

2020

ACTIVITY REPORT

ECAS' activities in 2020 were supported by:



WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO WARMLY THANK:

*Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer for their pro bono support, and
Mr. Daniel Cornelius Schily for his personal support to ECAS*



Table of Contents

About the European Citizen Action Service	3
Foreword by the Executive Director	4
EU RIGHTS Focus Area	5
Services to Citizens... ..	7
<i>Your Europe Advice (YEA)</i>	<i>7</i>
Projects	13
<i>MORE for EU citizens</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>CORE.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>IMPEU.....</i>	<i>16</i>
Events and Advocacy Campaigns	17
EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY Focus Area	18
Services to Citizens	20
<i>European Citizens' Initiative Forum</i>	<i>20</i>
Projects	21
<i>REP2019.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>NEXUS.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>eDemocracy - Driving citizen advocacy through digital means.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>DEMOS.....</i>	<i>24</i>
Events and Advocacy Campaigns	25
<i>ECI DAY 2020: Today and Beyond</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>eDemocracy: Driving citizen advocacy through digital means – Online Workshop Series.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>European Citizens' Initiative Week.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>EuroPCom 2020: Building our future together</i>	<i>29</i>
ECAS Membership and Outreach	30
ECAS Membership	30
ECAS' Outreach	31
Annexes	34
Annex I - Thank You Messages received by Your Europe Advice	34
Annex II - European Citizens' Initiative Forum Feedback.....	38

About the European Citizen Action Service

The **European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)** is an international, Brussels-based non-profit organisation with a pan-European membership and 30 years of experience in empowering citizens in order to create a more inclusive and stronger European Union by:

- Promoting and defending citizens' rights, and
- Developing and supporting mechanisms to increase citizens and citizen organisations' democratic participation in, and engagement with, the EU.

ECAS believes in an inclusive, transparent, citizen-centric and democratic European Union in which citizens' rights are at the heart of decision-making at all levels and in which citizens are informed, consulted and active participants.

ECAS delivers its mission by implementing projects, services to citizens, advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns, research and high-level events in two focus areas: **EU RIGHTS** and **EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY**.



Foreword by the Executive Director

2020: A Year of Unprecedented Challenges and of Promising Beginnings

The COVID-19 pandemic has shaken and challenged the way we live and has exposed the vulnerability of European citizens' rights. At the same time, it has fostered an understanding of the need to innovate and be bold in policy making if we want to preserve democracy and European values.

An ultimate promoter and supporter of freedom of movement in the EU, it was harrowing for ECAS to witness this fundamental right of European citizenship fall apart as one of the first victims of the pandemic, with Member States shutting their borders unilaterally and imposing restrictions in an uncoordinated manner. We knew what we needed to do – acquire the necessary knowledge as swiftly as possible in order to provide advice to citizens in trouble. In 2020, ECAS' network of legal experts advised more than 25 000 citizens from around the EU on their rights in the framework of [Your Europe Advice](#), including providing relevant and up to date COVID-19-related information.

On a positive note, ECAS' consistent, evidence-based advocacy for a new Communication from the Commission to the Member States on the 2004 Citizenship Directive has resulted in a commitment from the Commission to review the 2009 guidelines. The objective is to improve the legal certainty for EU citizens exercising their free movement rights and ensure a more effective, uniform application of free movement legislation across the EU. We WELCOME this development and consider our efforts in this respect a success.!

Another notable ECAS achievement in 2020 is related to the management of the [European Citizens' Initiative Forum](#). ECAS provided tailored advice to more than 40 current and potential ECI organisers, helping them register and carry out their initiatives. ECAS ensured a fourfold increase in the number of unique visits to the Forum and fostered its multilingual character. 75% of citizens now access the content of the Forum in languages other than English, thus supporting this unique transnational instrument of participatory democracy in the EU.

On the policy front, ECAS' advocacy efforts for innovative use of information and communications technology (ICT) to ensure more collaborative engagement of policy-makers with citizens and transform the relations between them into more of a partnership is finally bearing fruit. The European Democracy Action Plan, the consequent [Declaration](#) in the framework of the German Presidency of the Council of the EU and the newly released Citizenship Report all emphasise the need to put co-creation and collaboration with citizens into practice, encouraging the use of digital tools in the process and fostering the participation of citizens in political-decision-making.

In 2021 ECAS will start, in partnership with our members and technological partners, the first EU level crowdsourcing pilot for co-producing solutions on the subject of air quality with citizens. Our hope is that the pilot will prove the added value of this collaborative method of citizens' engagement and pave the way for its structured and consistent use as part of the EU decision-making process. On the occasion of our 30th anniversary in 2021, we will carry out monthly events with members and partners in our focus areas of EU Rights and European Democracy we will release a video of the main achievements of ECAS over the last three decades and we will publish a forward-looking book on European Citizenship.

Assya Kavrakova, ECAS' Executive Director



EU RIGHTS Focus Area

European citizenship lies at the core of the European project and [freedom of movement](#) is one of the most cherished rights of European citizens. In 2020, the COVID-19 crisis had a serious impact on the movement of citizens and businesses within the EU.

ECAS activities in the EU Rights Focus area aim at ensuring that the practical implementation of freedom of movement and other EU citizenship rights measure up to the spirit of the European legislative framework and the values of solidarity and non-discrimination.

In 2020, in the framework of the **'Your Europe Advice' (YEA)** service of the EU, ECAS legal experts provided advice to **25,281** European citizens. The service maintained a high level of quality with more than 94% of controlled cases fulfilling all the quality assurance criteria (+ 3% compared to 2019) and 96% (+1%) of all replies provided by their respective deadline. YEA received a higher number of social security enquiries (23%) in 2020, mainly because of the COVID-19 crisis and Brexit. There was also a significant increase in questions relating to the free movement of goods and enquiries linked to consumer rights. YEA received fewer enquiries related to the UK compared to 2019, instead receiving more enquiries related to Germany, Spain, France, and Italy. The testimonials in Annex 1 illustrate the extent to which the service is greatly appreciated by citizens.

In the framework of the **"Mobility and Political Rights Enhancement (MORE) for EU Citizens"** project, ECAS conducted the study "Under a Double Lockdown - Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Mobile EU Citizens' Rights". The study was based on desktop research, policy analysis, an investigation of COVID-19-related enquiries submitted by EU citizens to YEA, a focus group and two original surveys carried out on the ECAS crowdsourcing platform.

The [ECAS Awards "Hosts Open to Mobile European Citizens" \(HOME\)](#) were launched for the first time in 2020 to promote practices and initiatives that aim at fostering the inclusion and provision of information to mobile EU

citizens in three categories. 268 citizens from around the EU took part in the awards by voting on the ECAS crowdsourcing platform for the Most EU Mobile Citizen-Friendly Location or Initiative from nine candidates. The winners were announced during the annual ECAS State of the Union conference, which took place on 21 and 22 January 2021: State of the Union Citizens' Rights 2021: *Moving Together Beyond the Pandemic*.

The project '**Improving Inclusion of EU Mobile Citizens' (IMPEU)** aims to foster the political participation of EU mobile citizens and to enhance the capacity and knowledge of civil servants and relevant national, regional and local experts on EU citizenship and related political rights. In 2020, ECAS organised online policy roundtable sessions and citizens' dialogues. The activities were designed to present the IMPEU project, to acquire the input of stakeholders on common obstacles to political participation facing mobile EU citizens, to identify reasons behind the low levels of political involvement of EU mobile citizens. Moreover, the activities sought to gather feedback on the project tools developed for civil servants, including the IMPEU toolkit and the online course, and to discuss possible solutions on how to improve the political participation of mobile EU citizens.

In 2020, ECAS continued advocating for better enforcement of EU citizens' rights with a special focus on calling on the European Commission to update the Communication on Directive 2004/38/EC from 2009 to provide guidance to the Member States on how to implement the Directive more efficiently.

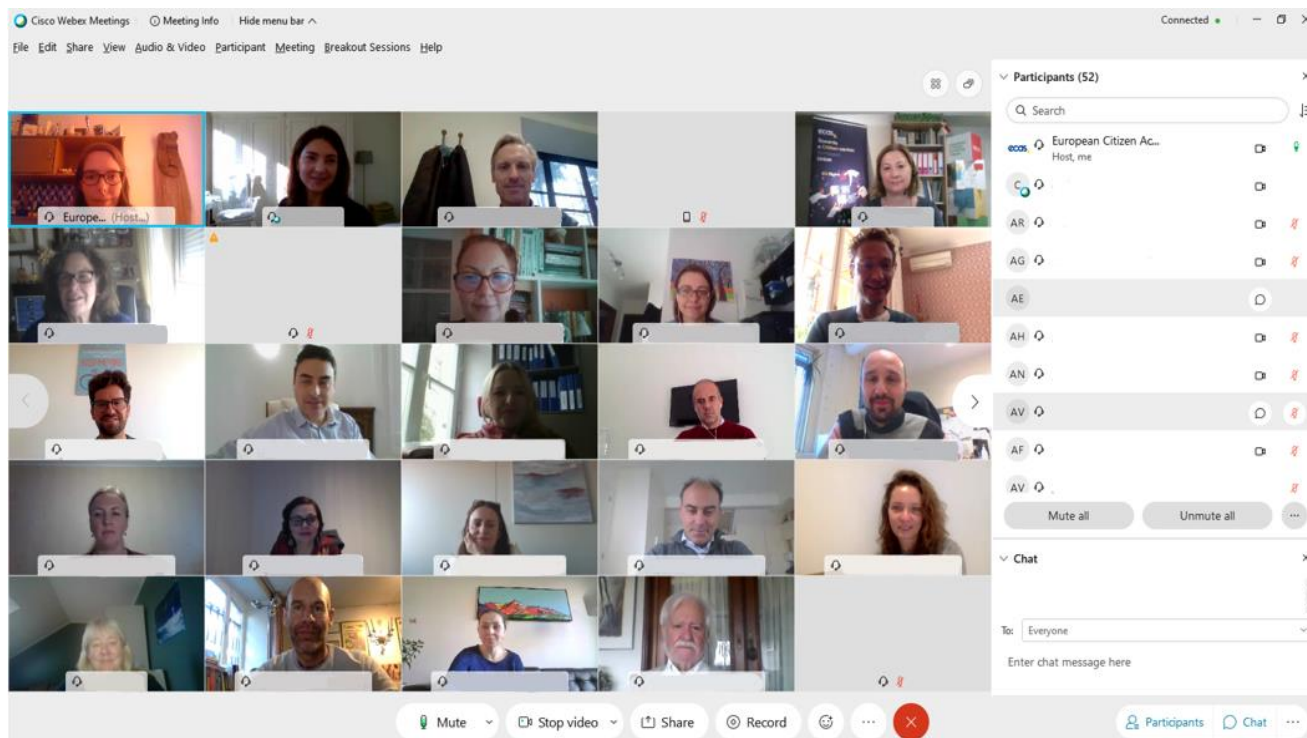
In response to the public consultation on the EU Citizenship Report 2020, ECAS outlined the biggest problems in the field and once again called for an updated Communication. As a follow-up in November 2020, ECAS shared a paper with DG JUST outlining the specific areas which need further clarification ("grey areas") in the Free Movement Directive. The areas needing revision were first highlighted by ECAS in the framework of the REFIT platform in 2017 and were made into an [opinion piece](#) recommending the Commission to issue a new Communication. The paper was updated in 2020 with the most recent cases received by YEA in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December 2020 the European Commission published the [EU Citizenship Report 2020](#), committing to adopting a new Communication on Directive 2004/38/EC in 2022. ECAS welcomed this development and published an official [position paper](#).

