

State of the Union Citizens' Rights

Towards a **stronger democracy**
that leaves no one behind

TUESDAY, MARCH 19th 2024

9.30 am – 13.00 pm The Hotel
Boulevard de Waterloo 38, 1000 Bruxelles

C O N F E R E N C E



Co-funded by
the European Union

Agenda

ECAS is happy to announce that the 2024 edition of its annual State of the Union Citizens' Rights conference will take place on March 19th, 2024.

As every year, the conference will take stock of recent developments in the EU citizens' rights domain and will provide a forum for discussion between civil society, decision-makers and relevant stakeholders on how to raise awareness on citizens' rights, improve and innovate the European citizenship and make it more inclusive.

Given that 2024 is a special year, where the European Parliament elections will take place, this State of the Union Citizens' Rights conference will focus on how to foster political participation and improve the voting rights of EU citizens. Our keynote speaker will set the scene by elaborating on the current state of democracy in the EU.

As both the outcomes and the turnout of the 2024 European elections are difficult to foresee, we will ask the audience to share their hopes and expectations. We will also present EU citizens' thoughts and wishes about the elections.

As the health of democracy strongly relies on a high and inclusive turnout, our first panel will discuss ways to boost the participation of under-represented citizens. Potential legislative changes and existing initiatives will be presented to the audience by experts in the domain.

This year, for the first time, citizens at the age of 16 will be able to vote at the European elections in four Member States. Thus, our second panel will engage stakeholders working on youth participation to share best practices in supporting young people to exercise their political rights and encouraging them to get more involved.

Finally, as every year, we will close the State of the Union Citizens' Rights Conference by announcing the winners of the ECAS Citizenship Awards. Participants who cannot attend in person are welcome to join remotely.

Programme

State of the Union Citizens' Rights

C O N F E R E N C E

9:30 – 9:50

Keynote speech: State of Democracy

TBA

10:00 – 10:20

Engaging citizens through crowdsourcing

Elisa Lironi, Programme Director – European Democracy, ECAS

**Presentation of solutions provided by citizens
on fostering political participation**

Claire Morot-Sir, EU Rights Manager, ECAS

10:20 – 10:30

Q&A

10:30 – 11:10

**Panel discussion: Shaping an inclusive European Union
by engaging all citizens (Moderation by Jennifer Baker)**

Encouraging political participation of homeless people

FEANTSA

Engaging Roma people in the EU political landscape

European Roma Grassroots Organisations Network

Improving voting access of citizens with disabilities

DG JUST

Revamp gender balance in political representation

TBA

11:10 – 11:20

Q&A

Programme

State of the Union Citizens' Rights

C O N F E R E N C E

11:20 – 11:35

Coffee Break

11:35 – 12:15

Panel discussion: Towards a youth-centered European Union
(Moderation by Jennifer Baker)

Democracy and Young people
European Youth Forum

The future of youth democracy
TBA

Presentation of the EurHope campaign
Young European Federalists (JEF)

Presentation of the Your Europe, Your Say initiative
European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

12:15 – 12:30

Q&A

12:30 – 13:00

**ECAS Awards 2023 on fostering citizens' participation
in the 2024 European Parliament elections**
Jean Lambert, ECAS Chairperson

Closing remarks by Assya Kavrakova, Executive Director, ECAS

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch

