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Access to nationality

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Boriss CILEVIČS and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Access to nationality for immigrants and their descendants is a crucial condition for integration. Only citizenship guarantees security of residence as well as the full enjoyment of political rights and political representation.

However, most European countries do not facilitate naturalisation for first-generation migrants, while European-born children often face unfavourable additional requirements for becoming citizens of their country of birth.

As stricter criteria apply to them, many migrants wanting naturalisation can have their application refused or nationality withdrawn on many grounds, without any time limits. Moreover, only a few countries allow migrants to hold complete dual nationality.

The tendency in recent years to make it more difficult to acquire citizenship in several Council of Europe member states raises concerns. The eligibility criteria have become more arduous and have been accompanied by a trend for instigating comprehensive citizenship tests.

Excluding long term immigrants from access to nationality fosters the perception by the wider public of them being “foreigners” in the sense that they might not deserve to become citizens of their country of residence.

While it is clear that, in matters concerning nationality, account should be taken both of the legitimate interests of the State and those of individuals, discrimination should be avoided, statelessness prevented and the rights of persons normally living in the countries concerned respected.

Minimum standards and good practices in the area of access to nationality should be promoted. Public campaigns to encourage application for naturalisation could have a positive impact both on integration of immigrants and on their perception by the wider public as being their future co-citizens. Member states which have not yet done so should sign and ratify the 1997 [Council of Europe Convention on Nationality \(ETS No. 166\)](#).

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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