**PETITION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

*To challenge the loss of European citizenship of 64 million people with BREXIT
and to challenge the limitation of the rights all other European citizens as a result of BREXIT*

We, the undersigned, ask that the European Parliament should use its powers of inquiry and oversight to challenge the assumption that citizens of a country leaving the EU should lose their European citizenship. Deprivation of citizenship is a measure of last resort, the risk of which should always be brought to the attention of individuals concerned who should have a right of appeal. Article 20 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union states that “*every person holding the nationality of a member state shall be a citizen of the Union*”, but is silent, as is the rest of the Treaty, on what should happen in case a Member State withdraws from the Union.

Can UK citizens be involuntarily stripped of their European citizenship and European citizens in the UK of their rights?

* Voters were not warned in advance of this danger in case of a majority to leave the EU. This issue was not mentioned in the document sent by the government to every household nor was it an issue for either side in the referendum campaign. Loss of European citizenship is a hidden by-product of the vote on 23 June 2016.
* Those most effected did not even have the right to vote in the referendum. Is the loss of European citizenship acceptable when potential votes among 3.3 million European citizens resident in the UK and among 1.3 million from the UK, who were resident outside their country for over 15 years, were disenfranchised?
* There is no guarantee in a complex and unprecedented situation that European rights will be maintained, even for long-terms residents. There is a risk that European citizens directly concerned will become bargaining chips in negotiations under Article 50 behind closed doors between the leaving and the remaining States. What kind of agreement, if any, could emerge? European Limbo could replace European citizenship.
* This does not only concern mobile citizens. There are far wider repercussions. The loss of citizenship applies to all UK citizens at home and is a threat to other citizens across the EU. Those less directly but still affected include those who travel, temporarily stay, work across borders either physically or digitally, and buy and sell in the EU.

We ask the European Parliament to hear those concerned. Should European citizens who planned their future and that of their children be stripped of a status they could reasonably assume should be kept for the rest of their lives? Is European citizenship, which has been made a “fundamental status” in case law by the Court of justice of the EU so meaningless that it can just be swept aside?

We suggest that the European Parliament:

* organise a public inquiry:
	+ with experts, including those in European and international law, on the acquisition and loss of European citizenship;
	+ designed to maximise the input from European citizens both from the UK and elsewhere.
* examine which core European rights should be maintained for European citizens in or from the UK on a reciprocal basis;
* find a way to secure these rights by establishing a more inclusive European citizenship based not only on being a national of a member state but also on long-term residence.

In a more interconnected world this first transnational citizenship of the modern era was enacted to bring people together. As the only EU institution which is directly elected, the European Parliament has the responsibility to protect this uniquely European concept and the related European rights.