Services to Citizens

Your Europe Advice (YEA)

Your Europe Advice is an EU advice service on the personal EU rights of citizens and businesses that ECAS manages under contract with, and on behalf of, the European Commission.

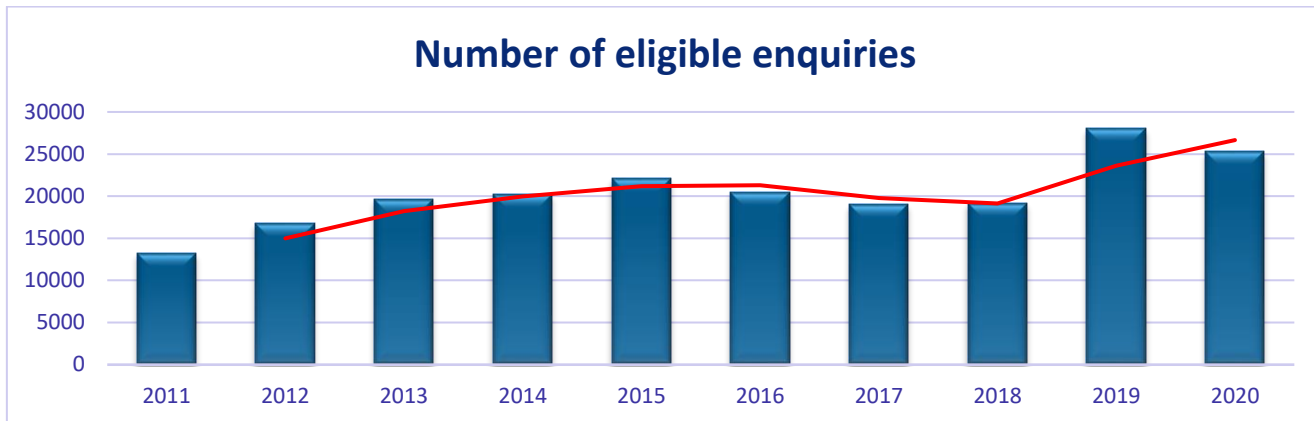


The ECAS team of around 60 lawyers, who are experts in both EU law and national law in all EU countries and are native speakers of the 24 official EU languages, responds to questions received from citizens within one week, free of charge and in the language chosen by the user. Enquiries can be submitted either via an [online form](#) or by phone (00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11).

Performance in 2020

ECAS won in 2020 the YEA tender with an evaluation score of 92.2 points out of a possible 100 and was awarded a 4-year contract. The new contract between ECAS and the European Commission started on 1 April 2020.

YEA legal experts replied to **25,281 enquiries** which, despite representing a decrease of 9% compared to the previous year, makes 2020 the year in which the second highest total number of enquiries were received in the last decade.

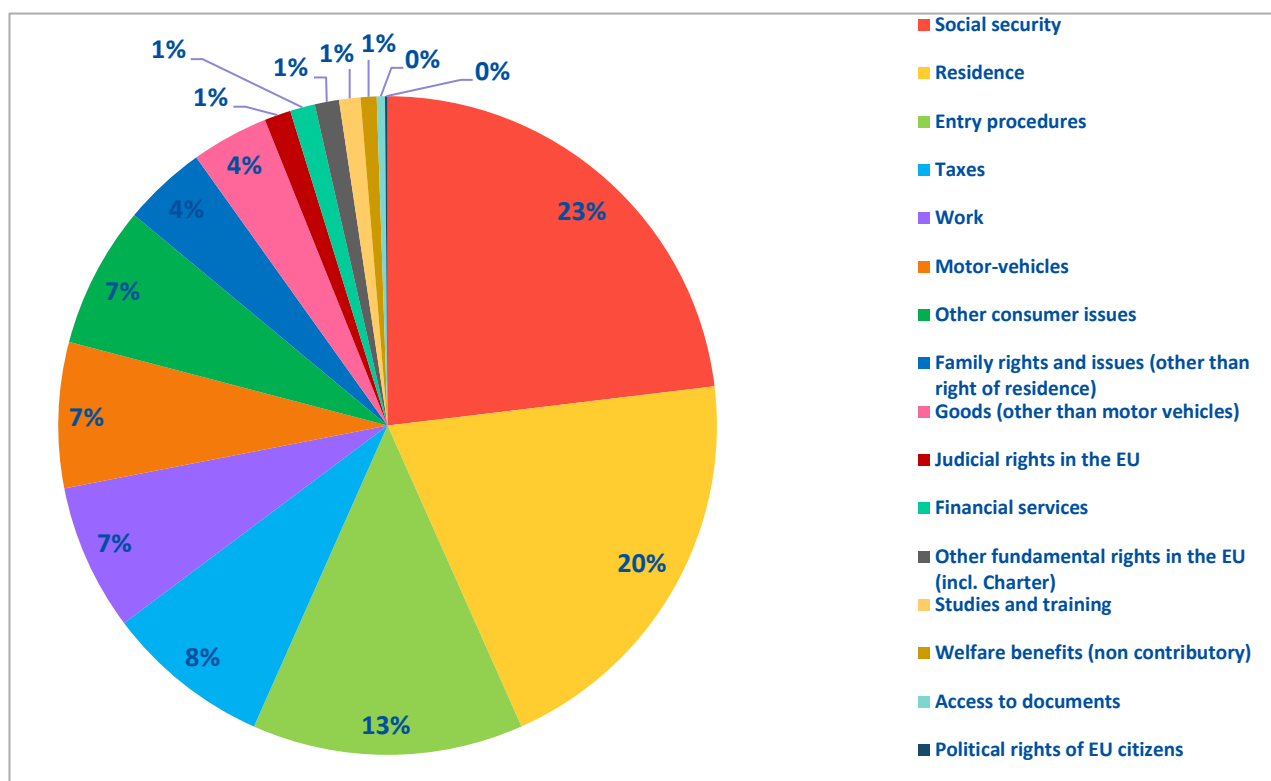


The quality of the service was maintained at a high level. Under the service contract, the European Commission requires ECAS to maintain a high level of quality assurance and to carry out quality control based on a sample that “should be 10% of all cases” and “not less than 150”. This quality assessment allows precise quality control and very focused management responses.

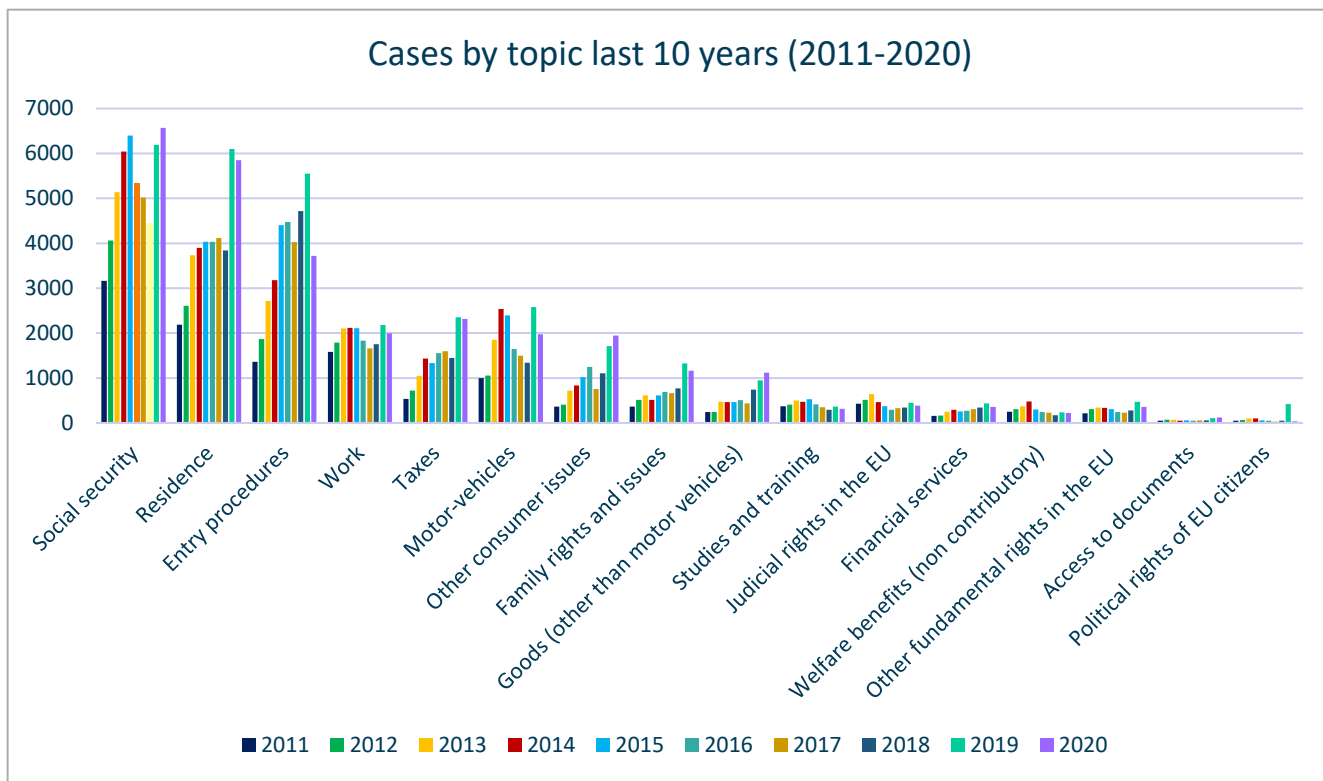
In 2020, more than 94% of checked cases fulfilled all the quality assurance criteria (+ 3% compared to 2019) and 96% (+1%) of all replies were provided within the one week deadline.

Nature of the Enquiries

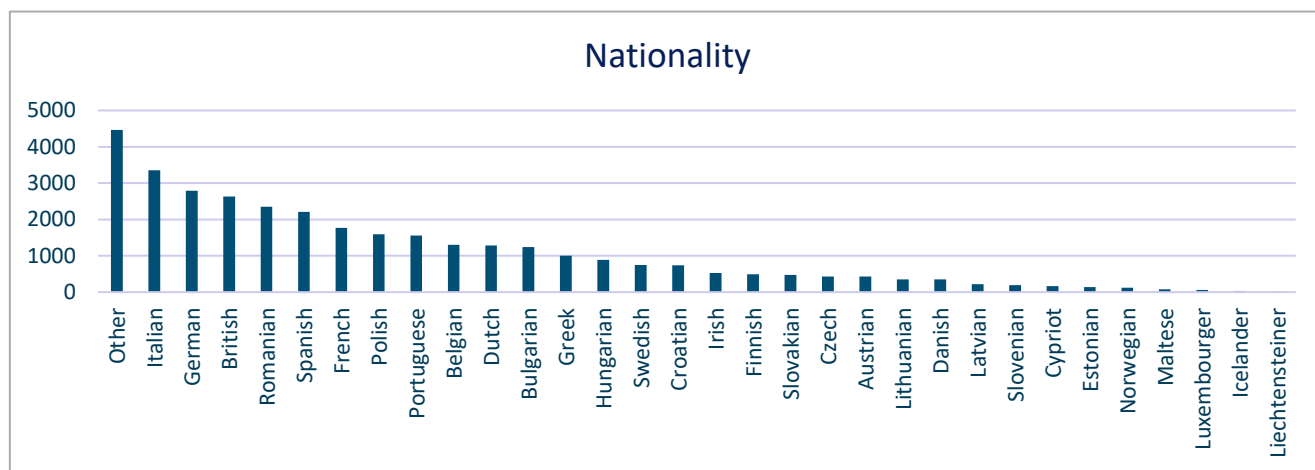
In 2020, the COVID-19 crisis had an enormous impact on the movement of citizens and businesses within the EU. Citizens faced obstacles imposed not only by national administrations, but also by private entities. Many citizens were well informed but unable to find any remedy to their situation.



