

**ecads**

European Citizen Action Service



# ACTIVITY REPORT 2022

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**EU  
RIGHTS**



**EUROPEAN  
DEMOCRACY**

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- **Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer and**
- **LATHAM & WATKINS LLP for their pro bono support to ECAS**

# 1. ABOUT THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN ACTION SERVICE

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The European Citizen Action Service (ECAS) is an international, Brussels-based non-profit organisation with a pan-European membership and more than 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 in Central and Eastern Europe: from the Region for the Region

ECAS branch office in Bulgaria coordinates ECAS's initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) related to tackling the spread of disinformation and populist narratives, backsliding of the rule of law and narrowing of civic space. The branch is also developing technical expertise in innovative online tools for citizen engagement, such as crowdsourcing through digital platforms and digital dashboards for ethical social listening.

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

## 2022: A Year of New Beginnings in Challenging Times

In a year of unimaginable challenges to the Peace and integrity of Europe, our societies and citizens, ECAS has tripled its activities in the Member States in order to contribute to promoting the EU values, countering disinformation, co-creating a blueprint for a digital transformation that leaves no one behind, providing tailored advice to citizens to help them exercise their freedom of movement and related EU Rights and supporting them in launching and carrying out citizens' initiatives on a variety of subjects.



2022 was a year of many new beginnings for ECAS!

Cautious of specific regional challenges, ECAS established its first branch office in Bulgaria with the aim of implementing tailored initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe to tackle negative tendencies related to democratic deficiencies. In 2022, the branch facilitated ECAS's support to the formation of civic anti-disinformation alliances in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Hungary, providing capacity building and supporting the implementation of tailored anti-disinformation campaigns.

In addition, more than half of our 30+ events in 2022 took place outside Brussels, in a Member State of the European Union, thus increasing our national presence and relevance to specific contexts.

In 2022, for the first time, ECAS developed and piloted a high-quality training programme on EU Rights for public administration and rights' advice organisations in France, Italy and Spain and launched a free of charge civil society mentoring scheme for small civil society organisations and civic movements throughout Europe.

Moreover, 2022 was the year when ECAS boosted its diversity, equality and inclusion policies by developing and implementing a tailor-made strategy, supported by a Gender and Non-discrimination Advisory Panel, composed of representatives of relevant organisations.

Last but not least, as part of a big crowdsourcing experiment, soliciting citizens opinions on the subject of "air quality" in ten different cities in ten European countries, ECAS provided methodological guidance for the crowdsourcing process and carried it out in Brussels, where more than 300 citizens provided proposals on improving the air we breathe.

In conclusion, while 2022 was a difficult year in more ways than one, ECAS managed to implement a diverse and meaningful programme to deliver its mission of empowering citizens in order to create a more inclusive and stronger European Union.

I warmly thank ECAS's team, Board of Directors, members, partners and funders for their dedication and hard work, continuous support and confidence in ECAS!

*Assya Kavrakova*  
ECAS Executive Director



## 2. EU RIGHTS FOCUS AREA

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European citizenship lies at the core of the European project and freedom of movement is one of the most cherished rights of European citizens.

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 2022 ECAS's work in the EU Rights area was focused on:

- Providing practical legal advice to more than 20,000 European citizens on their EU rights;
- Building capacity of public authorities and EU Rights' advice organisations on how to better implement the EU Rights of EU mobile citizens through training and focus groups;
- Providing tailored evidence-based advice to the EU institutions on the rights of EU citizens through the YEA quarterly feedback report and the contribution to the *Draft opinion Implementation report on the Agreement on the withdrawal of the UK from the EU* of the European Parliament.
- Building a knowledge base on the use of a citizen-centric Artificial Intelligence (AI) in law enforcement.

### Services to Citizens

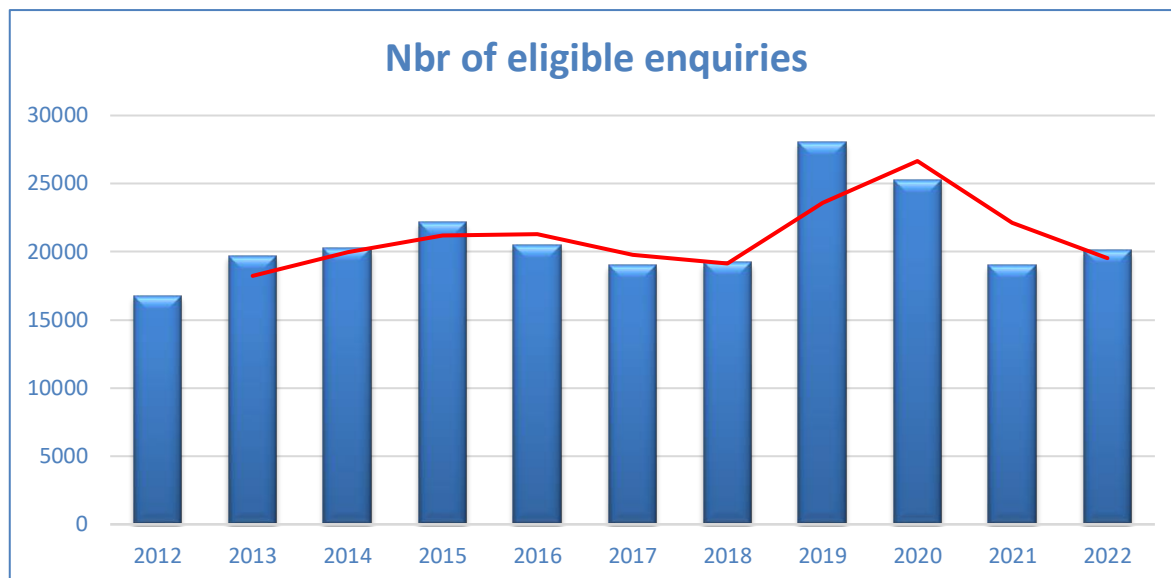
#### Your Europe Advice (YEA)

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.

ECAS' team of 58 lawyers, who cover all 24 official EU languages and are experts in both EU law and national law in all EU countries, respond to citizens' questions 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 2022

In 2022, YEA legal experts replied to 20,071 enquiries, which is an increase of 5.6% compared to the previous year.

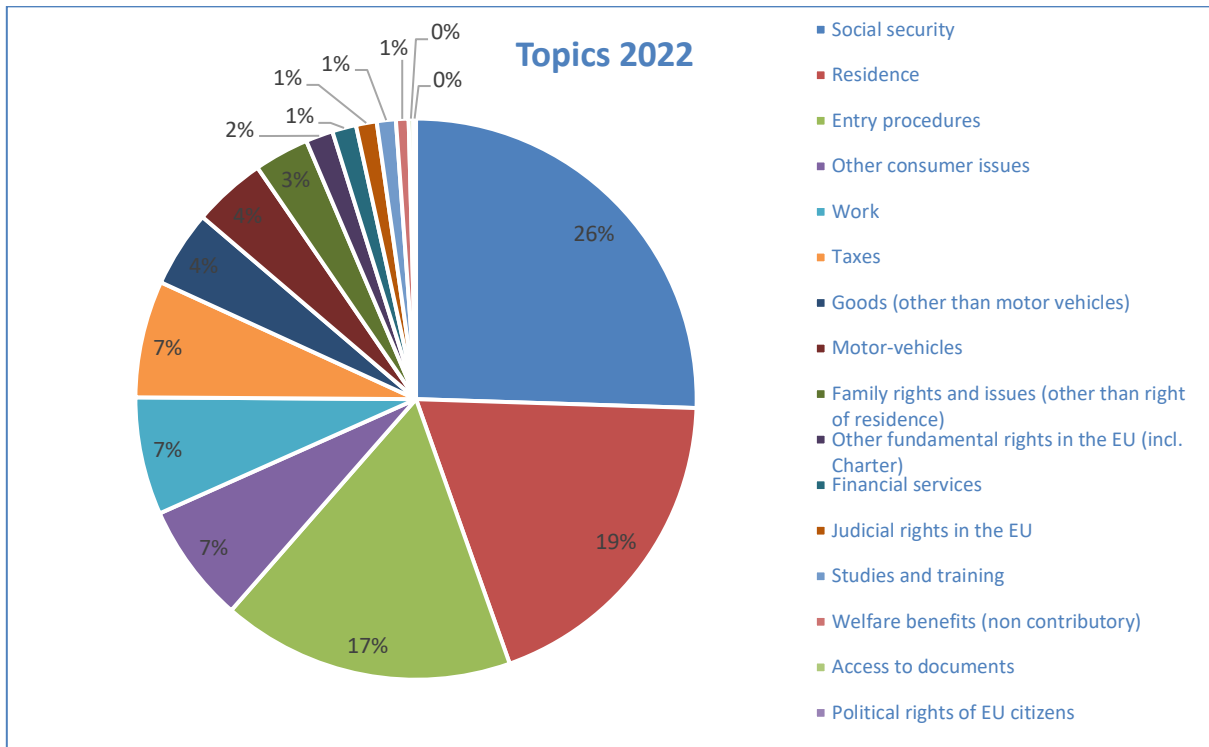


The quality of the service was maintained at a high level. Under the service contract, the European Commission requires ECAS to ensure a high level of quality of the replies and to carry out monthly quality controls based on a sample of the eligible enquiries that “should be 10% of all cases” and “not less than 150”. The quality of an answer is determined on the basis of nine criteria (e.g., the relevance of the legal references provided or whether answer is complete) which shows how well the experts are performing and also counts as a measure of their overall competences. The results ensure that the management team can provide targeted feedback and guide the experts if and where necessary. The quality control thus also acts as a guarantee mechanism that citizens receive good and useful answers.

