

European Citizens' Initiative

Minority SafePack - one million signatures for diversity in Europe

Expert and research publications



This Thematic Digest contains a list of publications from the European Parliament's expertise and research capacities within the Directorates-General for Internal Policies (IPOL) and Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), relevant to the topics of debate of the hearing on the Minority SafePack European Citizens' Initiative.

The [hearing](#) is co-organised by the Committees on Civil liberties, Justice and Home Affairs ([LIBE](#)) and on Culture and Education ([CULT](#)), in association with the Committee on Petitions ([PETI](#)).



Respect for fundamental rights in the European Union

Fact Sheets by Udo Bux, Ottavio Marzocchi, and Martina Schonard, September 2020

This booklet presents issues related to the fundamental rights of EU citizens. The Charter of Fundamental Rights gathers all the rights of individuals in a single document, grouping them around several major principles: human dignity, fundamental freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights and justice. EU citizens have the right to move freely within the EU and to petition the European Parliament or present Citizens' Initiatives to the Commission on any matter in a field in which the EU has competence.

European Day of Languages: digital survival of lesser-used languages

Briefing by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, September 2020

The European Union is a mosaic of 24 official languages, around 60 regional and minority languages, and a variety of sign languages spoken by half a million people. Europe is the most linguistically homogenous continent and yet most of its languages are in danger of disappearing. This briefing looks at the role of digital technologies and cyber space in potential preservation of such endangered lesser-used languages.

Education in isolation in the pandemic: following the path of Isaac Newton

Briefing by Denise Chircop, June 2020

What started as an emergency has become an eye-opener, as existing educational gaps have become more visible. Inequalities and greater difficulties of access for those with special educational needs, are just two examples. This briefing provides an overview of the situation in the different educational sectors and the policy challenges linked to the impact of closures and to the extent to which educational continuity can be assured.

Jewish communities in the European Union

'At a glance' note by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, January 2020

This note presents the situation of the diminishing Jewish population in the EU, which has witnessed an increase in acts of anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish violence in recent years. In defence of its values, including respect for minorities, the EU undertakes and funds actions to counter anti-Semitism, counter hate speech, and to educate on related issues.

International Year of Indigenous Languages – Sami people and languages in the EU

'At a Glance' note by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, January 2020

Indigenous languages are the essence of indigenous peoples' culture and traditions. They constitute the majority of the almost 7 000 languages spoken all over the world, yet, tragically, almost half of them are threatened with extinction. This note illustrates the complex situation of Sami indigenous people and languages present in and outside the EU. It also presents the link between the preservation of indigenous languages and cultures, and biodiversity.

Access to cultural life for people with disabilities

Briefing by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, December 2019

This briefing presents the EU's action in the framework of its disability strategy to honour its obligations as a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. People with disabilities' cultural activities are covered by a range of actions, from specific entrance requirements at cultural venues to copyright exceptions for the benefit of blind or visually impaired persons, where the EU provides recommendations and funding.

Inclusion of migrants in formal education

Briefing by Denise Chircop and Eulalia Claros, November 2019

Statistics show that students with a migrant background are not as integrated in formal education as other students. This briefing contains a number of graphics to provide an easy grasp of the complexity behind inclusion in early childhood education, in compulsory education and in tertiary education.

Sign languages in the EU

'At a glance' note by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, September 2019

Sign languages are not modelled on spoken languages, yet are languages in their own right, with equally complex rules, grammatical structures and vocabulary that evolve and vary by region, social and age group; convey meanings and emotions; create social and family bonds; and meet artistic and identity needs. This note briefly introduces a variety of sign languages in the context of rights of people with disabilities and linguistic minority rights. It points to specific needs concerning interpretation and language technologies.

EU policies – delivering for citizens: promoting European culture – podcast

Briefing by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, August 2019

There is a strong commitment at the EU level to ensure that culture is mainstreamed in all policy areas, with a special focus on the protection of cultural heritage and cultural diversity, which are key elements in cultural identity and expression. This briefing introduces the framework of EU actions in support of cultural sectors and access to culture facing external competition and linguistic fragmentation on the internal market. It presents the ambitions, challenges and benefits of cultural policies that focus on citizens.

Scaling up Roma inclusion strategies - truth, reconciliation and justice, addressing anti-gypsyism

Study coordinated by Udo Bux, February 2019

This study aims to promote a better understanding of the Roma minority and communities' situation in the EU. It explores concrete proposals to upscale the post-2020 Roma framework strategy via a Rule of Law, Democracy and Fundamental Rights Periodic Review/Mechanism, and a Truth and Reconciliation Process at the EU level. It proposes ways to strengthen the role of the European Parliament in ensuring democratic accountability and the right to truth and effective justice for human rights violations.