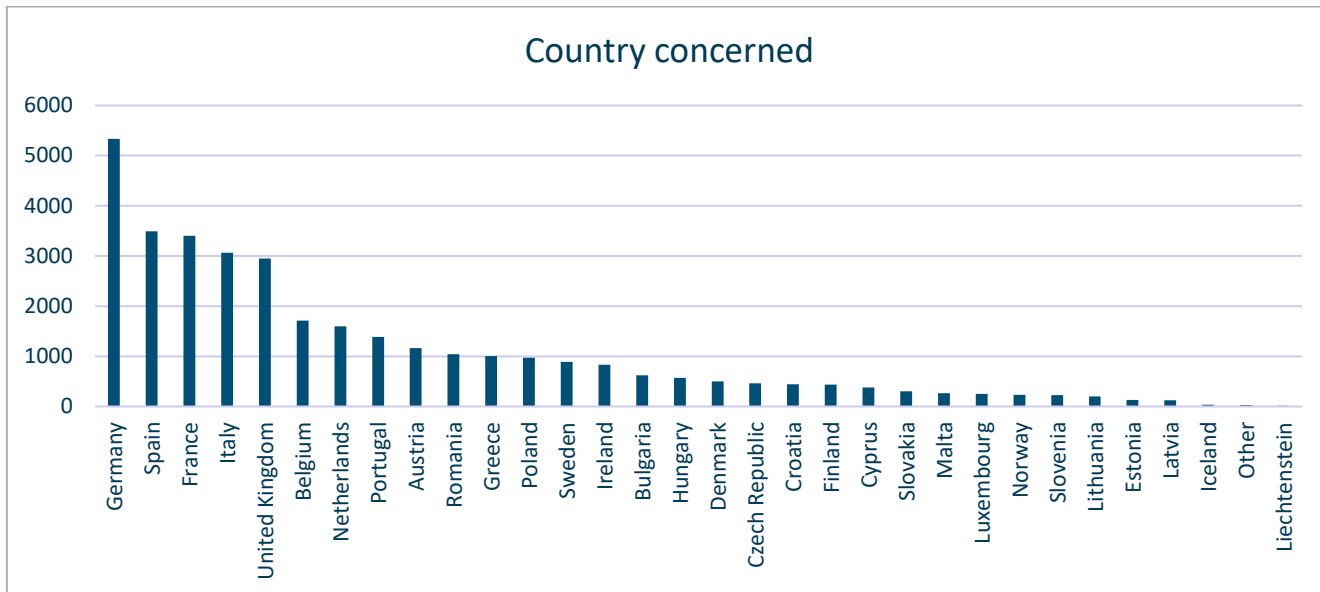
YEA received a higher number of social security enquiries (23%) in 2020, mainly because of the COVID-19 crisis and Brexit. There was also a significant increase in questions relating to the free movement of goods and enquiries linked to consumer rights.



YEA received enquiries from citizens from all 27 EU countries, from British, Icelandic and Norwegian citizens as well as from other third country nationals who are family members of EU citizens. YEA received fewer questions from British citizens compared to previous years but much more from Italian and German citizens.



The enquiries received related to all 27 Member States, as well as Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein. YEA received fewer enquiries related to the UK compared to 2019, which was the focus of the fifth highest amount of enquiries, and more enquiries related to Germany, Spain, France, and Italy.



Outreach Activities

Four YEA experts participated in outreach activities in Slovenia, Lithuania and the Czech Republic, of which two were online events. The number of participants varied significantly according to the type of event, but the number of people reached is estimated to have exceeded 500 citizens based upon the feedback reports of events.

The YEA network meetings tended to be organised by the Commission Representations and gathered many representatives from a variety of service networks such as SOLVIT, Europe Direct, Team Europe, EURES, Enterprise Europe Network and other consumer organisations. YEA experts presented and explained the Your Europe website and YEA to potential multipliers and 'institutional' users, while liaising with representatives from other networks who provided help and advice to citizens and businesses.

Your Europe Web Portal Assistance

The Your Europe portal is an EU website designed to act as a first point of contact that provides comprehensive information and signposting to citizens and businesses to assist them in understanding, exercising and enforcing their rights and entitlements under EU law throughout the European Union. The YEA Team contributes to maintaining the high quality and accuracy of information on the Your Europe Portal, relating to both EU legislation and national implementation rules. The Editorial board of the Your Europe Portal is informed promptly if a legal expert or a Member of the Management Team ever identifies any information gaps or contradictions on the website.

EU Legal Updates

The Management Team ensures that the YEA experts are kept up-to-date with new legislation and case law by providing them with a monthly newsletter entitled 'EU Law Updates'. This newsletter is tailored to the continuously evolving informational needs of the experts. It includes the latest news from the EU, information on recent infringement procedures undertaken by the European Commission and an analysis of the latest European Court of Justice judgments relating to areas dealt with in enquiries. Each month the newsletter also

publishes one or more interesting or exemplary responses provided by YEA experts to enquiries received. Additional resources that may be relevant for the experts, including outreach activities, interesting websites, developments in individual Member States and references to academic EU articles are also included in the EU Law Updates newsletter.

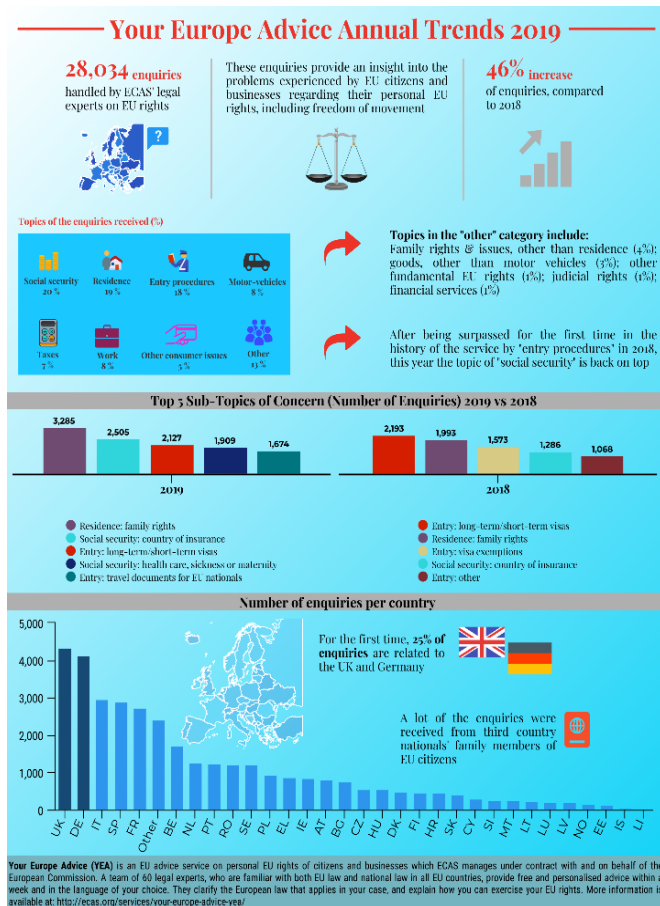
Feedback Reports

ECAS provides four feedback reports to the European Commission every year. These reports include details of the cases handled by the YEA experts and a policy analysis of the topics covered in the enquiries. In 2020, a new chapter was added on analysing enquiries related to COVID-19.

The ECAS Management Team also provides the Commission with Monthly Reports that focus on the specific trends of each month. These reports include information on the number of enquiries received, the quality of the answers provided, the transfers made to and from SOLVIT and EDCC as well as any late enquiries and operational matters. Additionally, each Monthly Report includes an interesting or exemplary response provided by a YEA expert to an enquiry.

YEA annual trends

ECAS published a report at the end of March 2020 that identified key trends in obstacles to free movement based upon YEA enquiries received in 2019. These trends provide useful information about the problems experienced by citizens who seek to exercise their right to free movement.



YEA training seminar

The *Your Europe Advice* Annual Seminar took place online due to the COVID-19 pandemic on Wednesday 18, Thursday 19 and Friday 20 November 2020 and was organised by the European Commission and ECAS. The internal session took place on the first day of the seminar, limited to the Your Europe Advice legal experts and the ECAS Management Team, with the aim of informing the experts about qualitative and quantitative trends. The following seminar days were attended by fifty-seven Your Europe Advice legal experts and by officials from DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG Justice and Consumers, Brexit Task Force, DG Internal Market, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, DG for Health and Food safety and participants from SOLVIT, EEN and EDCC. The seminar informed the legal experts of new developments in EU law, the achievements of the service in 2020 and of the new challenges currently facing the European Union.

In 2020, the experts were trained on the latest legislative developments in areas such as the impact of Brexit on social security coordination and on residence and entry rights, free movement of goods, the Directive and Regulation on medical devices and the legal challenges of teleworking.

YEA chat

The ECAS Management Team organised weekly online chats due to the COVID-19 pandemic in order to keep the YEA experts informed on the latest news and legislation regarding EU law and COVID-19-related policies (e.g. closure of borders) and to ensure that these topics could be discussed in detail.

Projects

MORE for EU citizens



MORE for EU Citizens is supported by the European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM), a collaborative initiative of the Network of European Foundations. The project tackles the challenges experienced by EU mobile citizens, in particular those affecting rights to family reunification and political participation.

The final objective of MORE for EU Citizens is to improve the enforcement of EU citizens' rights by the EU institutions, to raise awareness among EU citizens on EU rights and to involve national decision-makers in discussions on the obstacles facing mobile EU citizens.

Certain activities that had been planned to take place in person, such as meetings with MEPs, were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic and replaced by a study on the impact of the pandemic on mobile EU citizens. The study is based on desktop research, policy analysis, an investigation of COVID-19-related enquiries submitted by EU citizens to the Your Europe Advice service, a focus group and two original surveys carried out on the ECAS crowdsourcing platform.

Additionally, ECAS organised a dedicated session during the 18th European Week of Regions and Cities in October in order to gather additional evidence from a group of relevant stakeholders in the area of EU mobile citizens' rights. Together with top experts from selected EU institutions and civil society organisations, we sought to reflect, recognize, and react to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on mobile Europeans and freedom of movement.

Based on this empirical evidence, a 73-page-long study titled "Under a Double Lockdown - Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Mobile EU Citizens' Rights" was produced and published officially in 2021.