In 2022, more than 94% of the checked cases fulfilled all the quality assurance criteria and 94% of all replies were provided within the deadline. The quality of the answers given remains at a high level and has been very stable throughout the years, which shows the high standard of YEA.

## Nature of the Enquiries

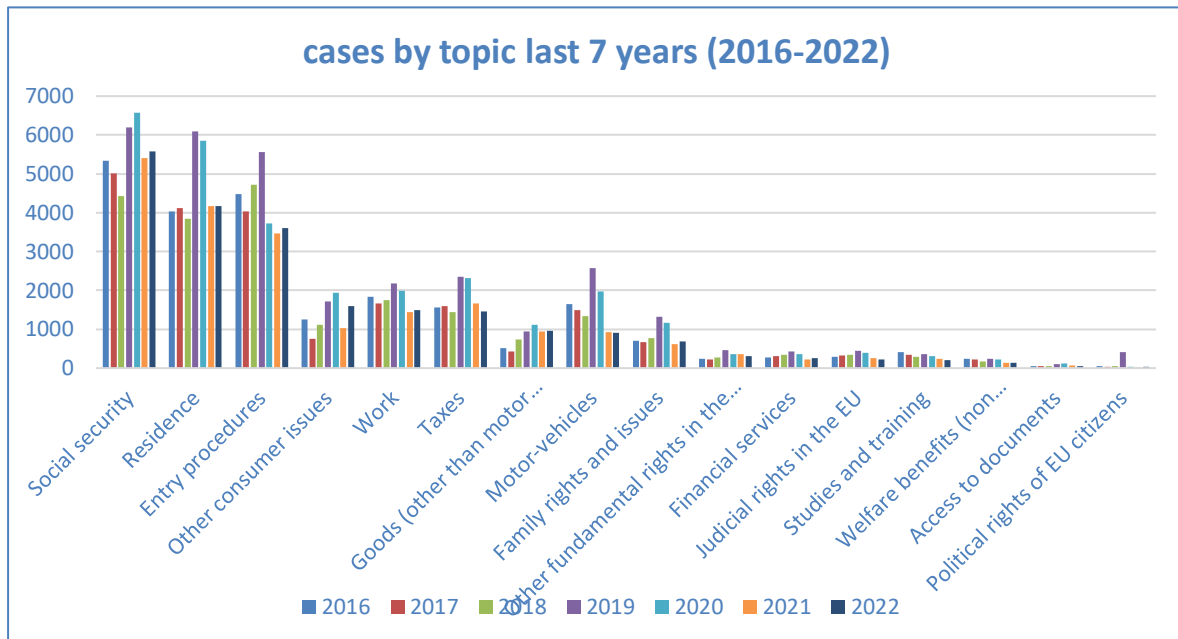
In 2022, there was a slight increase in the number of questions the service received compared to the year before. After a significant increase in the number of ineligible enquiries in 2021, as a result of Brexit, the number of ineligible questions stabilised again in 2022. Some UK related enquiries are no longer covered by EU law. In addition, there is an important number of enquiries coming from third-country nationals, as well as third-country businesses which are not related to EU law and cannot be dealt with by YEA.



In 2022, YEA received a high number of social security enquiries (26%), followed by residence rights (19%) and entry procedures (17%). These are the same top 3 as in 2021.

In comparison with previous years, issues related to working in another country, taxes, which are partly related to the new issues of telework, as well as questions on consumer law, are increasing.

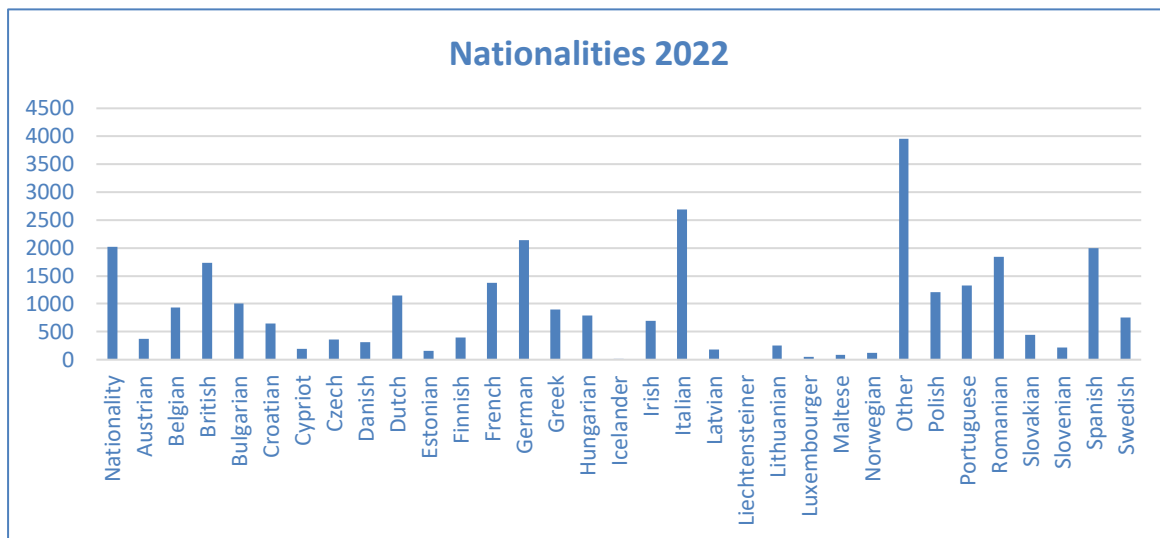
Compared to 2021, YEA received only a few enquiries related to COVID-19.



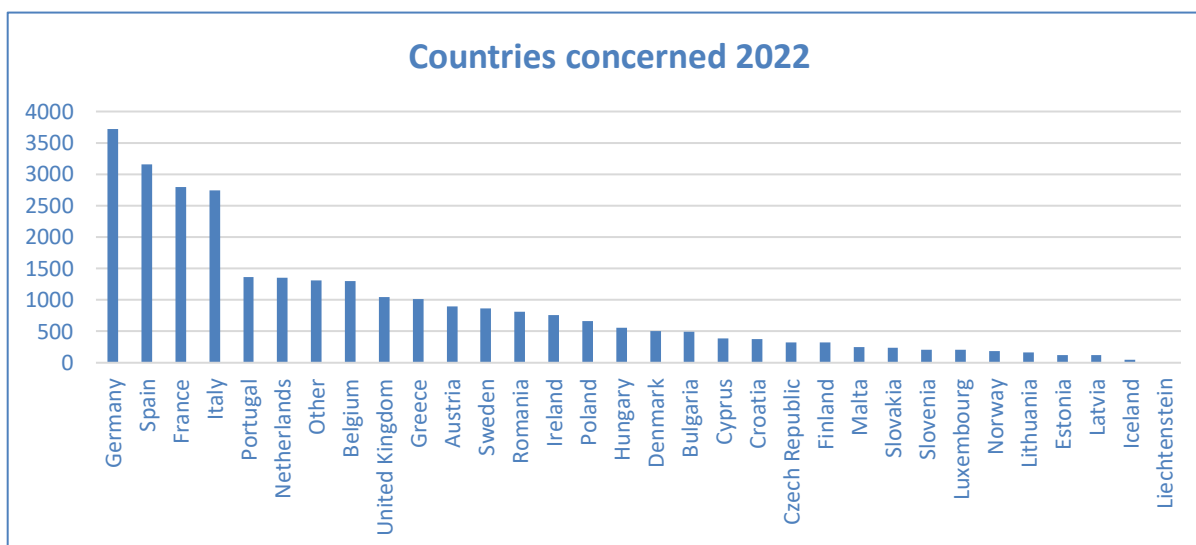
YEA received enquiries from citizens from all 27 EU countries and from Norwegian, Icelandic, and third-country nationals who are family members of EU citizens, while 14% (+3% compared



to 2021) of the enquiries were from third-country nationals. YEA received less questions from British citizens compared to the previous years due to Brexit and much more enquiries from Italian, German, Spanish and Romanian citizens.



The enquiries received related to all 27 Member States, as well as Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein. YEA received less enquiries related to the UK compared to 2021 (it is now on the 9th position compared to the 7th position last year and the 5th place in 2020) and more questions related to Germany, Spain, France, Italy, and Portugal.



## Outreach Activities

Six outreach activities were conducted by YEA experts in Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The number of participants varied significantly according to the type of event, but based on the feedback reports of the experts, more than 500 citizens may have been reached.

The outreach activities can be categorised as network meetings and were organised by different services, networks, or agencies: the European Commission representation in Bratislava, the European commission and the EU assistance services in Vilnius, the EU information and

counselling services in Budapest. YEA experts complied with the two main objectives: presenting and explaining YEA to potential multipliers and 'institutional' users and liaising with representatives from other networks who provide help and advice to citizens and businesses.