Audiovisual Media Services Directive

EU Legislation in progress briefing by Ivana Katsarova, January 2019

The overarching goal of the proposal was to bring about a balance between competitiveness and consumer protection. It therefore aimed to introduce flexibility when restrictions only applicable to TV are no longer justified, promote European films, protect minors and tackle hate speech more efficiently. The deadline for transposition into national legislation was set at 19 September 2020.

Lifelong learning in the EU

Animated infographic by Denise Chircop and Eulalia Claros, October 2018

This animated infographic presents a sample of the available data, to draw attention to some of the recurrent issues in lifelong learning. Data highlights differences linked with learners' country of origin, gender and socio-economic status. You can navigate between four sections, each dedicated to a stage in lifelong learning. The sections discuss types of education and training and their objectives, staffing issues, financing, accessibility, participation rates, and impact.

Remaining 'united in diversity' thanks to multilingualism

'At a glance' note by Ivana Katsarova, September 2018

This note illustrates the current linguistic diversity in the EU and globally, but also highlights the different degrees of language endangerment in the EU and worldwide. Furthermore, it explains how the EU and other actors contribute to safeguarding linguistic diversity, while being aware of its limited influence, because educational and language policies are the responsibility of the individual EU countries.

Democratic transition and linguistic minorities in Estonia and Latvia

In-Depth Analysis coordinated by Giorgio Mussa, May 2018

This paper claims that in order to understand the situation of political representation rights of ethnic and linguistic minorities in Estonia and Latvia, it is essential to provide a historical-political framework that contextualizes the presence of such substantial minorities in the two countries and justifies the type of relationship existing with the majority of nation holder. It is also suggested that full integration is the goal that needs to be pursued, while ensuring the cultural and national values of Latvians and Estonians.

Political and electoral rights of non-citizen residents in Latvia and Estonia

Briefing coordinated by Giorgio Mussa, May 2018

This briefing finds that persons with undetermined citizenship of Estonia and non-citizens of Latvia do not have the right to take part in the elections to the European Parliament. The decision to extend, or otherwise, the right to vote in European elections is one of Member States policy. The position of Estonia and Latvia is that their respective non-citizen populations have certain legal links with the respective Member States but that these populations are not their nationals.

International Roma Day: how the EU supports the study of Roma culture, language and history

Briefing by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, April 2018

This briefing presents EU supported projects focusing on Roma history, culture and language. The study and promotion of Roma culture and language fall under the remit of legislation concerning the preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity on the one hand, and the protection of minority languages, on the other. The EU offers support for the preservation of the Roma language, Romani, which is endangered and could disappear in some areas.

EU funding for cultural work with refugees: towards the next programme generation

In-depth Analysis coordinated by Michaela Franke, November 2017

This paper explores the EU's current programmes (2014-2020) that support cultural work with refugees in Europe, and provides case studies of EU-funded projects in this field. It focuses particularly on the Erasmus+, Creative Europe and Europe for Citizens programmes, offers feedback from these projects, and gives recommendations for actions on the future programme generation beyond 2020.

Why cultural work with refugees

In-depth Analysis coordinated by Michaela Franke, November 2017

Cultural work with refugees has a long history. This paper outlines the contentions in this area, provides a theoretical basis for the work, and gives leading examples of cultural work with refugees - including work that promotes intercultural understanding and work that promotes fear. It outlines key findings and recommendations, which have a substantial focus on ethical engagement, aesthetic importance and societal wellbeing.

EU funding for cultural work with refugees: current practice and lessons learned

In-depth Analysis coordinated by Michaela Franke, November 2017

This paper gives an overview of publicly funded cultural projects with refugees as target group. These projects are analysed in the light of two interconnected challenges in contemporary Europe: good governance of cultural diversity, and refugees' aspiration to a good life in Europe. It asks the fundamental question of what it is to live a good life together in Europe today, and how cultural interventions can contribute to this aspiration.

Multilingualism and lifelong language learning

'At a glance' note by Denise Chircop September 2017

Rooted in the Treaties, multilingualism reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the European Union's Member States. This note highlights the importance for students to master the language of instruction and to learn foreign languages. It also points to the Parliament's position and to several EU programmes that contribute to multilingualism and lifelong language learning.