ECAS Awards



The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the temporary suspension of freedom of movement across the European Union. Once such measures come to a close, citizens Member States, EU institutions and civil society will have the challenging task of restoring one of the greatest legacies of the European integration. With this goal in mind, the inaugural edition of [ECAS Awards “Hosts Open to Mobile European Citizens” \(HOME\)](#) were launched in 2020 to promote practices and initiatives that aim at fostering the inclusion and provision of information to mobile EU citizens.

The aim of ECAS Awards is to recognize the efforts of cities, regions and CSOs to overcome the obstacles experienced by mobile EU citizens, enhance freedom of movement in the EU and foster the inclusion of mobile EU citizens.

Nine eligible initiatives competed in three categories:

- Practices aimed at alleviating the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak on mobile EU citizens
- Practices aimed at improving social and cultural inclusion of mobile EU citizens
- Practices aimed at improving political inclusion of mobile EU citizens.

A fourth category entitled “ECAS’ choice” was added and awarded to an initiative selected by ECAS staff for being closest to the mission and values of ECAS.

268 citizens from around the EU took part in the awards by voting on the ECAS crowdsourcing platform for the Most EU Mobile Citizen-Friendly Location or Initiative from nine outstanding pre-selected candidates. The winners were announced during the annual ECAS State of the Union conference, which took place on 21 and 22 January 2021, *State of the Union Citizens’ Rights 2021: Moving Together Beyond the Pandemic*.

CORE



Together with FEANTSA and Médecins du Monde (MdM), ECAS launched the Civic Observatory on the Rights of EU Citizens (CORE) in 2019. This joint initiative aims at monitoring and taking stock of legal and political developments in the field of EU citizenship on an annual basis. CORE allows the organisations involved in the Observatory to run and implement joint cross-sectoral initiatives and advocacy actions in order to complement and increase the impact of their individual activities.

The main goal of CORE is to optimise the impact of the individual work of its members by:

- Creating synergies in terms of expertise to increase capacity;
- Upscaling the promotion of EU mobile citizens' rights;
- Agreeing on CORE's core messages and multiplying them through individual networks;
- Advocating by engaging the Members of the European Parliament; and
- Promoting CORE's messages and activities through individual organisations' events.

In January 2020, CORE published a [policy paper that](#) outlined the most important developments in the fields of the participating organisations and provided recommendations on how to overcome obstacles experienced by mobile EU citizens .

In October 2020, an online workshop aimed at exchanging knowledge between members of the CORE organisation took place. Doctors of the World (MdM) carried out a session on the right to healthcare and the existing services provided to uninsured mobile EU citizens. FEANTSA delivered a training session on homelessness among mobile EU citizens, relevant policies and practices, while Anthony Valcke from the EU Rights Clinic conducted a workshop on strategic litigation. Overall, the online workshop brought together 21 participants from the networks of FEANTSA and MdM as well as several legal experts from YEA.

IMPEU

In December 2018, ECAS launched the project 'Improving Inclusion of EU Mobile Citizens' (IMPEU), coordinated by Agenzia per lo Sviluppo dell'Empolese Valdelsa (ASEV). The aim of IMPEU is to foster political participation of EU mobile citizens and enhance the capacity and knowledge of civil servants and relevant national, regional and local experts on EU citizenship and related political rights.

The project is funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Commission and is implemented by ECAS in consortium with:

- Agenzia per lo Sviluppo dell'Empolese Valdelsa (ASEV) - Italy
- Institut za Podgotovka na Slujiteliv Mejdunarodni Organizacii Zdruzhenie (ITPIO) - Bulgaria
- Astiki Mh Kersoskopiki Etareia Helping Hand (HELPING HAND) - Greece
- Dimos Vrillission (MUVRI) - Greece
- Magenta Consultoria Projects SI (MAGENTA) – Spain

2nd round of IMPEU Roundtables and Citizens' Dialogues

In the second half of 2020, ECAS organised policy roundtables and citizens' dialogue sessions. The aim of these activities was to present the IMPEU project, to gather the input of stakeholders on the obstacles to political participation facing mobile EU citizens and the reasons behind their low political involvement, and to gather feedback on the tools and instruments developed for citizens and for civil servants in the framework of the IMPEU project.

The preparations for the second citizen dialogue took place in July 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and for safety reasons, the decision was taken for the citizen dialogue to be organised virtually via Zoom, instead of taking place as originally planned in the form of a physical event

An invitation was sent to 15 mobile EU citizens residing in Belgium. The group was selected with the intention of reflecting the characteristics of mobile EU citizens in the Brussels region, taking into account gender balance and ensuring that both citizens who had moved to the city recently and those who had resided in Brussels for a long time were included, as well as citizens who spoke the official languages of Belgium and those who did not. Finally, it was decided to include both mobile EU citizens working in EU institutions and those who do not because of the very different experiences lived in relation to the acquisition of residence rights. The citizens' dialogue was organised on 14 July, bringing together 7 mobile EU citizens.

The participants provided feedback on the documents and tools developed in the framework of the IMPEU project, such as the physical and [online Info Kiosks](#) and the [IMPEU toolkit for citizens](#), and discussed the inclusion policies in Belgium and suggested improvements.

Due to the COVID-19-related restrictions, the IMPEU Policy Roundtable also took place online in the form of individual meetings/interviews between October and November 2020 with three civil servants, one local councillor and one representative of a citizens' advice bureau. They provided feedback on the tools developed

for civil servants in the framework of the IMPEU project, such as the IMPEU toolkit and online course, and discussed potential solutions on how to improve the political participation of mobile EU citizens.

Events and Advocacy Campaigns

In 2020, ECAS continued advocating for better enforcement of EU citizens' rights. In particular, a focus was placed on activities calling on the European Commission to update the Communication on Directive 2004/38/EC. An update was published in 2009 with the aim of providing guidance to the Member States on how to implement the Directive more efficiently but there have been several key ECJ judgments since then that have clarified various aspects of the Directive. By researching and analysing enquiries received through Your Europe Advice, ECAS has demonstrated how mobile EU citizens and their family members continue to experience significant obstacles to freedom of movement and exercising their EU rights. ECAS has therefore advocated for an updated Communication in formal and informal meetings with EU decision-makers and included this call for legislative action in the [CORE Policy Paper](#). In response to the public consultation on the EU Citizenship Report 2020, ECAS outlined the biggest problems in the field and, once again, called for an updated Communication.

As a follow-up in November 2020, ECAS also shared a paper with DG JUST outlining the call for a new Communication on Directive 2004/38/EC. The document identified areas which need further clarification ("grey areas") in the Free Movement Directive, which had first been submitted by ECAS in the framework of the REFIT platform in 2017 and made into an [opinion piece](#) recommending that the Commission issue a new Communication. The paper was updated in 2020 with the most recent cases received by Your Europe Advice in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

ECAS also participated in an interview conducted by Milieu, a consultancy company contracted by the European Commission to conduct a study on difficulties faced by EU citizens and their family members when exercising their rights under Directive 2004/38/EC. In addition to identifying key problems, the aim of the study was also to evaluate the need to update the Communication on Directive 2004/38. ECAS Senior Legal Manager was interviewed for the study on behalf of ECAS and provided her input on the main obstacles that EU citizens and their non-EU family members face when entering to or residing in another Member State based on the enquiries received by YEA and various ECAS reports and policy papers.

In December 2020, the European Commission published the [EU Citizenship Report 2020](#), committing to adopting a new Communication on Directive 2004/38/EC in 2022. ECAS welcomed this development and published an official [position paper](#).



EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY Focus Area

ECAS continued its work in the European Democracy focus area in 2020 while adjusting to the unforeseen circumstances caused by the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the nature of activities carried out in the framework of this focus area, which considers innovative solutions to European democracy and concentrates primarily on the digital world, disruptions caused by the pandemic were minimal.

The ongoing multiple crises facing Europe, including health crises, Brexit, challenges to the rule of law and shrinking civic spaces, have reinforced the position of ECAS on the urgency of establishing a deliberative-collaborative e-democracy model. Such a model would facilitate a more open, inclusive form of policymaking by involving citizens through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and developing a more precise understanding of the imminent threats to democracy, not least populism and online disinformation.

For these reasons, ECAS has developed its work in the European Democracy Focus Area based on three pillars:

- [Digital Democracy](#) – to explore the potential of ICT in reducing the gap between political elites and citizens while fostering engaged citizenship through civic tech.
- [Understanding Populism](#) – to develop a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of ‘populism’ in order to take greater account of citizens’ voices in democratic political systems.
- [Online Disinformation](#) – to gain a better understanding of how to counter online disinformation so that citizens have access to quality and objective information, which should represent a central element of healthy public debate.

One of the most remarkable achievement of ECAS in 2020 was undoubtedly the management of the **newly revamped European Citizens’ Initiative Forum**, which is now included in the updated ECI Regulation ((EU)

2019/788) and is now coordinated by ECAS and its two subcontractors – Democracy International and ProMedia Productions.

ECAS increased the number of unique visits to the Forum fourfold in 2020 in comparison to 2019, achieving 8,000 visits per month, while developing the tool as a multilingual hub in which more than 75% of citizens now use its information and services in languages other than English. Through the Forum, ECAS provided tailored advice to more than 40 current and potential organisers, helping them to register and carry out their initiatives. Moreover, ECAS updated and produced new learning material for organisers of citizens' initiatives to help them during their campaigns and also carried out a number of online events related to the Forum while conducting plenty of promotional communications activities.

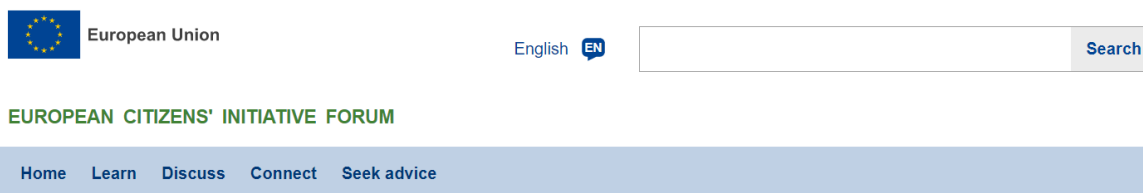
In 2020 ECAS also witnessed the results of its longstanding policy work to include more collaborative forms of decision-making through the use of digital technologies. This can be seen in the European Democracy Action Plan, the follow-up Declaration in the framework of the German Presidency of the Council and the newly released Citizenship Report, which all called to increase the use of digital tools to foster citizen participation in decision-making processes. Furthermore, the work of ECAS together as part of a coalition of 30 civil society organisations on transparency for political advertisements resulted in the proposal of more rigorous rules in this field included in the new European Democracy Action Plan and Digital Services Act.

In the framework of its European Democracy focus area, ECAS contributed to the organisation of the European Citizens' Initiative Week. The high-level event, which was attended by almost 2,000 participants, showed a renewed enthusiasm for the unique participatory instrument at the EU level. ECAS also contributed to the organisation of the annual ECI Day in cooperation with the European Economic and Social Committee. Finally, on the topic of digital democracy, ECAS supported the organisation of a series of three online workshops on the latest developments in the field and sought to establish and lead a network of practitioners and experts. The outcomes of the discussions of the workshops fed into a publication on the same subject that analysed 15 European case studies of citizen-driven digital democracy projects.