## Your Europe Web Portal Assistance

The [Your Europe portal](#) is an EU website designed to provide comprehensive first-stop information and signposting to assist citizens and businesses in understanding, exercising and enforcing their rights and entitlements throughout the European Union under EU law. The website is available in 23 languages and if citizens and businesses are unable to find an answer to their query they can go to the 'assistance service finder' and be redirected to YEA. The YEA Team contributes to maintain high quality and accuracy of the information on the Your Europe Portal, both on EU legislation and national implementation rules. Each time a legal expert or a Member of the Management Team identifies information gaps or contradictions, they are shared with the Editorial board of the YEA Portal, which consequently acts upon them. This way YEA assists in maintaining the quality of the information on the Your Europe portal on a high level.

## EU Legal Updates

The Management Team ensures that the 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 concerning 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 by experts in their enquiries. Each month, by way of example, the newsletter also publishes one or more of the experts' answers to the enquiries which are considered to be either exemplary or interesting. Outreach activities, interesting websites, developments in individual Member States and references to academic EU articles, which may be relevant for the experts, are also included in this newsletter.

## Feedback Reports

At the request of the European Commission, ECAS provides four feedback reports per year. These reports include details of the cases handled by the experts of YEA and a policy analysis of the topics covered in the enquiries. The reports provide a clear overview of the main problems citizens and businesses encounter while exercising their EU rights and help the Commission in understanding which issues require their attention. The content of the report is continuously adapted to current events.

The ECAS' Management Team also provides the Commission with a Monthly Report which focuses on the trends of the specific month. These reports include information on the number of enquiries, the quality of the answers, transfers made to and from SOLVIT and EDCC, late enquiries and operational matters. In addition, each month an exemplary or interesting answer of an expert to an enquiry is published by way of example.

## YEA annual trends

Based on the enquiries responded to in 2021, ECAS produced a [report](#) that identifies key trends in obstacles to free movement. This was published in April 2022. The trends provide useful information about the problems experienced by citizens who seek to exercise their right to free movement and can be consulted by citizens and organisations on the website of ECAS.



## Brexit Webinars

YEA still receives an important number of Brexit related enquiries in many areas. The experts have a deep knowledge of EU law and of the Withdrawal Agreement and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, but there were quite some challenging issues on which they needed additional training.

For this reason, in cooperation with the European Commission, a webinar was organized on the 27th of June. It covered questions related to entry, residence, work, and social security. The event brought together around a hundred participants.

## YEA training seminar



On 24 and 25 November 2022, the European Commission and ECAS organised the annual training seminar of Your Europe Advice. The seminar took place in a hybrid format; in person and online. The internal session with the experts was organised on 25 November. Besides the YEA experts, attendees from SOLVIT and the Commission were also present.

The content of the training focused on several topics e.g., Brexit, Directive 2004/38, entry and residence rights of Ukrainian nationals, teleworking, social security and free movement of workers, and the European Labour Agency.

## YEA chat

During the exceptional time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ECAS' Management Team made sure to keep the experts informed on the latest news and legislations regarding EU law and COVID-19 related policies, by organising a bimonthly chat where these topics were discussed in detail.

## YEA Knowledge

In 2022, ECAS and YEA were also asked to share their opinion on the implementation report on the Agreement on the withdrawal of the UK from the EU by a Member of the European Parliament. The suggestions ECAS and YEA made were put forward by the MEP and appeared under the amendments made by the MEP in the document *AMENDMENTS 1 - 49 - Draft opinion Implementation report on the Agreement on the withdrawal of the UK from the EU* as published on 19/10/2022. Most of our suggestions have been taken into account, in [their final opinion](#).

# Projects

## Pop AI Horizon 2020 project



In 2021, ECAS launched (as a partner in a consortium led by the National Centre for Scientific Research "Demokritos" in Greece) the project [popAI](#), "A European Positive Sum Approach towards AI tools in support of Law Enforcement and safeguarding privacy and fundamental rights". PopAI is a Horizon 2020 project which aims at engaging citizens and law enforcement authorities to improve their perception of security, produce ethically sound guidelines for future use, and foster a human-centric and socially-driven AI for security.

In 2022, ECAS conducted a thorough analysis of what citizens share online related to AI, through a "social listening" exercise, which scans predefined AI-related keywords (on blogs, publications,

research papers, news articles and everything else except for social media) in order to better understand citizens' discourses. This social listening exercise showed researchers how the public perceives new policies and recent technological developments linked to the use of AI in policing. The results of social listening are accessible [here](#).

Moreover, in an attempt to explore citizens' main concerns and attitudes regarding the use of AI by law enforcement authorities, ECAS asked citizens to share on its [crowdsourcing platform](#) their opinion on major AI-related controversies and experience. While the purpose of the first phase of the crowdsourcing exercise was to rank controversies in order to establish which ones are the most concerning for citizens, ECAS launched a second phase in November 2022, where citizens propose solutions to tackle these concerns. At a later stage, a voting phase will be organised to prioritise the best proposals.

Finally, in 2022, ECAS organised three Policy Labs in Greece, Germany and Slovakia, where we had the chance to gather law enforcement authorities, civil servants, NGOs and academics to discuss best practices around the use of AI tools in policing. Each Policy Lab had the same format: participants reflected together on a presented scenario, expressed their main concerns and developed ideas to overcome controversies and ensure AI tools are used in an efficient manner while respecting human rights and privacy. More information can be found [here](#).

The project is implemented by ECAS, as a member of a consortium with:

- National Center for Scientific Research "Demokritos", Greece
- Trilateral Research Limited, Ireland
- Eticas Research and Innovation, Spain
- Kentro Meleton Asfaleias, Greece
- Ethniko Kentro Erevnas Kai Technologikis Anaptyxis, Greece
- Technische Universiteit Eindhoven, The Netherlands
- Zanasi Alessandro srl, Italy
- Hellenic Police, Greece
- Hochschule fur den offentlichen Dienst in Bayern, Germany
- Gobierno Vasco – Departamento Seguridad, Spain
- Akademia Policajneho Zboru V Bratislave, Slovakia
- Comune di Torino, Italy.

## **EURECA (European Citizenship Accelerator) 2022**

The EURECA 2022 project is part of ECAS's 4-year framework contract under the CERV operating grants and will further develop the capacities of ECAS and its members to empower citizens and promote EU citizenship rights, providing citizens with the opportunity to contribute to the implementation of the European Democracy Action Plan and the EU Citizenship Report 2020.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

## ECAS Citizenship Innovation Awards



The third edition of the ECAS awards was launched in 2022 on ECAS's [crowdsourcing platform](#). During the first phase of the Awards, ECAS asked citizens to share what type of new or updated EU rights they would like to see attached to their EU citizenship. In the second phase citizens voted to prioritise the three best ideas.

Winners will receive prizes and will be able to present their ideas during the State of the Union Citizens' Rights Conference on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2023.

## Civil Society Accelerator



The Civil Society Accelerator is a community service provided by ECAS in an effort to support citizens and small Civil Society Organisations (CSO) in maximizing their impact and achieving their EU-related mission.

Under this service, ECAS' experts respond to requests from civil society on the following topics:

- Advocacy for EU Rights
- Guidance for effective campaigning
- Making CSOs a credible source of information
- Financial management
- Programme strategy
- Human resources management

To benefit from the CSA service, individuals need to apply via an [online form](#) and articulate their request. Upon receipt, they are assigned to a suitable expert.

The three topics ECAS provided advice to in 2022 were “Fostering Active Citizenship”, “Financial Management” and “Advocacy for EU Rights”.

## Focus groups on Voting Rights

Through the organisation of focus groups, ECAS’ goal is to raise awareness on electoral rights amongst the EU mobile citizens community ahead of municipal elections. In 2022, we organised two online sessions gathering stakeholders from the Netherlands and from Czech Republic a few weeks before local elections took place, to discuss the issue of low engagement of EU mobile citizens. We invited NGOs, political parties, local administrations, and mobile citizens to participate.

We discussed together concerns related to both municipal and European elections, in an attempt to understand how to tackle the low involvement of EU mobile citizens in the local political landscape. We also looked into potential measures to promote the right to stand as a candidate. Raising awareness and having more electoral content available in foreign languages have been put on the table as potential solutions, as well as the possibility to have electoral campaigns targeting EU mobile citizens specifically.

Our reports can be found on the ECAS website:

[Focus Group Report: Political participation of EU mobile citizens in the Netherlands - ECAS](#)

[Political Rights Focus group in the Czech Republic - ECAS](#)

## Training on Freedom of Movement Rights



**PROMISE**  
Your rights on the move

In 2022, ECAS launched the project “Promise”, Post-pandemic Reinvention of Mobility for Inclusive and Sustainable Europe. Funded by [EPIM](#), the European programme for Integration and Migration, Promise is run in partnership with the Brussels-based organisations [Democratic Society](#) and [Alliance4Europe](#).

The goal of this project is to raise awareness on freedom of movement as we have noticed that EU mobile citizens and their (non-EU) family members still face obstacles both from legal and from administrative standpoints.

While ECAS and the Promise partners are waiting for the Communication of the European Commission on Directive 2004/38 to be published, we have organised in 2022 four training events **co-funded by the EU under the EURECA 2022 project**, aiming at sharing knowledge with both civil society actors and civil servants on the application of freedom of movement at

the national level, with the purpose to help them understand and interpret the current EU legislation.

The three first training events took place in person in Lyon, Milan and Madrid (October/November 2022), while a fourth training summarising the first three ones took place online (December 2022).

The format of the training sessions was interactive, including a quiz and questions to the audience on what is missing or should be improved in the current legal framework provided by the Directive 2004/38.



