

WINDY ROADS

The ambivalent relationship of Union
citizenship and Member State nationality

28-30 January 2026



Concept

Introduced with the Treaty of Maastricht some 30 years ago, Union citizenship is intertwined with the Member States' nationalities. Following the letters of the EU Treaties, it is no freestanding, but a derived status: Union citizens are those who possess the nationality of a Member State (Article 9 TEU). While the Court of Justice ascertained already in 2001 that Union citizenship is destined to become the “fundamental status” of the nationals of the Member States, the past 30 years have demonstrated that Union citizenship follows no linear development towards this destiny. Instead, the relationship of Union citizenship and Member State nationality is ambivalent and subject to many, sometimes contradictory trajectories. Some have strengthened the status of Union citizenship, others have reinforced the relevance of Member State nationalities. With other words: *these concepts travel on windy roads*.

This conference aims at mapping these windy roads. On the one hand, we can observe a renaissance of nationality. Consider the restriction of the rights of economically inactive Union citizens by the EU legislature and the Court of Justice (*Dano* and its progenies) or the consequences of Brexit, which demonstrated the precarity of Union citizenship (*Préfet du Gers*) and led to a flood of naturalisation requests in continental Europe.

On the other hand, the rights flowing from Union citizenship, free movement and equality, have increasingly expanded. Today, Union citizenship has developed beyond a mere status for mobile and economically active “market citizens”. We can even witness the forming of EU requirements not only for the loss and acquisition of the Member States' nationalities (*Commission v Malta*), but also for political rights in national elections (see the infringement proceedings against Poland and the Czech Republic over the right of Union citizens to join a political party in another Member State). In this sense, even core domains of Member State nationality, such as naturalisation requirements and political rights attached to that status, are no longer immune from European influence.

Some of these cases are well-studied, some might say over-explored. However, we do not aim at simply revisiting these “classics”. By zooming out and assessing them with temporal distance, we seek to understand their impact and interplay in the long term. Ultimately, we are placing these diverging trajectories in a bigger framework that might allow us to identify the direction in which Union citizenship and Member State nationality are heading. Finally, we want to explore future paths in this relationship. What is their role in an emerging European society, what are their potentials and promises, what are their dangers and risks?

Programme

- **Dates:** 28 to 30 January 2026
- **Venue:** Senatssaal, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin,
Unter den Linden 6, 10117 Berlin,
- **Convener:** Dr. Luke Dimitrios Spieker, DFG Research Training
Group DynamInt
- **Email:** windyroads.conference.rewi@hu-berlin.de

28 January 2026

[Open to public]

17:00	<i>Welcome address</i>
17:15 – 18:00	Opening keynote: Professor Tamara Čapeta , Advocate General at the Court of Justice of the European Union
18:00 – 18:45	Opening keynote: Professor Daniel Thym , Universität Konstanz
19:00	<i>Reception</i>

29 January 2026

Part I: Weakened Union citizenship, strengthened nationality?

9:00 – 10:30 **Panel 1: The long-term impact of *Dano* and its progenies**

Moderator: [Hannah Zaruchas](#), DynamInt (2nd cohort)

- [Anastasia Iliopoulou-Penot](#), Université Panthéon-Assas (Paris 2)
- [Charlotte O'Brien](#), York Law School
- [Victoria Hooton](#), University of Sheffield School of Law
- [Dion Kramer](#), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

10:45 – 12:15

Panel 2: The long-term impact of Brexit

Moderator: [Jana Ebersberger](#), DynamInt (3rd cohort)

- [Hannes Krämer](#), Director (Team External relations and International Law) & Principal Adviser (Legal matters related to EU-UK relations and to Ukraine), European Commission
- [Susanne K. Schmidt](#), Universität Bremen
- [Oliver Garner](#), City St George's, University of London
- [Maarten Vink](#), European University Institute

12:15 – 13:00

Lunch break

Part II: Strengthened Union citizenship, weakened nationality?

13:00 – 14:30

Panel 3: Shrinking autonomy? EU impact on the acquisition and loss of Member State nationality

Moderator: [Jasper Kamradt](#), DynamInt (associate)

- [Martijn van den Brink](#), Leiden University
- [Ségolène Barbou des Places](#), Université Paris 1
- [Ferdinand Weber](#), Universität Göttingen
- [Sara Iglésias Sanchez](#), Universidad Complutense Madrid

14:45 – 16:15

Panel 4: Declining relevance? The impact of fundamental freedoms on Member State nationality

Moderator: *tbd*

- [Eleanor Spaventa](#), Bocconi University Milan
- [Gareth Davies](#), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- [Alina Tryfonidou](#), Cyprus University
- [Catherine Barnard](#), Cambridge University

16:15 – 16:45

Coffee break

16:45 – 18:15

Panel 5: Opening participation? EU impact on national political rights

Moderator: [Lena Kaiser](#), DynamInt (2nd cohort)

- [Monica Claes](#), Maastricht University & [Nora Vissers](#), Maastricht University
- [Mattias Wendel](#), Universität Hamburg
- [Daniel Sarmiento](#), Universidad Complutense Madrid
- [Jonathan Tomkin](#), European Commission

19:30

Conference dinner

30 January 2026

Part III: Outlook

9:00 – 10:30 Panel 6: Derived, decoupled, displaced? What future for Union citizenship and nationality in the EU?

Moderator: [Hanneke van Eijken](#), Utrecht University

- [Francesca Strumia](#), City St George's, University of London
- [Rainer Bauböck](#), European University Institute
- [Daniel Thym](#), Universität Konstanz
- [Dimitry Kochenov](#), Central European University

10:45 – 12:15 Panel 7: What role for Union citizenship and nationality for the emergence of a European society?

Moderator: [Jakob Gašperin Wischhoff](#) (DynamInt, 1st cohort)

- [Ana Bobić](#), Hertie School
- [Jules Lepoutre](#), Université Côte d'Azur
- [Paivi Neuvonen](#), Durham University
- [Armin von Bogdandy](#), MPIL Heidelberg

12:15 – 13:00 *Light lunch*

[Open to Public]

13:00 – 14:00 Closing keynote: Professor Koen Lenaerts, President of the Court of Justice of the European Union