Services to Citizens

European Citizens' Initiative Forum

The new European Citizens' Initiative Forum, operated on behalf of and under contract with the European Commission, was implemented as part of a new three-year project that started in November 2019.



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the website. On the left is the European Union flag and the text "European Union". In the center, there is a language selector set to "English" with a small "EN" icon. To the right is a search bar with the word "Search" in a blue button. Below the navigation bar is a green header with the text "EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE FORUM". Underneath that is a light blue navigation bar with the links "Home", "Learn", "Discuss", "Connect", and "Seek advice".

Are you planning to launch a European citizens' initiative, or are you currently promoting one? Or perhaps you are simply interested in discussing potential citizens' initiatives?

This platform is a space for you to get practical information and advice about the European citizens' initiative, and to discuss any topics related to it. If you would like to register an initiative, you should visit the [European citizens' initiative website](#).

This site is operated by the European Citizen Action Service (ECAS) on behalf of and under contract to the European Commission.



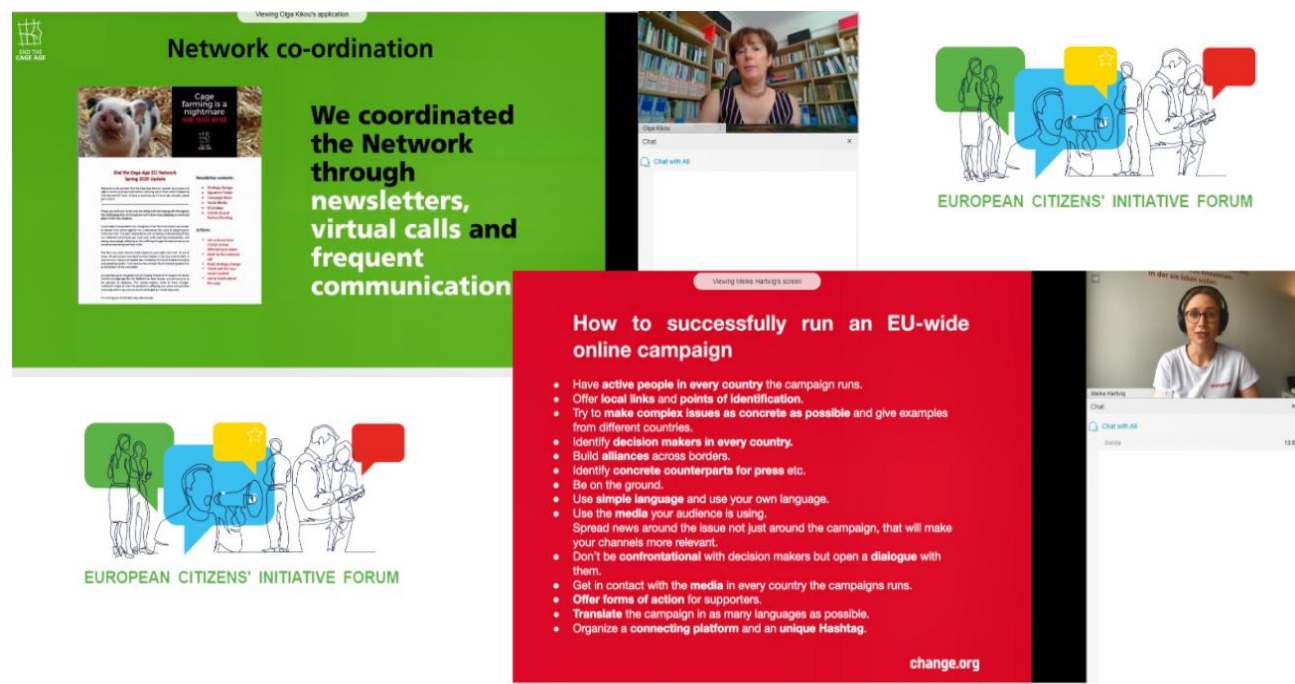
The purpose of the online collaborative platform, whose new version was officially launched on 7 January 2020, is to provide advice and information to organisers before, during and after the process of launching and implementing an initiative. The objective is to foster interactions between (potential) organisers, citizens and experts on the topic of the European Citizens' Initiative and the Forum aims to become as reference entry point for all information and capacity-building related to the European Citizens' Initiative.

Over the course of 2020, ECAS supported the European Commission in developing and implementing the updated version of the European Citizens' Initiative Forum. The responsibilities of ECAS greatly expanded in 2020 from the original pilot project and ECAS implemented various activities together with its subcontractors Democracy International and ProMedia Productions.

In order to help users familiarise themselves with the various support services and resources offered on the platform, ECAS produced an introductory video for the homepage of the Forum. ECAS also created a new 'Learn' page to improve the accessibility of the learning materials available on the Forum, restructuring the page and its materials by topic and creating five new subpages on different aspects of the European Citizens' Initiative. The new learning materials created in 2020 included three video testimonials from organisers of citizens' initiatives. Throughout the year, ECAS updated existing content on the Forum, creating new versions of its guidance notes

and success stories while producing a new guidance note on the new support tools available to organisers of citizens' initiatives.

Due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the participatory activities envisaged for the Forum were carried out online. ECAS held three webinars on different topics related to the European Citizens' Initiative, covering: legal advice when drafting an initiative, online campaigning, and the European Citizens' Initiative supporting tools. Approximately 250 people attended the three webinars in total.



The communication and outreach efforts of ECAS resulted in a fourfold increase in the number of unique visits received to the Forum and helped foster the multilingual dimension of the platform. Furthermore, ECAS created a brand-new visual identity to promote the Forum at external events, organised five stakeholder consultation activities and contributed to the organisation of the European Citizens' Initiative Week.

Lastly, ECAS continued to manage the 'SEEK advice' section of the Forum, handling citizens' enquiries and providing legal, campaigning and fundraising advice to more than 40 potential and current organisers over the course of 2020.

Projects

REP2019

The Europe For Citizens project 'Road to European Parliament 2019 – Empowering a new generation of EU citizens' (REP2019) aims to contribute to the growth of a new generation of young European citizens able to critically assess the strengths and the weaknesses of the European Union and propose innovative solutions to enhance citizen participation in European democracy.

REP2019 aims to achieve this goal by designing and delivering a training programme on the role and functioning of EU institutions for students in their final year of high school. The training programme seeks to foster youth participation in the EU decision-making process.

The project involves 250 students from rural areas from five different EU countries – Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Spain and Romania.

The project was implemented in partnership with the following organisations:

- [Dimos Alimou – Municipality of Alimos](#)
- [Ayuntamiento de La Palma del Condado](#)
- [Comuna Victoria](#)
- [Associazione Pro Loco “Pro Mercogliano”](#)
- [Novi Homines – Pilietiškumą skatinanti asociacija](#)

ECAS supported the development of the training programmes in 2020 and led its communication activities. The specific tasks carried out by ECAS included the:

- Implementation of the communication and dissemination plan;
- Management of the project website in cooperation with all partners;
- Management of project profiles on main social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram);
- Production of one of 5 electronic newsletters, which focused primarily on the second project event that took place in Athens in January and the promotion of subsequent activities.



ECAS participated in the second transnational training and simulation event in Athens, Greece on 21 January 2020. ECAS engaged with the young students participating in the event through a series of interviews and other activities, which aimed at highlighting the skills and the knowledge acquired by the students through participating in the project. The subsequent activities of the project originally planned were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project partners obtained an extension by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Union to conclude the project by the end of 2021.

NEXUS



ECAS continued its work on the three-year project entitled ‘Promoting the nexus of migrants through active citizenship (NEXUS)’. The project empowers students (with particular attention to newly-arrived migrant students and under-served students) to exercise their rights, uphold human rights and contribute positively to their society and the global community. The objective of the NEXUS project is to allow the development of necessary skills in order for students to become informed and active citizens.

This project is implemented in partnership with the following organisations:

- [Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia \(UNED\)](#), Spain
- [Unione delle Università del Mediterraneo \(UNIMED\)](#), Italy
- [Malmö University](#), Sweden
- [Knowledge Innovation Centre \(KIC\)](#) Malta
- [Institut za razvoj obrazovanja \(IRO\)](#), Slovenia
- [Apis Institute](#), Croatia

In 2020, ECAS contributed to the NEXUS project by utilising its expertise in digital democracy and online participation. ECAS worked together with partners to build the online course (MOOC) “Civics 4.0: active citizenship and participation in the digital age”, participating in the design of the online course, the identification of e-participation case studies and other best practices of digital democracy in Europe. Furthermore, ECAS recorded five introductory videos to bring the MOOC to life and allow students to better navigate the modules and content of the course. The course will be officially launched in the first months of 2021.

The envisaged consortium meetings for 2020 in Rome, Italy (March) and Malmo, Sweden (September) were replaced by online sessions attended by the project partners.

eDemocracy - Driving citizen advocacy through digital means

The project ‘eDemocracy: Driving citizen advocacy through digital means’ was implemented in cooperation with the European Liberal Forum (ELF) and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation from August to December 2020.

Building on the knowledge of various forms of online participation, the project fostered the exchange and evaluation of good practices of citizen e-participation at local and national levels across Europe.

The project activities included a series of three thematic workshops on the topic of citizen-driven eDemocracy as well as a publication on the same subject.

ECAS supported the implementation of the project activities with specific tasks including the:

- Organisation and implementation of three thematic workshops carried out on 4, 8, and 10 September 2020 via Zoom;
- Moderation of Workshop I and III;
- Preparation of visual materials for the workshops;
- Contribution to the research methodology of the publication;
- Authoring of the final publication.

DEMOS



Democratic Efficacy and the Varieties of Populism in Europe



The three-year 'Democratic Efficacy and the Varieties of Populism in Europe' (DEMOS) project, under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme of the European Union, began in December 2018. The project is led by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and implemented by a consortium of 15 organisations. It explores the practical value of 'democratic efficacy' as the condition of political engagement needed to address the challenge of populism.

In 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak was a challenge for the implementation of certain tasks under DEMOS and a number of activities were postponed in agreement with the European Commission. However, ECAS managed to fulfil most of its activities envisaged for the project.

ECAS carried out an exhaustive mapping of projects that address populism in Europe in order to highlight the main features of citizens' reactions to populism. 338 projects were identified in total, out of which 10 representative projects were selected as case studies for further research. ECAS carried out interviews with these 10 project managers in order to better understand the challenges and success factors of citizen responses to populist narratives. ECAS started compiling the findings of the interviews into a report.

ECAS also initiated the organisation of deliberative polling scheduled to take place in 2021 on the topic of migration. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has presented some challenges to the project given that physical meetings are of high relevance for citizen assemblies.

Another activity carried out was the identification of Russian-influenced populist narratives online. ECAS commissioned a case study to the Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS) on such narratives in Bulgaria. Based on this research, ECAS started developing a Digital Dashboard for 'social listening' on the subject of populist narratives and will finalise preparations for the implementation of the task in 2021.

In 2020, ECAS also continued to support the communication and dissemination activities of DEMOS in a variety of ways, using the online channels (social media, newsletters, etc.) of ECAS, partners (e.g. ECAS members) and EU stakeholders.