While the online module allowed participants from various locations to join, the in-person training sessions enabled local actors working on freedom of movement matters to meet and exchange on the issues they face when supporting citizens in their moves across the EU. This created a very dynamic and positive synergy, enhanced by a strong interest of participants to create a network and engage in future activities with both ECAS and other participating organisations.

Next year, training sessions will be organised in Dublin, Berlin and Stockholm.

## Events and Advocacy Activities

### State of the Union Conference 2022: Reinventing EU Citizenship post COVID-19



The conference "State of the Union Citizens' Rights" is the flagship annual event of the ECAS's EU Rights focus area since 2018. Its goal is to provide a forum to discuss current developments in the field of EU citizenship. Each year, the focus of the conference is different, depending on the latest political developments.

In 2022, the conference was developed in the framework of the EURECA 2022 project under the CERV programme of the European Commission. This time, as the borders reopened and returned to their pre-pandemic status, the conference focused on the new realities that accompany the EU citizenship post COVID-19. It was held online on the Webex platform, and was live-streamed on Facebook. The event gathered 59 participants and 133 people watched the presentation recordings on YouTube as of April 12, 2022.



The event opened with the keynote speech of the MEP Yana Toom who reflected on the EU rights landscape shaping EU citizenship in its unique form. Initially, she focused on the EU citizens' right to freedom of movement and acknowledged that the COVID-19 restrictions posed a vast obstacle. Keeping her eyes on the future, she set the goal to ensure that freedom of movement is not endangered again in any future crises.

The first panel outlined the main challenges mobile EU citizens face in their host countries, including hurdles faced by EU citizens in the UK post-BREXIT. It gathered several speakers from diverse sectors: Claire Damilano, Senior Legal Manager at ECAS, Marrit Westerweel, Citizens' Advice Manager at ECAS, Julie Bishop, Director of the Law Centre Network, Simona Barbu, Policy Officer at FEANTSA, Dimitris Kyriazanos, Associate Researcher in the Institute of Informatics and Telecommunications of the National Centre for Scientific Research "Demokritos" (NCSR), and Carolin Hjort Rapp, Associate Professor at the University of Copenhagen.

Then the conference focused on the results of the CORE campaign – a joint initiative of ECAS, ICPA and Alliance4Europe to shift negative narratives on freedom of movement. The speakers that presented the experiment were: Assya Kavrakova, Executive Director at ECAS, Eoin Young, Programme Director at ICPA, and Omri Preiss, Managing Director at Alliance4Europe.

The second panel revolved around the future of EU citizenship. The panelists leading the conversation this time were: Sybille Luhmann, Policy Officer for Union citizenship rights and free movement at the European Commission's Directorate General for Justice and Consumer Rights, Francesca Strumia, Senior Lecturer and Director of internationalization at the University of Sheffield, Maurizio Ferrera, Professor of Political Sciences at the University of Milan, and Piotr Sadowski, Secretary General of Volunteurope.

The Conference closed with Jean Lambert, Chairperson of the ECAS Board, who presented the ECAS awards for EU Citizenship innovation. The ceremony awarded one winner in each category: Concept Paper, Project/Best Practice, and Image.

- The award for the concept paper was awarded to prof. Antonella Nuzzaci, for her concept paper "Measuring and Evaluating the Quality of Teacher Training in Citizenship Education"
- The second award winner was the project PRODEMO that aimed at promoting democratic engagement through mobile participation. The project representative, Marian Cramers, underlined the importance of citizens' active participation.
- The image award was awarded to the Ph.D. student Christopher Radovici. His image depicts the embrace of two women from different backgrounds who have united for a common objective. This image illustrates what "united in diversity" looks like in practice.

The full report of the conference is available [here](#).



### 3. EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY FOCUS AREA

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ECAS's European Democracy focus area has two main objectives. On the one hand, to explore democratic innovation and a more open and inclusive form of policy-making by involving citizens through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). On the other hand, to develop a more precise understanding of how trends, such as populism and online disinformation, affect our societies and to encourage civic engagement to increase the resilience of our democracy.

In 2022, ECAS's work in the European Democracy's focus area was on:

- **Digital Democracy** – Through its CODE Europe and DigiDem projects, ECAS held, together with more than ten partners, a transnational crowdsourcing in 10 cities in Europe on the topic of 'air quality'. Furthermore, ECAS continued its work on Digital Transformation by presenting to the COFE civil society policy positions on the subject and has held 5 local events in member states to co-create further recommendations and to develop Digital Inclusion Guidelines for the EU.
- **Understanding Populism** – ECAS has been fostering the creation of civil society coalitions in Central and Eastern Europe with one goal – countering disinformation and building resilience against it. ECAS started with online disinformation campaigns in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Hungary to support the capacity-building of civil society organisations that will allow them to effectively counter fake narratives and drive democratic participation through targeted communication.
- **Civic Engagement** – ECAS has continued managing on behalf of the European Commission, the European Citizens' Initiative Forum, an online collaborative platform (available in all 24 EU languages) that provides advice and information to initiative organisers before, during and after the process of launching and implementing an initiative.

# Services to Citizens

## European Citizens' Initiative Forum



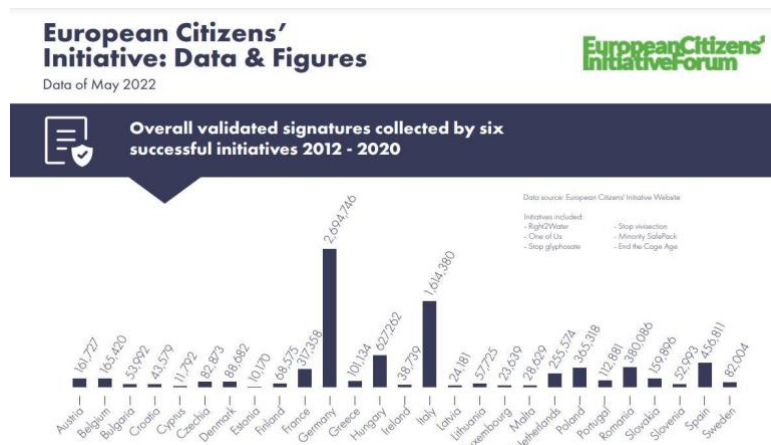
The European Citizens' Initiative Forum, operated on behalf of and under contract with the European Commission, was implemented as part of a three-year service contract that started in November 2019. In 2022, ECAS won the tender for another 3-year period (2022 – 2025).

The purpose of the online collaborative platform 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 a reference entry point for all information and capacity-building related to the European Citizens' Initiative.

Over the course of 2022, ECAS operated the platform on a daily basis and implemented all the activities foreseen in the Work Plan, together with its subcontractors Democracy International and ProMedia Productions.

The new learning materials created in 2022 included one video testimonial featuring organisers of three citizens' initiatives and a video on the Central Online Collection System with the Commission's head of ECI IT team and organisers of three citizens' initiatives. ECAS produced three social media clips with the organisers to promote the Forum on the European Commission's social media channels.

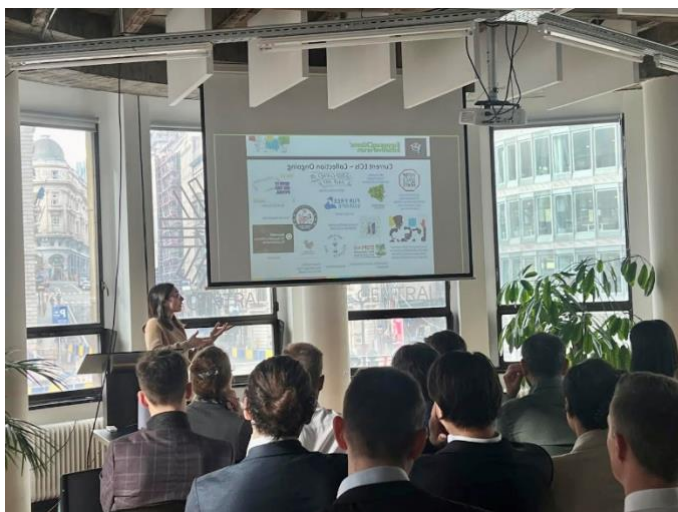
In June 2022, ECAS updated the infographic published in 2021. The infographic offers diverse data and figures on the European Citizens' Initiative such as the geographic distribution and the sources of funding of successful initiatives. In November 2022, ECAS published a blog post with interviews from national authorities on best practices, main challenges faced and common mistakes made by citizens when signing an ECI.



In 2022, ECAS held two webinars on different topics related to the European Citizens' Initiative, covering: campaigning during a global crisis and essential skills for European citizens' initiative organisers – the basics. Approximately, 43 people attended the two webinars in total.

In 2021, ECAS launched the first edition of the online course 'Essential Skills for European Citizens' Initiative Organisers. In May 2022, ECAS updated this course based on an evaluation survey sent to the users. Currently, a total of 608 users are enrolled in this course and 22% of users have completed the course.

In addition to the webinars and the online course, ECAS also provided tailor-made training to newly registered initiatives. Over the course of the three-year contract, ECAS provided training to 11 initiative organisers.



