth exchange scheme. The European Union will adopt a measure to achieve this aim; **[new proposal]**
- Provide citizens with their own European public space independent of the EU Institutions where they can exchange their views on all areas of Union action. The Institutions should make available e-participation tools and facilities for face-to-face dialogue;
- Encourage citizens to play their part in the development of the Union through the adoption of a European association statute and a pact for open dialogue between the Institutions and civil society. The European Union will adopt a law for this purpose; **[new proposal]**
- Develop further the programmes for transnational exchange of best practices and projects in the areas of culture, consumer, environmental, health; social protection and territorial cohesion policies which are closely linked to Union citizenship.

This article innovates in several respects, bringing together proposals to implement Article 11 TEU on participatory democracy, and ways to strengthen information and participation rights.

Point three is a long-standing demand by civil society and the European Parliament. A European Citizens' Initiative "Fraternité 2020" goes in this direction. We appreciate that there are funding constraints, however such a right could be developed as resources become available.

For some of these proposals loan schemes could be developed.

The goal should be to truly fulfil the slogan 'Erasmus for all'.

Points four and five reflect long-standing demands which, once implemented, can help make participatory democracy, called for in article 11 TEU, a reality.

Any form of citizenship needs symbols. The symbols were eliminated from the draft Constitutional Treaty when it became the Treaty of Lisbon - they should be restored. Citizens rather than the EU institutions should decide upon their symbols.

- Provide for a citizens' and civil society convention with delegates from all Member States to shadow a future European Convention for the revision of the Treaties. **[new proposal]**
- Ask the public to propose symbols of Union citizenship, such as the European passport, flag, anthem or Europe Day. **[new proposal]**

19. The European Parliament, elected by direct universal suffrage, represents European citizens and is the main advocate of their concerns in the decision-making of the Union. In particular:

- **European political parties should put forward candidates for high office in the Union, so that citizens have a choice. [new proposal]**
 - **Citizens should have the choice also of voting for candidates on trans-national party lists, to enhance the European character of the elections. [new proposal]**
 - **The President of the European Commission should be elected by direct universal suffrage. [new proposal]**
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- The European Parliament should propose how EU-wide referenda could be introduced to allow citizens to choose vital options for Europe's future.

This article is based on article 14 TEU whilst supporting reforms to make the European elections more European. The President of the European Commission should be directly elected. In order to achieve this aim, a Treaty amendment will be necessary.

Follow-up — Implementation and Development

20. Union citizenship is an evolving concept. This charter is not “set in stone” and should serve to frame debate. Changes and additions should be encouraged. Once adopted, there should be a public consultation on the functioning of this charter every three years. [new proposal]

This seeks to link the charter with the reports every 3 years on the development of Union citizenship under Article 25 TFEU.

This Article is based on the observation that many day-to-day issues covered in secondary legislation may be as important, if not more so, than general texts derived from the Treaties or the Charter of Fundamental rights.

21. This charter should be supplemented by easily accessible and understandable guides to European citizens’ rights which are contained in discrete legislative instruments or case law and make an impact on people’s everyday lives. Examples include legislation affecting:

- **travellers;**
- **consumers of goods and services;**
- **patients and other groups in society mentioned in article 6;**
- **visitors to Europe.**

Such guides may be developed also in areas of policy, such as economic and monetary governance, the environment, the internal market and services of general economic interest. “A one-stop shop” should bring this charter and such guides together. [new proposal]

22. In order to implement this charter, a senior European Commissioner will be appointed with responsibility for communication and all aspects of Union citizenship, rights, access to the EU Institutions and policies to encourage a sense of belonging to Europe. [new proposal]

In the Barroso Commission, the creation of the post for justice, fundamental rights and citizenship is a step in the right direction but does not go sufficiently far. A special Commissioner for citizenship should be well known, responsible for communication and backed by a strong legal team which can receive requests and complaints and help coordinate the response across specialised departments. The Commissioner should have the rank of Vice-President and be shadowed by a Vice President in the European Parliament.