Events and Advocacy Campaigns

ECI DAY 2020: Today and Beyond



The 'ECI Day 2020: Today and Beyond' took place at the Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels on 25 February 2020. Organised by the EESC in cooperation with several civil society organisations including ECAS, the ECI Day represents an important annual meeting to exchange ideas on the European Citizens' Initiative as a tool for participatory democracy in the EU. The 2020 edition of the event focused on the analysis of current trends related to the impact of digital technologies on democratic processes and citizen participation, putting the European Citizens' Initiative in the context of current affairs and societal developments.

The event changed its usual format in 2020 and ECAS featured in both of its morning and afternoon sessions, namely:

- The ECI today: lessons learned from the world's first transnational participation instrument
- Beyond the ECI: the future of EU citizens' participation in the digital age



The morning session focused on the history of the world's first transnational participation instrument and its prominent speakers included representatives of civil society organisations as well as former initiatives' organisers. Taking stock of the lessons learned and the achievements of the European Citizens' Initiative, the discussion aimed at formulating recommendations for a successful future of the instrument. The intervention of ECAS acknowledged longstanding efforts in supporting organisers of citizens' initiatives and the need to provide organisers with a more adequate support infrastructure. The recommendations drafted during the morning debate were presented to Commissioner Dubravka Šuica, Vice President of the European Commission for Democracy and Demography, responsible for the Conference on the Future of Europe.



In the afternoon session, the speakers discussed the future of the European Citizens' Initiative in the context of the digital era. ECAS European Democracy Senior Manager participated in a panel with Vice President Šuica and technology expert Jamie Susskind to debate potential means of integrating the use of digital technologies into the democratic process. The contribution of ECAS reaffirmed the need to use existing instruments such as the European Citizens' Initiative as well as new channels for participatory democracy to make sure that the voices of citizens are better heard in the future.

The report and programme of the event can be found [here](#)

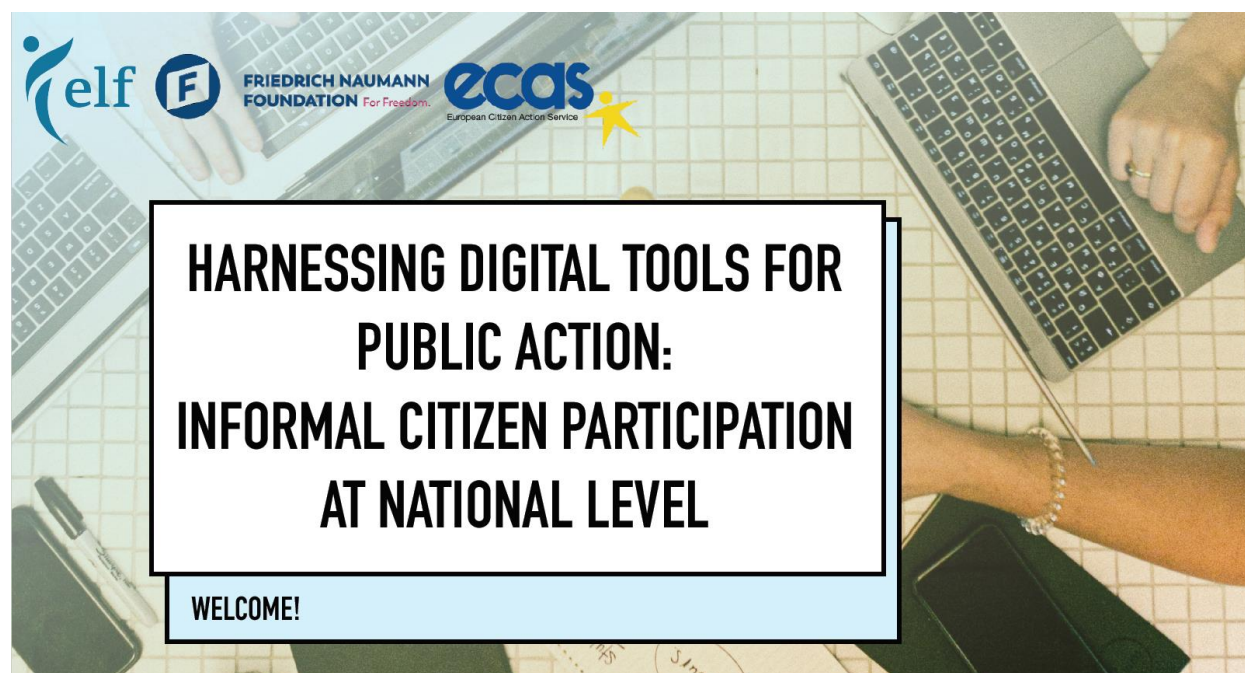
eDemocracy: Driving citizen advocacy through digital means – Online Workshop Series

On 4, 8, and 10 September 2020, ECAS contributed to the organisation of a series of three online workshops on digital democracy. The workshops took place in the context of the project ‘eDemocracy: Driving citizen advocacy through digital means’ carried out in collaboration with the European Liberal Forum and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation.

The workshops focused on good practices for informal citizen e-participation with experts on digital democracy. The thematic workshops discussed (1) concepts and theories on the role of digital citizens in the XXI century, (2) informal citizen participation projects at the local level and, (3) projects at the national level. Around 30 experts attended the workshops upon the invitation of the organisers.

The workshop ‘The role of the digital citizen in the 21st century democracy’ took place on 4 September 2020 and aimed at discussing the potential of digital tools for citizens today and in the future with practitioners. ECAS Executive Director moderated the thematic discussion and ECAS Citizens’ Rights Training Coordinator presented the theories and concepts on digital citizen-driven participation tools.

The workshop ‘Harnessing digital tools for public action: Informal citizen participation at local level’ took place on 8 September 2020 and aimed at providing an overview of digital democracy tools applied at the local level.



The workshop ‘Harnessing digital tools for public action: Informal citizen participation at national level’ took place on 10 September 2020 and provided an overview of digital democracy tools applied at the national level. ECAS Participatory Democracy Manager moderated a discussion in which experts presented good practices in the field and formulated recommendations for the multiplication of similar projects in other contexts and countries.

European Citizens' Initiative Week

The European Citizens' Initiative Week took place as a digital event between 16 and 20 November 2020 and represented the most high-level event of the year on the topic. The event was organised by the European Commission in cooperation with its partners including ECAS. Over the course of a week full of online activities built around the European Citizens' Initiative, institutional representatives, members of civil society organisations and organisers of past and ongoing initiatives discussed how to make the reformed European Citizens' Initiative a success.

Around 2,000 participants attended the six thematic sessions held during the week and the event attested to the growing enthusiasm of citizens to become more involved in influencing and setting the policy agenda of the European Union.



ECAS greatly contributed to the organisation of the event in close cooperation with the Secretariat-General of the European Commission. ECAS Executive Director participated as the only representative of Civil Society in the opening panel of the conference and moderated the first session entitled 'What makes the European Citizens' Initiative unique?' that opened the series of online activities. Furthermore, ECAS moderated both the fifth and closing sessions of the European Citizens' Initiative Week, bringing the week to a close and presenting an overview of the main takeaways that emerged from the event.

In the framework of the European Citizens' Initiative Forum, ECAS organised two thematic sessions, 'Online campaigning in COVID-19 times' and 'Launching an initiative: hints and tips to get you started'. The sessions featured campaigning and legal experts, institutional representatives and current and past organisers of citizens' initiatives. The two sessions were attended by more than 300 participants and provided valuable suggestions on two of the most important aspects of the participatory democracy instrument. Over the course of the week, ECAS also made a significant contribution to the promotion and communication of the event.

The full agenda of the inaugural European Citizens' Initiative Week and the recordings of the various sessions are available [here](#). A blog post on the European Citizens' Initiative Forum summarising the event can also be found [here](#).

EuroPCom 2020: Building our future together

The European Public Communication Conference (EuroPCom) took place online on 7 and 8 December 2020 and ECAS participated in one of its main sessions while running a virtual booth to connect with citizens and other civil society organisations. The event explored three key themes: **Citizens**, **Green** and **Digital** through a series of sessions and conversations with citizens, civil society organisations and representatives of EU institutions. The conference also focused on two new European initiatives that will have a major impact on citizen communication in the coming years, namely the Conference on the Future of Europe and the European Green Deal.

In the framework of the event, ECAS Executive Director participated in Digital Workshop 3 'For a truly inclusive debate' that focused on the Conference on the Future of Europe and strategies to engage citizens in decision-making processes. ECAS Executive Director presented also the position of ECAS on how to ensure inclusiveness in the Conference and stressed that the Conference should pilot different methods of citizen engagement which could be taken on board beyond the framework of the conference and put into practice in more consistent ways. Based on the work and expertise of ECAS, including an assessment of successful existing initiatives around Europe,, she highlighted meaningful examples of citizen engagement with decision-making including: (1) Citizens assemblies, (2) Crowdsourcing, (3) Ethical social listening. These examples should inspire European institutions to innovate and take full advantage of ICT **in order to ensure that the Conference is "a new public forum for an open, inclusive, transparent and structured debate with citizens"**.

During EuroPCom, ECAS also held a virtual booth to connect with citizens and other civil society organisations. Within its framework, ECAS team members carried out three separate presentations exploring different methods of citizen engagement:

- Digitize your EU activism: E-participation that makes a difference
- Co-deciding Europe: tapping into the wisdom of the crowd!
- Where civic activism starts: European Citizens' Initiative Forum

ECAS Executive Director also recorded an interview in which she stressed the importance of tapping into the potential of innovative, new democratic tools at the European level. The contribution of ECAS focused on the need to involve citizens more in decision-making processes in order to increase the legitimacy of decisions taken by policymakers.

The recording of Digital Workshop 3 'For a truly inclusive debate' is available [here](#).

The interview with ECAS Executive Director is available [here](#).

The EuroPCom after show wrap-up is available [here](#).