In response to the growing number of young ECI organisers, 201 organisers of all ECI's from 2012 to 2022 are between the ages of 21 to 30<sup>1</sup>, and the European Year of Youth, ECAS took the initiative to increase its outreach to young European citizens. In February 2022, ECAS mapped out Universities with European Studies curricula in the European Union to present the European Citizens' Initiative Forum. ECAS contacted 60 identified universities to arrange meetings and presentations of the Forum. The aim of these presentations is to raise awareness about the European

Citizens' Initiative and the Forum, in the hope that more EU citizens will be aware of this unique instrument available for them to shape the European Union.

In 2022, ECAS presented to 13 Universities and 326 participants.

The communication and outreach efforts of ECAS continued to produce excellent results with the number of unique visitors reaching an average of 9000 per month and an increasing geographical diversity of users accessing the platform. These results were achieved despite the policy changes adopted by social media platforms in 2022 that established stricter requirements for social media campaigns. Furthermore, ECAS organized five stakeholder consultation activities and contributed to the organization of the ECI Day 2022.

Lastly, ECAS continued to manage the 'SEEK advice' section of the Forum, handling citizens' enquiries and providing legal, campaigning and fundraising advice, available in all 24 EU languages, to nearly 40 potential and current organisers over the course of 2022.

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<sup>1</sup>Data taken from 2022 European Citizens' Initiative Infographic

# Projects

## CODE Europe

Co-Deciding Europe (or CODE Europe) is an innovative 3-year project funded by the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation. CODE Europe involves both a transnational experimentation with e-democracy platforms for the co-creation of policies and a research project on e-participation.

The aim of this project is three-fold:

- 1) to allow citizens to co-produce solutions for Europe on the subject of 'air quality' through the method of crowdsourcing legislation in five different countries;
- 2) to implement a Digital Dashboard for social listening in order to gather online opinions on the issue of 'air quality';
- 3) to develop a universally applicable methodology for assessment of e-participation experiences and ethical guidelines for social listening. The success of the crowdsourcing pilots and the social listening will be evaluated through the assessment methodologies based on clearly defined criteria and indicators.



In 2022, the second year of the project, ECAS was guiding the consortium in the implementation of the first ever transnational crowdsourcing on the topic of 'air quality' in a total of 10 European cities (Greece, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Portugal and Hungary under the CODE Europe project and Brussels, Podgorica, Amsterdam and Berlin under the DigiDem project). This one-year long crowdsourcing took place in four distinct phases throughout 2022:

- 1) Phase 'Problem Mapping' (January-March 2022) – Citizens started off by identifying problems related to air quality that they encounter in their daily life in their city.
- 2) Phase 'Problem Solving' – Once the issues are identified, citizens participate on the second platform to propose solutions to the 'air quality' problems they have mapped in Phase 1.
- 3) Phase 'Ideas Selection' – Citizens evaluated the solutions proposed in Phase 2 in order to highlight the most popular ideas and priorities not only for their cities but also for European policy-makers.
- 4) Phase 'Policy Formulation' – Based on the previous phases, citizens and experts co-created a policy document on 'air quality' under the guidance of the European Environmental Bureau.

In total, **4184 citizens actively participated** in the crowdsourcing on air quality giving their contributions for solutions that should be implemented by policy-makers at all levels.

ECAS's role this year was to ensure the correct implementation of the crowdsourcing methodology, to guide partners in their national campaigns and to support the EEB in the transition of citizens' content from each phase to the next one in order to reach the final concrete recommendations for the EU level.

*Project partners:*

- Hungarian Academy of Science – Centre for Social Sciences, Hungary
- European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Belgium
- Citizens Foundation, Iceland
- Scify, Greece
- DAEM, Municipality of Athens, Greece
- OneSource, Portugal
- ManaBalss.lv, Latvia
- ProInfo, Bulgaria
- E-Governance Academy, Estonia
- InePA, Slovenia
- Centre for Public Policy Providus, Latvia

## DigiDem

The DigiDEM project is being implemented alongside CODE Europe to apply the same collaborative methods of crowdsourcing legislation and ‘social listening’ in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Montenegro on the subject of ‘air quality’ – a topic chosen because of its transnational nature and the problems associated with it (estimated 400 000 premature deaths in Europe each year).

In 2022, ECAS piloted the crowdsourcing through the four phases (mentioned above) in Belgium, specifically in Brussels. The ‘Brussels For Clean Air’ campaign collected citizens’ issues with air pollution and their proposals for solutions for decision-makers in Belgium and at the EU level.

Despite external circumstances that were on people’s minds, such as the war in Ukraine and subsequent energy crisis, ECAS managed to receive hundreds of citizens’ contributions to its crowdsourcing platform. The engagement of Alain Maron, Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Participatory Democracy, as patron at the local level gave more legitimacy to the project and encouraged engagement throughout the campaign. ECAS also had the support of representatives of local civil society and formed a group of 7 citizen ambassadors to support in the promotion of the campaign. ECAS was present in local events, for example with a school intervention and active campaigning on the streets, to get citizens to share their ideas on air quality.

The crowdsourcing on air quality in Brussels showcased the potential and challenges of e-participation as a tool to get citizens’ involvement on policy matters. In total 304 citizens actively contributed to the crowdsourcing in the first three phases focused on the local issues, and we managed to gather in total 214 contributions which led to Brussels citizens’ top ten priority solutions for ‘air quality’ they think their political representatives should focus on in the next years.

### *Project Partners:*

- Stichting Netwerk Democratie, Netherlands
- Democracy International, Germany
- ProInfo Foundation, Bulgaria
- E-Riigi Akadeemia Sihtasutus, Estonia

## NEXUS



The NEXUS project is an ERASMUS+ project that ran from 2019 to August 2022 and was focused on empowering students (especially migrants) to exercise their rights, uphold human values, and contribute constructively to the society around them and the global community in general.

The project explored the relationship between digitally enabled participatory tools and democracy, including such dimensions as citizen demand, state power, collective action and mobilization, and culture. Building on the idea that many opportunities for meaningful civic learning exist in online environments, NEXUS was using technologies that are familiar and appealing to digital natives.

NEXUS aimed at innovating the civic educational process resulting in increased participation of students in their communities. As a part of this innovation, ECAS supported the consortium in developing a MOOC on Civic education for students with a migrant and diverse background and a knowledge-sharing platform (building on open educational resources and practices) for civic educators. Finally, the notion of Civics has been re-written in version 4.0, connecting students to institutions in the digital age. For that purpose, NEXUS partners compiled an inventory of digital tools for Open Democracy and digital citizenship education, and developed a handbook for educators on civic education for a digital age.

### *Project Partners:*

- 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

## DEMOS



The three-year project 'Democratic Efficacy and the Varieties of Populism in Europe' (DEMOS), under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme of the European Union, began in December 2018 and ended in June 2022. The project was led by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and implemented by a consortium of 15 organisations. It explored the practical value of 'democratic efficacy' as the condition of political engagement needed to address the challenge of populism.

As the only NGO of the consortium, ECAS implemented several practical activities to verify the research outputs of the academic partners in the project: 1. a deliberative polling activity - a citizen assembly in Brussels, that covered the topics "democracy and politics", 2. crowdsourcing to understand how citizens react to the solutions identified by DEMOS research on the topics of "Minorities", "Participation" and "Media", and 3. a Digital Dashboard to map Russian-influenced narratives online. ECAS also contributed to the communication activities throughout the years, especially to showcase the results to policy-makers and stakeholders at the EU level.

In its last year, ECAS analysed and compiled all the results into reports and co-organised the final event to ensure the dissemination of the outcomes of the project.

## EURECA (European Citizenship Accelerator) 2022

The EURECA 2022 project further develops the capacities of ECAS and its members to empower citizens and promote EU citizenship rights and will give citizens the opportunity to contribute to the implementation of the European Democracy Action Plan and the EU Citizenship Report 2020.

### Digital Transformation



As one of the EURECA activities, in 2022 ECAS, and some of its Member Organisations organised interactive training and co-creation events focusing on five policy areas: *Digital Democracy*, *Digital Economy*, *Digital Safeguards*, *Digital Rights*, and *Digital Education*. The goal was to raise awareness on digital policies at the EU level and give the opportunity to local stakeholders to contribute to the discussion on digital inclusion.

Five events took place in different Member States in 2022: **Ireland, Portugal, Latvia, Belgium and Luxembourg**. Each event invited Civil Society representatives, national policymakers, digital transformation experts and citizens from a Member State to discuss the state of play of digital policies and more inclusion for the future.



During the events, ECAS, together with national experts, presented the main challenges of digital transformation at the EU level and at the local level. ECAS had the possibility to showcase the recommendations advocated -up until then- by civil society organisations all across Europe in the framework of the Civil Society Convention that was contributing to the Conference on the Future of Europe. The participants then had a chance to propose their own recommendations during a co-creation session and discuss citizens' interests, mainly of vulnerable groups.

Based on these recommendations, **ECAS developed a set of Digital Inclusion Guidelines.**

ECAS identified recurring themes in the five Member States with practical proposals in two broad categories:

- **Infrastructure requirements** and
- **the deployment of a supportive ecosystem.**

Recording of the events can be found online [here](#).

## Anti-disinformation alliances in CEE



In 2022, ECAS fostered the creation of three coalitions in Central and Eastern Europe to build capacity and implement a targeted anti-disinformation campaign against a fake narrative of national importance. In Bulgaria, Slovenia and Hungary, a total of 29 civil society organisations gained knowledge, expertise and practical experience in effective (online) communication and addressing disinformation. More than 20% of those were engaged in working with minority groups or were active in promoting gender equality and women's rights. The coalitions received expert support from media and tech professionals or decision-makers as required by the objectives of their respective anti-disinformation campaigns. In all three countries, hundreds of thousands of citizens were reached and thousands were actively engaged by the campaigns' products.