Towards a comprehensive EU protection system for minorities

Study coordinated by Sarah Sy, August 2017

This study examines the added value of developing a democratic rule of law and fundamental rights-based approach to the protection of minorities in the EU legal system. It presents the state of play regarding the main challenges characterising the protection of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in a selection of 11 European countries. It suggests specific ways in which a Union pact for democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights, could help ensure a comprehensive EU approach to minority protection.

Access to culture in the European Union

In-Depth Analysis by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, July 2017

This publication analyses factors of access to cultural goods and services in the EU and their importance for groups of citizens according to age, education, area they come from, or disability. Measuring and accessing the impact of cultural consumption on Europeans' lives and the cost, availability, accessibility and attractiveness of the culture on offer, help cultural policy-makers and fund providers make informed decisions on the directions and risks to take.

The establishment of an EU mechanism on democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights

Thematic Digest publication coordinated by Corinne Cordina, June 2017

This publication provides extracts from expertise documents relevant to the topics discussed during the inter-parliamentary committee meeting on the establishment of an EU mechanism on democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights, held in June 2017. The aim of this meeting was to go over this proposed new mechanism, meant to ensure that all Member States respect the values enshrined in the EU treaties and set clear, evidence-based and non-political criteria for assessing their records.

Minority languages and education: best practices and pitfalls

Study coordinated by Michaela Franke, May 2017

This study delivers an in-depth comparative analysis of thirteen language case studies in order to gain insight into the situation of minority languages in education in Europe. Indications for best practices are described and challenges that minority languages face in education are highlighted. Specific attention is directed to vocational education and career perspectives. The study also gives recommendations on how the EU can support minority languages in education.

Migrant education: monitoring and assessment

Study coordinated by Michaela Franke, February 2017

This is a first attempt to explore the monitoring and assessment of migrant education (MAME) in EU countries. A literature review indicated the main dimensions of MAME, shaping a questionnaire completed by national experts of 27 EU countries. The country reports reveal that most EU countries have developed, to a greater or lesser extent, educational policies for immigrant children. However, little has been done to monitor and assess migrant education.

Discrimination(s) as emerging from petitions received

Study coordinated by Jos Heezen, February 2017

This study focuses on several issues stemming from a sample of forty petitions received. Whilst all petitions are related to anti-discrimination law, they are quite heterogeneous in terms of the respondent entity, the grounds of discrimination and the legal sources invoked. Recommendations are made to assist the Committee on Petitions and the European Parliament in replying to petitions received in this field.

Integration of refugees and migrants: Participation in cultural activities

'At a glance' note by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, February 2017

In the multi-faceted challenge of integrating refugees and migrants, cultural aspects are also part of the solution. This note introduces the legal framework, the role of the EU institutions and the challenges and benefits of migrants' integration. It presents several EU actions and funds devoted to the integration of refugees and migrants through cultural projects.

The implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU institutional framework

Study coordinated by Roberta Panizza, Eeva Eriksson and Ottavio Marzocchi, November 2016

This study examines the role of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU legislative process, in the economic governance of the Union, in the work of EU agencies, in the implementation of EU law by EU Member States, and in the external relations of the Union, both in trade and investment policies and in the Common Foreign and Security Policy. It also analyses certain gaps in the judicial protection of the Charter and identifies measures through which the potential of the Charter could be further realised.

European strategy for multilingualism: benefits and costs

Study coordinated by Miklós Györffi, September 2016

This study presents the different results of research in the economics of languages that deal with the advantages and the disadvantages of multilingualism in the economy, in society and in the EU institutions. The relevance of the general goals and the recommendations of the European Strategy for Multilingualism (ESM) is evaluated. The available evidence of measures and actions carried out by the Commission to implement the ESM is also summarised.

Language teaching and learning within EU Member States

In-depth analyses coordinated by Miklós Györffi, July 2016

This paper provides an overview of available resources offering case studies of innovative projects and initiatives, and examples of good practice aiming to improve the quality of language teaching and learning within EU Member States. It gives a summary of results delivered by recent studies and surveys on comparability of national language assessment regimes. Recommendations on which of the European Strategy's on Multilingualism objectives need urgent support are also given.

European strategy on multilingualism: policy and implementation at the EU Level

Study coordinated by Miklós Györffi, June 2016

The aim of this study is to review the work done at EU level regarding the European Strategy on Multilingualism, focusing especially on progress made after 2011. The paper presents a number of policy developments and initiatives which have been put in place, and encourages Member States to address the need for improving language learning outcomes by exploiting the wide array of financial and advisory support provided by the European Commission.