ECAS Membership and Outreach

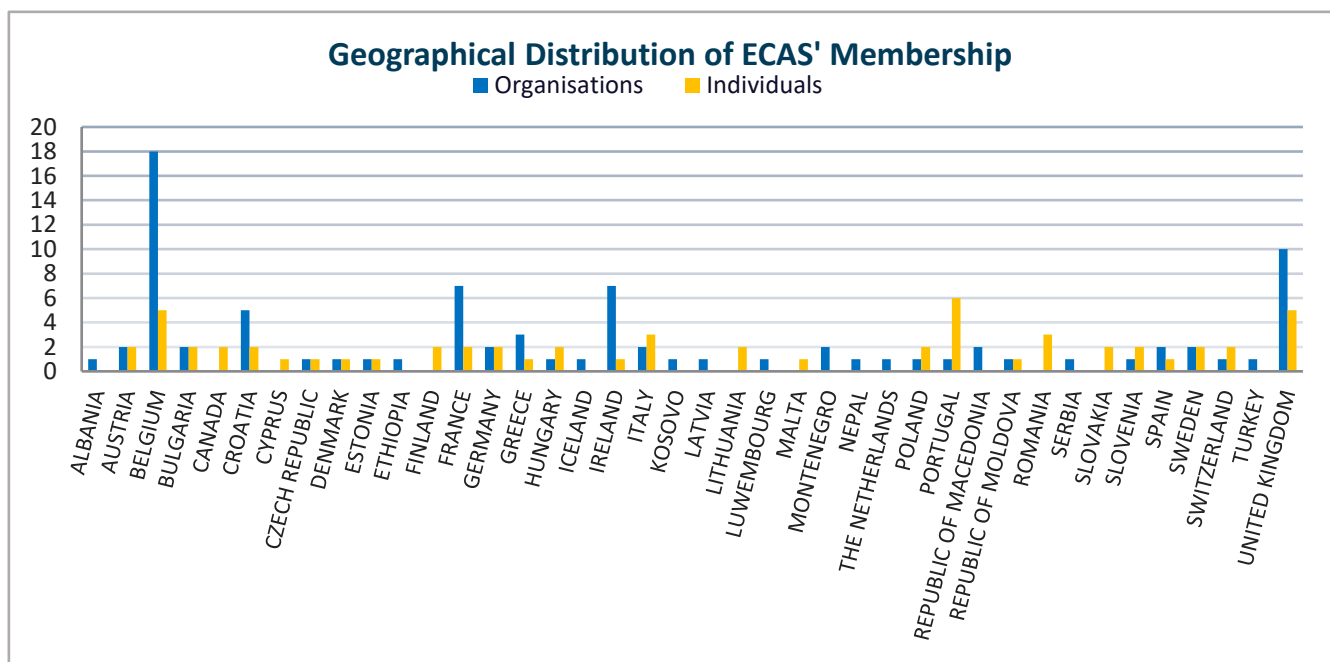
ECAS Membership

ECAS has implemented a **mission-driven** and **free-of-charge membership** since **1 January 2018** based on the promotion and defense of citizens' rights as well as the development and support of mechanisms aimed at increasing the democratic participation of citizens and citizen organisations in, and engagement with, the EU.

At the end of 2020, [ECAS Membership](#) consisted of **144 Members**, including organisations and individuals, who subscribe to the [ECAS Mission and Vision](#) and are active in the ECAS focus areas (EU Rights and European Democracy).

ECAS' Network of Members covered **40 countries** (27 EU Member States and 13 non-EU Member States) and included:

- **85 Member Organisations (24 of which are network organisations),**
- **and 59 Individuals**



ECAS' Outreach

Overview

ECAS continued to expand its outreach in 2020 through its website and social media communication channels. The ECAS website (www.ecas.org) received a total of **66,632 page views** for the year. It is worth noting that a number of projects and services (ECI Forum, IMPEU, REP2019 and DEMOS) that ECAS carries out are supported through the creation of their own, separate platforms and the traffic generated on these separate websites is not included in the aforementioned total.

The daily news and activities of ECAS were also widely publicised via Facebook and Twitter. There was a noticeable increase in followers on both platforms, as well as in audience engagement with ECAS posts.

ECAS Communications

Internal and external communication is key to the work of ECAS. As a citizen-centric organisation, ECAS aims to offer immediate assistance/solutions to citizens in their challenges they encounter in their daily lives, while also working to eliminate factors that cause such challenges in the long-run. This requires effective working synergies between ECAS, citizens, decision-makers and other civil society organisations to adopt a comprehensive approach to tackling issues. ECAS therefore strives to develop strong dialogue with stakeholders and inform them of developments through the main communication channels of ECAS: website, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.



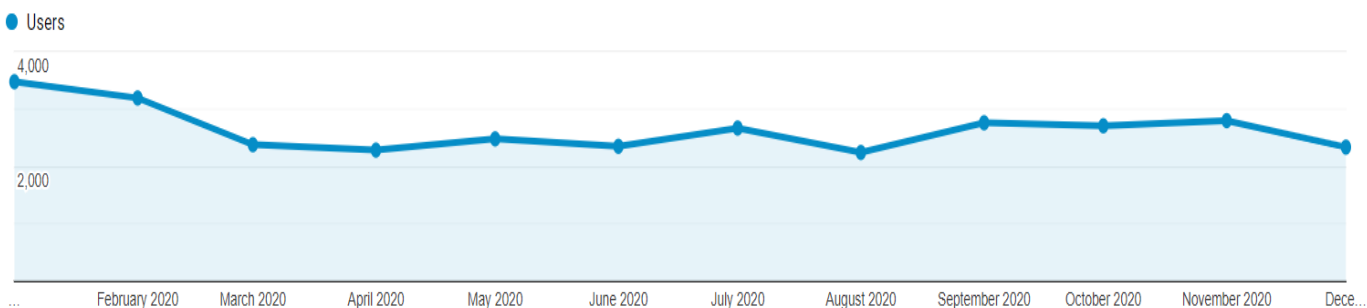
The ECAS bimonthly newsletters highlight the latest news from ECAS, ECAS members and relevant EU policy updates. These newsletters aim to present a full picture of the political field at the time of publication.

Beginning in June, ECAS also introduced 'ECAS Highlight of the Week', which are weekly articles covering notable developments in the work of ECAS and how they relate to current affairs and events at the EU level.

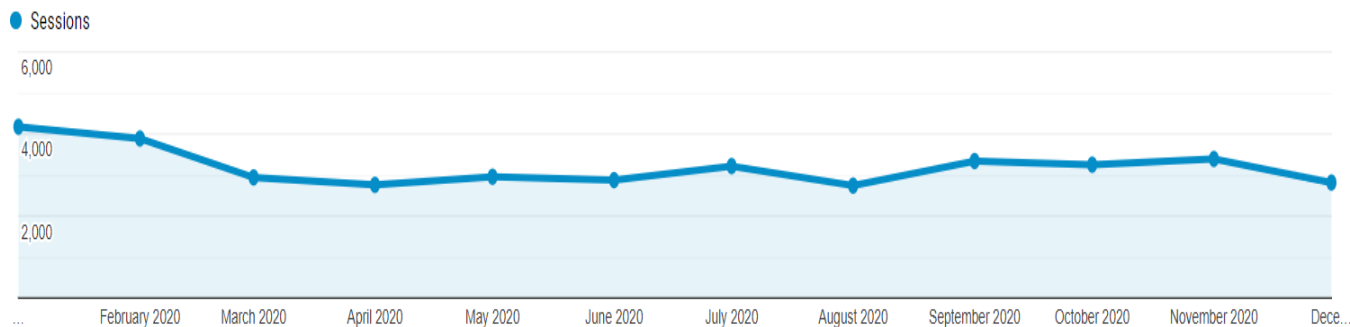
Detailed statistics of the communication activities of ECAS are as follows:

Website activity

In 2020, the ECAS website continued to generate a steady flow of visitors, recording a monthly high of **3,470** (January) and a monthly low of **2,242** (August), for an annual total of **30,417 unique users**.



The number of sessions followed a similar trend, with a high of **4,176** in January and a low of **2,740** in August, for an annual total of **38,351**.



Twitter

By the end of 2020, ECAS had achieved a total of **4,850 followers**, which represents a net increase of 250 from the previous year. ECAS posted **407 tweets**, producing **444,400 impressions** (i.e. the number of times a user sees a Tweet on their timeline or in their search results). The average engagement rate per month was **1.2%**, with a total of **1,352 likes** and **613 retweets** for the year.

Many of the posts were liked and/or shared by MEPs, civil society organisations and other stakeholders with large followings.

It is important to note that all of the traffic and engagement produced by ECAS was generated organically.

The top three tweets were:

ECAS NGO @ecas_europe
 Are you launching a [#EuropeanCitizensInitiative](#) or promoting a cause? With more events taking place online, the competition for attention can be fierce 🦊

▶▶ This webinar, w/ experts from [#EndTheCageAge](#) & [@Change](#), is packed with advice how to effectively campaign online! 📺

Impressions	112,855
Total engagements	22
Link clicks	8
Detail expands	8
Retweets	3



ECAS NGO @ecas_europe
 The new [#EuropeanCitizensInitiative](#) Regulation explained! 🇪🇺

ECAS's [@ElisaLironi](#) points out improvements introduced in 2020 that help organisers & simplify the process ▶▶ <http://bit.ly/EasierEUCitizensInitiatives> ...

Check out what else is new @ the Forum ▶▶ <http://bit.ly/CitizensInitiativeForum> ...

[#EUTakeTheInitiative](#)
pic.twitter.com/fmJj4fL8fS

Impressions	6,061
Total engagements	83
Likes	18
Detail expands	16
Retweets	15
Link clicks	15
Profile clicks	10
Media engagements	9



Impressions	5,727
Total engagements	173
Media engagements	104
Detail expands	33
Link clicks	11
Likes	9
Profile clicks	9

Facebook

In 2020, the ECAS Facebook page reached a total of **5,501** followers by the end of the year, achieving a net annual gain of **327**. The **252** Facebook posts published by ECAS **reached 141,661 unique users**, with **7,463 users engaging with the posts (shares and likes)**.

Posts were picked up and shared on several occasions by the European Parliament account and European decision-makers, while posts were also frequently shared by civil society organisations from around Europe.

LinkedIn

By the end of 2020 ECAS had a total of **1250 followers**, achieving a net gain of 290 from the previous year. ECAS received **2,035 page views** and an average monthly engagement rate of **3 percent**.

ECAS Newsletter (bi-monthly)

ECAS has published a bimonthly newsletter since January 2016. By the end of 2020, the number of subscribers amounted to 2,682, including EU decision-makers, experts in the fields of European democracy and EU rights, civil society organisations, citizens and other stakeholders.

The newsletter is structured around the two focus areas of ECAS: EU Rights and European Democracy. It serves to promote the activities of ECAS, along with those of ECAS members and partners. The newsletter also informs stakeholders and citizens about the main ongoing initiatives at EU level relevant to the areas of work of ECAS, while facilitating discussions on these subjects.

Annexes

Annex I - Thank You Messages received by Your Europe Advice

“Hi! I wanted to let you know that I am sincerely grateful for your quick and informative reply. I have had emailed you a few months ago about an issue I had and I got such good and informative reply from you back then, too. On behalf of everyone, I’d like to thank you for willing to help every single person out, and thank you so much for the time that you spend on us. Not everyone is able to do what you do, not everyone is as caring, as thoughtful and as attentive as you are. That’s very kind. Thank you and have a great day!”

« J'avoue que je ne m'attendais même pas à ce qu'on me réponde... mais de là à me répondre avec autant d'informations, de détails, Franchement un merci est trop peu par rapport à toutes ces informations bien détaillées. MILLE merci à vous!”

“Thanks to your advice on passenger rights during the COVID-19 crisis, I eventually succeeded to be reimbursed € 182 by SNCF after I had sent them your legal analysis of my tricky case. Many, many thanks – you really do a great job!”

“Thank you very much for your concise and explanatory reply. It is excellent. The extraordinary information that you sent me is not generally available on the internet, more the shame but thanks to organisations like yourselves, I now have what I need. Kind regards (and keep up your good work!)”

“I just want to say thank you very much for the detailed information regarding my matter. Have a great week and thank you again.”

“I very much appreciated your prompt response and provided valuable advice to me & my partner! The provided information offers excellent help to us at least shed the light to us! I'll discuss with my partner the next steps.”