In Bulgaria, the anti-disinformation campaign was coordinated by the Citizens' Participation Forum and targeted the fake narratives surrounding Ukrainian refugees. By producing a series of videos and blog posts to tell the stories of integrated, working Ukrainians in the country, the coalition sought to reverse this narrative and provoke positive reactions from the broader public. The campaign products successfully generated hundreds of thousands of views, engagements and comments at a very low cost, with 71% positive reactions.

In Slovenia, the alliance was formed from members of the Glas Ljudstva network, seeking to prevent election-related disinformation and increase election turnout in two elections –

presidential and local – by connecting voters throughout the country with candidates and by informing voters on the specifics of the two elections. They succeeded in bringing together citizens and politicians on the basis of content, as is evident by the participation of hundreds of political candidates and more than 1,350,000 citizens who visited the voter tool Volitvomat and the 50,000 active users. They managed to create media attention around the tool and established it as a trusted source of information and accountability before elections.

In Hungary, the coalition led by the Civil College Foundation addressed the issue of government propaganda that aims to segregate minorities in the education system. A multitude of products were developed to raise awareness of this narrative amongst different audiences. Targeting the general public videos with teachers, parents and educators from minority groups, as well as articles and printed issues were disseminated. For the affected, workshops were organised to train them on disinformation and for the students - an interactive game was developed to teach them in an engaging way how to recognise and react to disinformation.

The impact from the campaigns was two-fold. On the one hand, it provided close to 30 CSOs with capacity to recognise and counter disinformation; organisations also developed skills to connect to their audiences using social media platforms and marketing approaches. On the other hand, the target audiences in each country were exposed to information that actively or preventively addresses fake narratives and propaganda, thus creating resilience against disinformation and ensuring free democratic participation. Contributing to this end, the tools and materials developed by the alliances help citizens navigate the information space with increased awareness, in line with the EDAP priority of “digital literacy (which) enables people to participate in the online environment wisely, safely and ethically”.

## Civil Society Hub



In 2022, the Civil Society Hub for actors addressing populist movements comprised of 29 individuals coming from 22 Civil Society Organisations from 13 European countries. It brings together actors working on projects related to populist movements or safeguarding liberal democracy values, and aims to improve the quality and innovation of such projects across Europe and encourage joint action. Members of the Hub can learn from one another and consider shared knowledge when designing future projects to address populism. Throughout the year, participants shared knowledge and collaboration opportunities in a common digital space. Operationally, hub members worked together in three task forces on different topics – Democratic progress, Diverse participation and Inclusive societies – to produce joint blog posts with insights, information and guidance pertaining to the problem of populism. This brought together actors with different backgrounds and expertise and provided grounds for future collaboration and synergies. Membership in the Hub also provided organisations with an extra platform to communicate their activities through the bi-annual newsletter.

## BOLSTER project



In September 2022, ECAS started the implementation of the BOLSTER project (Bridging Organizations and marginalised communities for Local Sustainability Transitions in Europe).

Funded by the European Commission's Horizon Europe Framework Programme, BOLSTER is a 36-month project, with a total budget of nearly 3.8 million Euros, that is designed to understand how marginalized communities are affected by the European Green Deal (EGD)-related policies and to see if involving these communities in decision-making processes increases the support for transition plans. The project has 13 partners from 12 different countries that are working together on seven Work Packages (WPs) in order to make the BOLSTER project achieve its objectives, to actually succeed in helping marginalised communities and to become an example to other Horizon Europe related projects to come.

### BOLSTER project kick-off meeting



The BOLSTER project officially started with a successful kick-off meeting that took place on 7, 8 and 9 September in Tilburg, southern Netherlands, hosted by the project coordinator, Tilburg University.

Representatives from 13 organisations involved in the project, including ECAS, gathered together in Tilburg university. The meeting allowed the partners to introduce themselves, their backgrounds and their expected contributions to BOLSTER, but also made possible and easier the alignment of methodologies, the design of the research methods, and the definition of basic ground rules and guidelines for future work.

The meeting was accompanied by dynamic discussions, brainstorming sessions, presentations of the involved regions, and definition of main concepts and methodologies, followed by a

special tour to a local neighbourhood that is an example of renovation and regeneration towards greener and more sustainable practices in a complex social context.

### *Project Partners*

- Stichting Katholieke Universiteit Brabant (Tilburg University), The Netherlands – leader of the project’s consortium
- EU Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Spain SL (RMIT-EU), Spain
- Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny W Katowicach (UEKAT – University of Economics in Katowice), Poland
- Sociedade Portuguesa De Inovacao Consultadoria Empresarial e Fomento Da Inovacao Sa (SPI), Portugal
- Crowdhelix Limited (CHX), Ireland
- University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Bulgaria
- Sveuciliste u Rijeci, Fakultet za Menadzment u Turizmu Iugostiteljstvu (FMHT - Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, University of Rijeka), Croatia
- Université de Liege (ULiège), Belgium
- Asociatia Make Better (MKBT), Romania
- Culture Goes Europe (CGE) - Soziokulturelle Initiative Erfurt EV, Germany
- CEE Bankwatch Network, Czech Republic
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology - RMIT University (RMIT-Uni), Australia

## **Events and Advocacy Activities**

### **The ECI Day 2022**

ECAS actively participated in the 2022 ECI Day organised by the European Economic and Social Committee. The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the ECI Day on June 2, 2022 celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the European Citizens’ Initiative. During the event, ECAS organised and moderated the session: An ECI For the Next Generation. ECAS European Democracy Programme Coordinator moderated a panel of European citizens’ initiative organisers, policy experts and practitioners which explored and discussed the growing use of the European Citizens’ Initiative by young activists, how this changed over time and with what result.



More information on the event is available [here](#). Also check out the blog post on this event [here](#).

## Youth participation and active citizenship: can civic tech truly enhance our democracy?

ECAS organised on 28 June 2022 a NEXUS event to bring together stakeholders working in the field of youth participation and civic tech. The event held two interactive sessions to discuss amongst experts and participants what could be done to improve youth participation, civic education and the implications of technology on European democracy. The discussions aimed at answering two main questions from the panels:

- Young people's participation in democracy: is participation only for the highly-educated or can we be more inclusive?
- Civic tech and its appeal to young people: can technology truly enhance democracy in Europe?

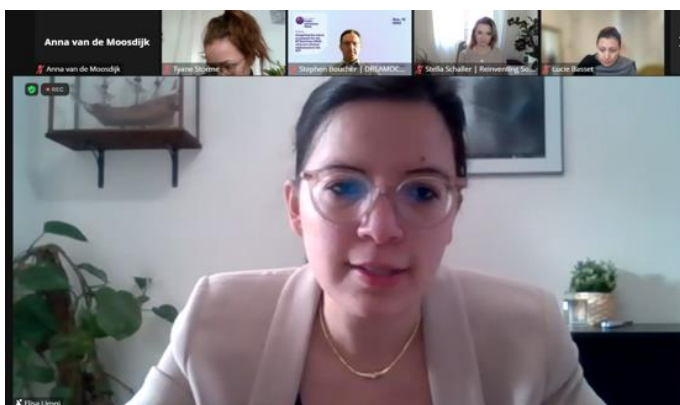
## December Democracy Events

At the end of 2022, ECAS organised a series of events to both showcase the achievements of the year and present upcoming initiatives in the "European Democracy" focus area. The three events hosted by ECAS in the framework of Brussels Public Innovation Week were complemented by the involvement in an event with Bulgarian public sector representatives, also reflecting ECAS' expansion with a CEE branch in Sofia.

Firstly, during the Brussels Public Innovation Week, ECAS organised a webinar titled "**Digitalisation: Who are Europe's frontrunners?**" to showcase the results of the Digital Transformation Co-Creation events. Based on these, concrete guidelines were compiled on ensuring more accessibility, transparency, data protection and digital skills for all. The event also included Nadia Gerasimova, CEO of Urbanpinion, who shared insights from Europe and beyond on digital citizen engagement platforms on voting, surveys, territory development surveys (interactive mapping), forums, ideas collection, consultancy, and citizen engagement CRM.



Following this was a webinar event showcasing ECAS' plan for engaging EU citizens in preparation for the 2024 European Parliament elections, titled "**Imagining the worst to prepare for the EP elections 2024: what are citizens' nightmares in the EU?**". Elisa Lironi, presented that in 2023, ECAS will run a crowdsourcing process in all 27 Member States to challenge EU citizens to discuss the topic of a 'European Elections Dystopia'. The goal is to have citizens reflect together across Europe on how to prevent having



European Elections that could potentially lead to dangerous democratic situations. From a starting point of 'creative destruction' and an approach of gamification, participants will be encouraged to share their fears, and start thinking about their own actions to finally end with possible solutions to avoid their worst nightmares for Europe.

Lastly, after a year of fostering civil society anti-disinformation coalitions in CEE, ECAS hosted an in-person event titled **"Cooperation against disinformation"**. Divided in two sections, the first panel's speakers showcased disinformation-related initiatives from CSOs with different geographical scope, target groups and expertise. The aim of the second panel was to shed light on how recent changes in Twitter were affecting their commitments to halt the spread of disinformation and how cooperation on this issue with authorities and media looked like amidst a changing or missing workforce.