Follow-up to the EP Resolution on the situation of fundamental rights in the EU (2013-2014)

Study coordinated by Sarah Sy, June 2016

This study examines the follow-up given to the European Parliament resolution of September 2015 on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union (2013-2014). It considers the conditions that should be met for the establishment of an EU fundamental rights strategy, as well as the recent developments related to the issues of concern and proposals made in the resolution.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Thematic Digest publication coordinated by Corinne Cordina, May 2016

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union sets out the basic rights that must be respected by the EU and by its Member States when implementing EU law. This publication provides an overview of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights itself and of its implementation in the EU. It also presents the activities of the European Parliament and of other key actors in protecting fundamental rights in the EU.

Human and Fundamental Rights

Key studies publication coordinated by Andrzej Sanderski, May 2016

The EU is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, human rights, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights sets out all the personal, civic, political, economic and social rights enjoyed by people in the EU. This publication provides extracts from relevant expertise documents prepared by the European Parliament's Policy Departments on this topic.

EYE 2016 – Integration of young migrants

'At a glance' note by Denise Chircop and Martina Prpic, April 2016

Research reveals that young migrants face many obstacles in education, but which policy changes and projects can help overcome. This note, which was prepared for the European Youth Event 2016, takes a closer look at young migrants' profiles, EU action to prevent discrimination, and possible ways to improve integration, e.g. through education.

Integrating migrants and their children through education

'At a glance' note by Denise Chircop, March 2016

For a number of years, the European Parliament has called for tangible commitments and proposed practical measures to integrate migrants and their children through education, training and the recognition of skills. This note summarises the main results of different data sources regarding the educational outcomes of foreign born and second-generation young people, and points to the number of tools that have been put in place at the European level to coordinate and support Member States' activities in the area of the education of migrants.

EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 51: stricter or broader application to national measures

Study coordinated by Martina Schonard, Ottavio Marzocchi, February 2016

This study considers the dilemma of a broad or narrow application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights to national measures. After examining the considerations that militate in favour and against a narrow interpretation of the Charter and of its Article 51, the study concludes that a more courageous approach should be taken at EU level when examining national implementing measures of EU law that raise fundamental rights issues, notably until these are not evenly and properly guaranteed across the EU.

Evaluation of the EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies

Study coordinated by Sarah Sy, December 2015

This study evaluates the implementation, impact and outcomes of National Roma Integration Strategies in seven Member States (Bulgaria, France, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain), in the broader context of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. It concludes that these strategies suffer from severe implementation gaps and that Roma populations continue to live in significant socio-economic deprivation, and suffer extensive discrimination and high levels of anti-gypsyism.

Practices and approaches in the EU Member States to prevent and end statelessness

Study coordinated by Sarah Sy, November 2015

This study describes the practices and approaches in all EU Member States as regards the prevention and eradication of statelessness. For that purpose, the different national practices are assessed in light of the relevant international and European standards. Since proper mechanisms to identify stateless populations are lacking in a majority of Member States, the study addresses the procedures used in determining statelessness and analyses the role of the EU in preventing and reducing statelessness.

Education and Intercultural Dialogue as tools against radicalisation

'At a glance' note by Denise Chircop, November 2015

At a time of rising concerns in Europe over radicalisation and violent extremism, the role that education and intercultural dialogue can play in promoting respect for diversity, pluralism and human rights is increasingly in the spotlight. This note provides a brief introduction of the characteristics of extremism and its attraction for young people. It then focuses on the educational response through policies and programmes.

The impact of the crisis on Fundamental Rights across Member States of the EU

Study coordinated by Roberta Panizza and Sarah Sy, March 2015

This paper presents a synthesis of studies conducted in seven Member States (Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain and Portugal), regarding the impact of financial and economic crises, and austerity measures imposed in response thereto, on the fundamental rights of individuals. The impact of measures is examined in relation to the rights to: education, healthcare, work, pension, access to justice, and freedom of expression and assembly in all seven Member States. State-specific rights are also looked into.

Policy departments

The Policy Departments of DG Internal Policies (IPOL) and DG External Policies (EXPO) are responsible for providing expertise and policy advice to support the activities of the parliamentary committees and other parliamentary bodies. Based on analyses carried out either in-house or externally, policy departments provide independent, specialised, objective, high-quality and up-to-date information in all areas of Parliament's activities.

A wide variety of formats is used by the Policy Departments in order to deliver their policy analysis, most frequently in response to a request from a parliamentary committee or delegation. Their written output serves a variety of purposes by feeding directly into the legislative work of a specific committee or serving as a briefing for delegations of Members, or as background notes and speaking points for Parliament's political authorities.

The Policy departments also organise events, including workshops and expert panels, to enhance Parliament's analytical capacity and develop common approaches to current issues.

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