“Merci pour la rapide réponse, nous savions que nous pouvions compter sur vous. Vos conseils dépassent notre espérance, les autres liens sont également très intéressants. Nous vous remercions infiniment. Vous avez par votre engagement vous avez confirmé l'importance de l'UNION Européenne, dont nous étions depuis toujours, des fervents adeptes. Encore un grand merci, nous ne manqueront.”

“Vielen herzlichen Dank für diese ausführliche und klare Auskunft. Sie haben uns damit sehr weitergeholfen.”

“Very many thanks for your prompt and informative response which is much appreciated. It is my deep deep regret that we have unwisely chosen to leave your organisation, a move which I have resisted throughout its process. Your role will be sorely missed.”

“Thank you for this counsel and rather fast response time! Je vous remercie chaleureusement pour votre réponse. Je ne manquerai pas de transmettre à mon réseau de connaissances cette excellente expérience. En vous remerciant!”

“Wer sich beschwert, muss sich auch bedanken, wenn er eine Antwort erhalten hat. Das will ich hiermit tun! Nach Ihrer Zwischenachricht habe ich von Ihnen bzw. einer Kollegin/einem Kollegen per 18. Juni 2020 eine Antwort zu meinem Anliegen erhalten. Damit ist meine zunächst geäußerte Kritik, dass Bürgeranliegen von der EU-

Kommission möglicherweise mit automatisch generierten Versatzstücken beantwortet werden, hinfällig geworden."

"Muito Obrigado pela vossa atenção."

"Grazie moltissimo per la risposta."

"Stort tack för det utförliga svaret."

"Σας ευχαριστώ πάρα πολύ!! Ευχαριστώ και πάλι!!"

"Kiitos vastauksesta ja mukavaa viikonloppua."

"Thank you very much for your prompt and elaborate answers. It does align with my assumption and is sufficient, even though we recommend to apply for an A1 Certificate prior to every business related trip across EU/EFTA/EEA borders, because we do not have a clear definition for exemptions for short term business trips, yet, even though it is not a posting of workers!"

"Heel erg bedankt voor de uitgebreide informatie , die ik tot nu toe nog niet had gevonden op internet. Ik waardeer het zeer; er is zoveel meer duidelijk nu...! Nogmaals hartelijk dank."

"Hola, muchas gracias por la respuesta."

"Hartelijk dank voor uw snelle bericht."

"Va mulțumesc foarte mult pentru informați îmi prind super bine."

"Bonjour et merci pour vos réponses, vous êtes la seule personne à m'avoir fourni des éléments."

"Thank you so much for the detailed and authentic information, first of all I would like to appreciate your efforts."

"Thank you Very much for your time and advice/ Information. It is much appreciated."

"Vriendelijk dank voor uw spoedige antwoord - enorm gaaf dat dit kan en ik voel me een trots EU burger dat dit bestaat!"

"Just wanted to say thank you very much for the detailed email. Really appreciate your assistance."

"Thank you so much for your thorough response in this matter!. We will definitely take your advice and apply for the permanent residencies (for both of us). Thank you again for helping us. Have a good day!"

"Herzlichen Dank für diese so schnelle und kompetente Antwort. Das hilft mir sehr weiter, hier die Rechtslage besser zu verstehen."

"Va multumesc mult pt raspunsul dvs, prompt si detaliat. M-a ajutat mult si ma bucur ca sunteti aici pt noi. O zi frumoasa si inca o data mii de multumiri !"

"Grazie mille per la risposta!"

"Tack och mycket bra och utförligt svar!"

"Ich möchte mich hiermit recht herzlich für Ihr schnelle und ausführliche Antwort bedanken. Sie haben mir sehr geholfen. Ich wünsche Ihnen alles Gute."

"Ich danke Ihnen sehr für Ihre rasche und aufschlussreiche Antwort."

"Vielen Dank für die ausführliche und aufschlussreiche Antwort."

"Agradeço imenso a sua ajuda."

"Many thanks for such detailed answer with links; I can not describe how much I appreciate below reply. Really good job."

"Köszönöm szépen válaszáat, megtaláltam benne a szükséges információt."

"Merci pour ce conseil , me voilà éclairé."

"Merci infiniment pour votre réactivité."

"Thank you very much for your detailed response, we really appreciate it."

"Hartelijk dank voor uw snelle antwoord."

"Thank you very much for your reply, it has been very held and informative."

"Thank you for your quick response. It is indeed very helpful! I thank you for your time and patience!"

"Many thanks for your reply. That is so helpful."

"Ich danke Ihnen vielmals für die sehr guten Hinweise."

"Grazie mille per le informazioni dettagliate."

"Merci. Votre analyse concernant mes questions est excellente. Veuillez m'excuser pour la ponctuation mais toutefois vos réponses sont très claires."

"Thank you very much for your response and the clarifications. It's highly appreciated!"

"Thank you very much for the swift response. It was very helpful. Have a nice day."

"Ok mulțumesc frumos."

"Thank you for your detailed advice! Best wishes!"

"Good morning, I just want to thank you for your help, I followed your advice about contacting the rijksoverheid.nl (the phone number doesn't work but I used the contact form). Today someone from the municipality called my husband in order to register me. Again thank you very much!!!! Muchas gracias!"

"Grazie infinite e un buon lavoro."

"Haben Sie zunächst vielen Dank für diese weiterführenden Informationen und Links!"

"Buna ziua si va multumesc pentru raspuns!"

"HERZLICHSTEN DANK!!!!!!"

"Nous vous remercions de votre réponse et de vos conseils."

"Hey - that's really helpful! - thank you. I appreciate that there is much yet to get sorted but it was good to receive some links from you so i can focus my attention on possibilities. Thank you so much for your considered and prompt response!"

"Σας ευχαριστώ πάρα πολύ για την κατατοπιστική σας εξήγηση και πληροφόρηση. Να ειστε καλά."

"Thank you so much for this comprehensive review of the situation. Much appreciated."

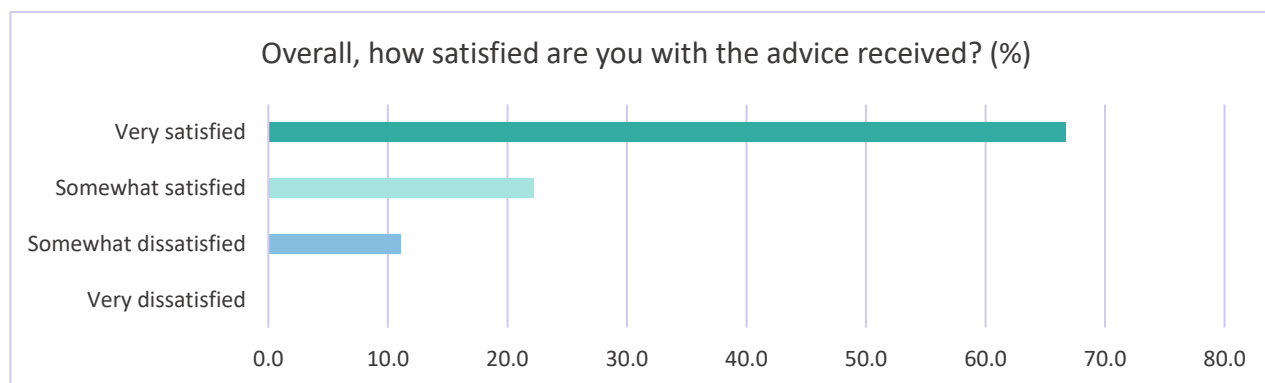
"Thank you very much for your email. I am heartened by this positive and rapid response."

"Thank you very much indeed for your complete answer and prompt response."

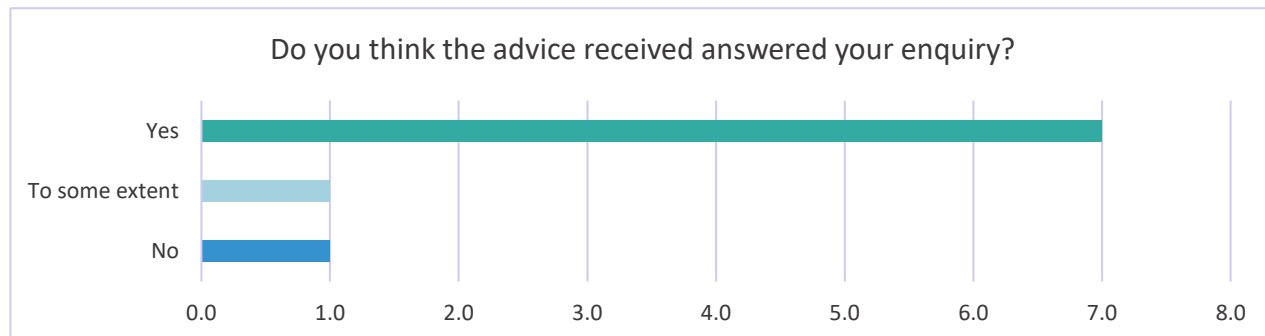
Annex II - European Citizens' Initiative Forum Feedback

An overwhelming level of satisfaction with the Seek Advice service of the European Citizens' Initiative Forum can be observed: 88,9% of the enquirers that provided feedback indicated that (1) they were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the service provided and that (2) the advice given was clear. Some organisers that submitted more than one enquiry started their follow up enquiry by thanking the Forum team for the support previously provided.

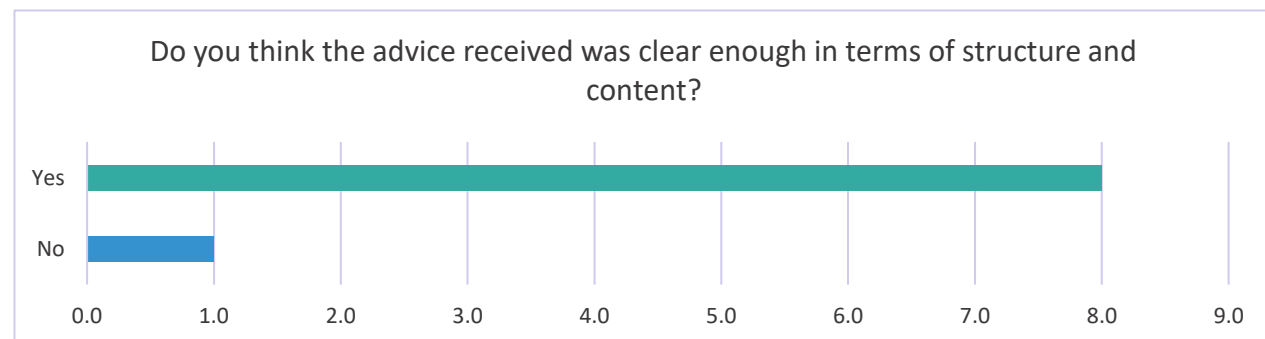
QUESTION 1



QUESTION 2



QUESTION 3



Comments in a follow up enquiry related to advice that was previously provided.

"Very satisfied, compliments!"

"Thank you very much for your quick answer. Your information was a very good assistance for us."

"Thank you very much for your advice on our ECI. It was very helpful."

"Thank you kindly for your response to my inquiry about ECIs and Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)."



EUROPEAN CITIZEN ACTION SERVICE

77, AVENUE DE LA TOISON D'OR

B-1060 BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

+32 (0) 2 548 04 90

INFO@ECAS.ORG

WWW.ECAS.ORG