Completing the December round of European Democracy events was ECAS' participation in an event hosted by the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) in Bulgaria. In the framework of the annual IPA meeting, ECAS took part with an expansive presentation of the topics covered by the three events that took place during Brussels Public Innovation Week. Apart from this, the ECAS team also piloted the European Dystopia methodology with the audience.

## Advocacy Activities

In 2022, ECAS continued its work as part of the Steering Committee of **the Civil Society Convention on the Future of Europe and leading the Digital Transformation Cluster** in order to develop and elaborate the final recommendations together with the Working Group members of the Cluster.

The elaboration of the Convention's Digital Transformation proposals went through a Crowdsourcing process that included 4 different phases: Ideas Collection (Jul-Nov 2021), Ideas Selection (Dec-Feb 2021), Policy Formulation (Feb 2022) and Resolution and Adoption (Mar 2022). In this last phase, ECAS developed a resolution with the top ideas from CSOs and the Working Groups members adopted the final resolution together.

In total, 20 Civil Society Organisations and 7 individuals participated on the Crowdsourcing platform, generating around **216 ideas and recommendations** that were distributed between the 5 subtopics of digital transformation (Digital Democracy, Digital Economy, Digital Education, Digital Safeguards and Defending Rights & Freedoms Online). The Working Group members are all network organisations that represent a total of **approximately 1200 CSOs across Europe**.

The recommendations in the final document were presented by ECAS during the discussions held by the Digital Transformation working group of the Conference of the Future of Europe in Strasbourg.



## 4. ECAS' MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH

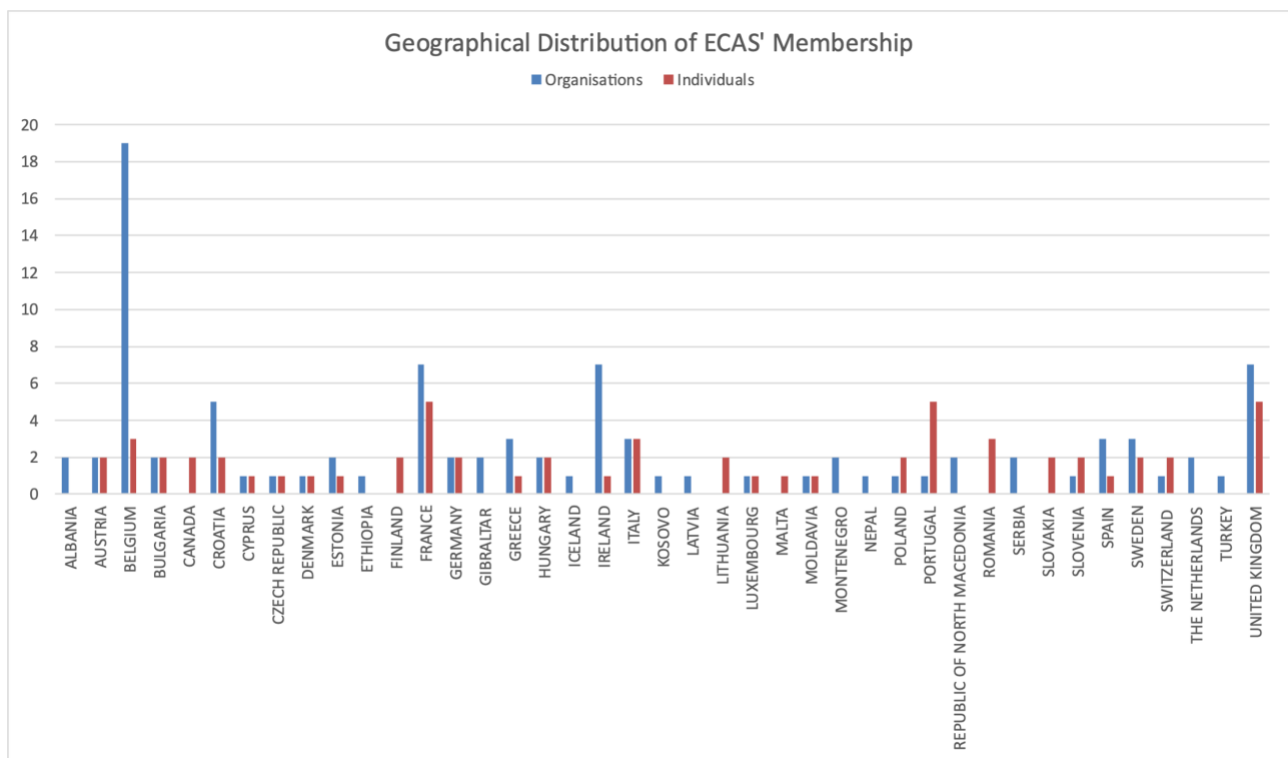
### ECAS' Membership

ECAS' membership is mission-driven and free-of-charge.

At the end of 2022, [ECAS Membership](#) consisted of 154 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 41 countries (27 EU Member States and 14 non-EU Member States) and included:

- 94 Member Organisations (28 of which are network organisations) and
- 60 Individuals.



ECAS actively involves its members in delivering its mission and in its activities focused on the promotion and defence 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.

## ECAS' Outreach

ECAS continued to expand its outreach in 2022 through its website, social media communication channels and newsletter.

2022 was the year of revamping the website of ECAS ([www.ecas.org](http://www.ecas.org)) which reflected on the number of visitors. It received a total of **92,039 page views** for the year, 77,950 from which were "unique page views". This constitutes an increase of 4,07%, compared to 2021 (**88,434 views**).

Day-to-day activities and updates of ECAS were also widely publicised via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. In 2022, ECAS has recorded a noticeable increase in followers on all platforms, as well as in audience engagement with ECAS posts.

## Website activity

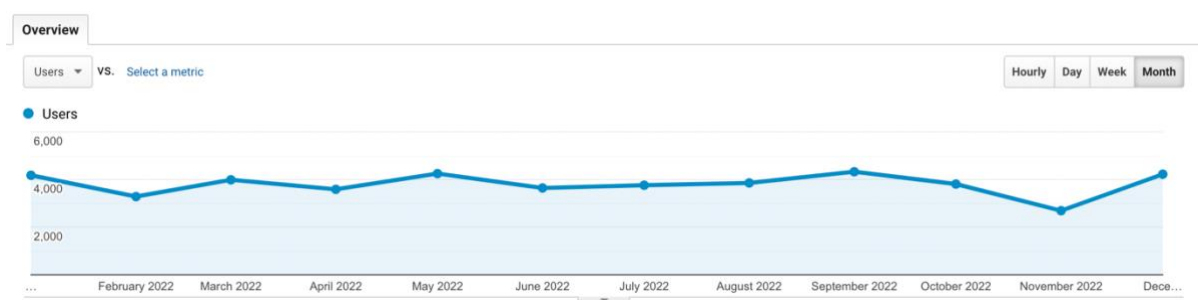
### Pageviews

In 2022, the ECAS website continued to generate a steady flow of visitors, recording a monthly high of **8,793 (March) and 8,788 (September)** and a monthly low of **5,819** (November, due to the revamp of the website), for an annual total of **42,920 users**.



### Users

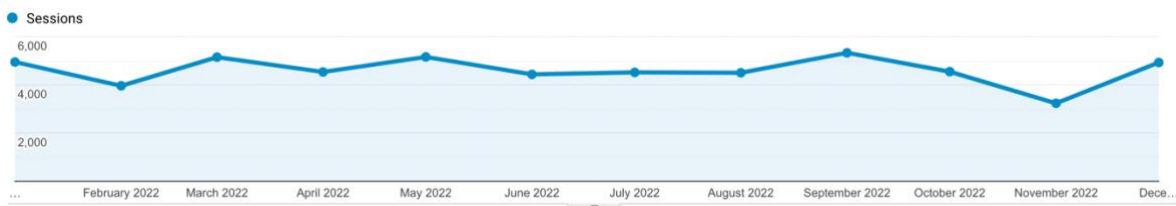
The highest number of users was recorded in September (**4,326 users**) and the lowest in November (**2,693 users**).





## Sessions

The number of sessions followed a similar trend, with a high of 5327 in September and a low of 2693 in June, for an annual total of 55,221 sessions for 2022.



## Social Media

ECAS is managing five social media platforms – Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube.

### Twitter

By the end of 2022, ECAS had a total of **5,155 followers**, which represents a net increase of **127** from the previous year. ECAS posts have been retweeted **419** times. The posts have received **951** likes. ECAS posted **555 tweets**, generating **776,008 impressions** (e.g., the number of times a user sees a Tweet on their timeline or in their search results), which constitutes an increase of 19,56 % compared to 2021.

Some Tweets were boosted by paid advertising.

The top 3 tweets were:

Interested in the future of EU Citizenship? Join us on 29 March at 9:30 CET at the "State of the Union Citizens' Rights: Reinventing EU Citizenship post COVID-19" Conference & listen to...

[View post on network](#)

**March 15, 2022 8:38pm**

Interested in the future of EU Citizenship? Join us on 29 March at 9:30 CET at the "State of the Union Citizens' Rights: Reinventing EU Citizenship post COVID-19" Conference & listen to policymakers and

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Impressions	Engagements	Favorites
<b>158,331</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>45</b>
Replies	Retweets	Clicks
<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>

Engagement Rate  
**0.10%**

✓ Last updated 10 months ago

Don't miss the conference "Unmasking Populism" next week ! We will discuss populism and its consequences for European democracies For more information and registration:...

[View post on network](#)

**May 11, 2022 2:56pm**

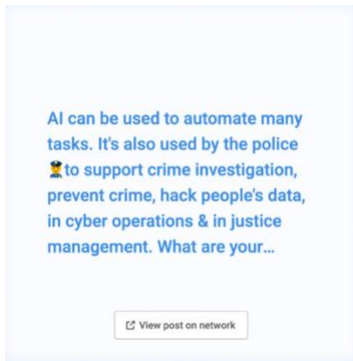
Don't miss the conference "Unmasking Populism" next week ! We will discuss populism and its consequences for European democracies For more information and registration: <https://t.co/wmivx3fEJ4>

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Impressions	Engagements	Favorites
<b>122,877</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>38</b>
Replies	Retweets	Clicks
<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>42</b>

Engagement Rate  
**0.30%**

✓ Last updated 8 months ago



August 10, 2022 7:00pm ecas\_europe

AI can be used to automate many tasks. It's also used by the police to support crime investigation, prevent crime, hack people's data, in cyber operations & in justice management. What are your thoughts on the...

Impressions	Engagements	Favorites
59,841	101	12
Replies	Retweets	Clicks
3	6	73
Engagement Rate		
0.20%		

Last updated 5 months ago

## Facebook

In 2022, the ECAS

Facebook page reached a total of **5,498 followers**, a net annual gain of **224**. The **517** Facebook posts published by ECAS reached **62,737 unique users**, with **7,269 page and post engagements**.

## LinkedIn

By the end of 2022, ECAS had a total of **2,610 followers**, achieving a net gain of **863** from the previous year. The number of posts were **211 with an increase of 69 % in comparison to 2021**, which generated **50,012 impressions**. The average engagement rate was **4,23 %**.

## Instagram

In 2022, ECAS started developing its Instagram account that led to gaining **235 followers**. The slow, but steady growth of the channel was due to **45 posts** through the year, generating **163 likes, 146,238 impressions** and **105,058 reach**.

## YouTube

ECAS YouTube channel is also growing, with published **23 videos** for 2022 and 3 short ones, generating a total number of **12,700 total views, 217, 4 hours of watch time** (estimated total hours of viewing time) and **10,900 impressions** (the impressions' number is based on the data between April-December 2022).

## Monthly Newsletter

The ECAS Newsletter was first published in January 2016. It is structured around the two focus areas of ECAS: EU Rights and European Democracy. It serves to promote the activities and events of ECAS, along with those of ECAS members and partners. The newsletter also informs stakeholders and citizens about the main ongoing initiatives at the EU level relevant to the areas of work at ECAS, while facilitating discussions on these subjects.

In 2022, 12 editions have been published and disseminated to an audience of **3394 subscribers** (2,478 in 2021), compiled of EU decision-makers, experts in the fields of European democracy and EU rights, civil society organisations, citizens and other stakeholders.

## 5. ANNEXES

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### Annex 1: YEA testimonials

In 2022 Your Europe Advice received more than 230 “Thank You” emails.

*“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!). L.”*

*“Dear all, When I wrote the email, I had little expectation that the reply I would get will be so detailed and clear. I really appreciate your time and promptness. It has been very helpful since it was so difficult to find a clear direction but this means a lot and I'm so thankful for that. and if I have any queries in future, I will surely contact you guys again. Thanks, S.”*

*“This is the most complete and comprehensive answer I have ever received following an online query. I have ADHD and panic disorder and you have just been so structured and detailed in your response with all the links that my brain has calmed down for the first time in a while. Thank you, honestly, I expected signposting, not this level of step-by-step guidance and you even included the steps I need to take. Warmest regards, C.”*

*“Thanks a million for your assistance, you're the only one who got back to me with a positive email and who cares about the trouble we are going through. We truly, truly appreciate it 🙏 Kindest regards, K.”*

*“Hi Your Europe Advice guys, I just want to say thanks a million! This is the first direct and useful advice I have received so far. Clear and easy to understand. I'll be honest, I wasn't sure I would actually get an answer but this has been great! Thank you so much. F.”*

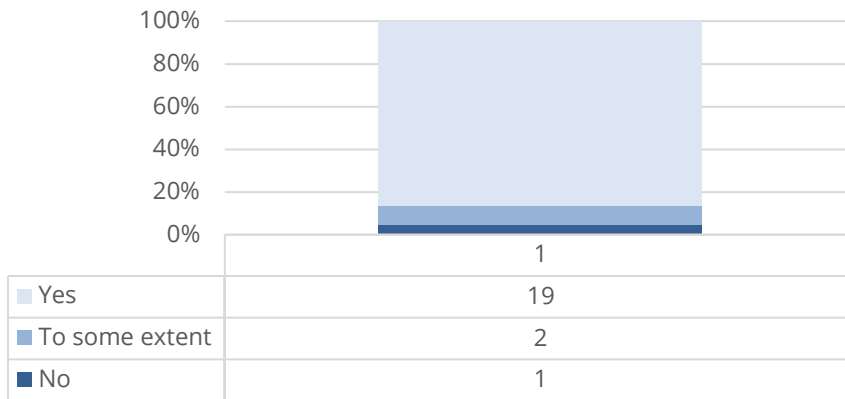
*“Hello, I'm not sure if you'll receive my response, but I wanted to thank you for the thorough and clear explanation. This is exactly the information I was looking for. Thank you so very much! Best wishes, S.”*

*“Good afternoon, I'd like to thank you for your help and professional advice which is very helpful. I deeply appreciate your quick response and clarify my situation. My kind regards E.”*

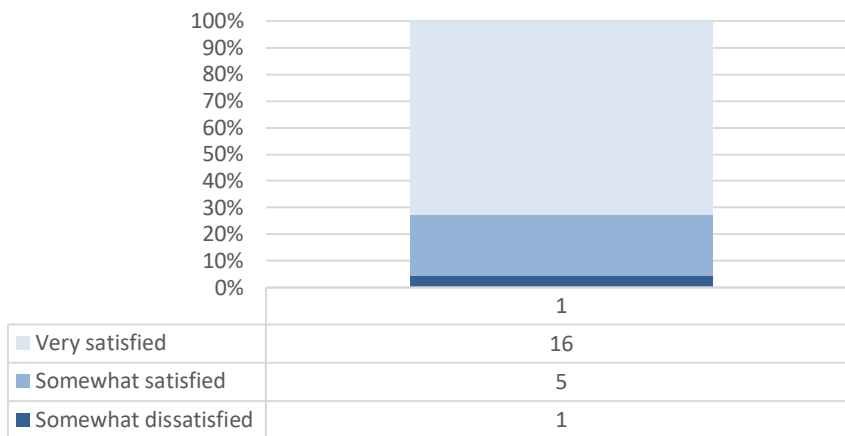
### Annex 2: ECI Forum Feedback

Out of the 127 enquiries, within the timeframe of this contract (2019-2022), 22 users used the available feedback form to provide feedback on the advice received. Out of these, 16 users expressed their complete satisfaction with the response received.

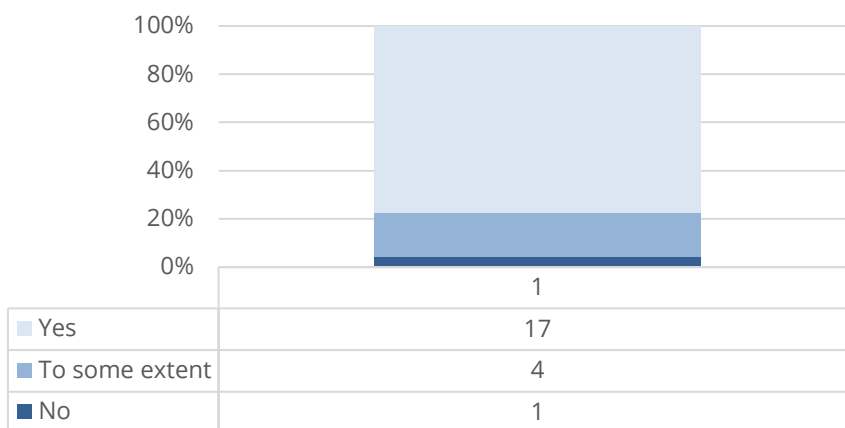
### Do you think the advice received was clear enough in terms of structure and content?



### Overall, how satisfied are you with the advice received?



### Do you think the advice received answered your enquiry?





# ACTIVITY REPORT 2022

ECAS BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN CITIZEN ACTION SERVICE

HEADQUARTERS:

BRUSSELS  
EUROPEAN CITIZEN ACTION SERVICE  
12, CANTERSTEEN  
BECENTRAL  
1000 BRUSSELS  
BELGIUM

BRANCH OFFICE:  
SOFIA

EUROPEAN CITIZEN ACTION SERVICE  
BRANCH BULGARIA  
65 EVLOGI I HRISTO GEORGIEV BLVD  
1142 SOFIA  
BULGARIA

ECAS.ORG  
INFO@ECAS.ORG  
TWITTER: @ECAS\_EUROPE  
FACEBOOK: ECAS.EUROPE  
LINKEDIN: ECAS – EUROPEAN CITIZEN  
ACTION SERVICE

