

# Problems discovered through the Your Europe Advice (YEA) service and suggestions from ECAS - the European Commission's contractor for YEA



## Residence: family rights

There is a general lack of information on the right of residence for EU citizens' family members. There are numerous bureaucratic barriers to applying for residence cards, including having to prove a durable relationship, legalising marriage certificates and proving sufficient resources.

## Suggestions from ECAS

- National legislation should be clear and sufficiently detailed, with clear instructions on the application of the Citizenship Directive (2004/38/EC);
- The definition of "durable relationship" should be harmonised;
- National administrations should be trained to appropriately apply the rules.



## Social security: country of insurance

Mobile EU citizens experience problems in keeping their social security coverage, often not knowing which country is the competent country. This is due to the complexity of the rules, lack of information and training of the national authorities and insufficient coordination between Member States.

## Suggestions from ECAS

- National authorities must improve the administrative cooperation between each other;
- National authorities must be trained on the applicable social security rules when citizens move within the EU;
- Requests for information should be answered within a maximum of three months.



## Entry: long-term/short-term visas

Non-EU family members of EU citizens experience difficulties in obtaining visas for several reasons: very long procedures, request of extra documentation, ignorance of the EU rules by the private service providers, illegitimate charging of fees.

## Suggestions from ECAS

- Member States should put in place an effective, harmonised and efficient system of complaints against refusals to issue visas;
- Establish a supervisory body to oversee the work of visa service providers and ensure correct application of the EU rules.



## Social security: health care, sickness or maternity

EU citizens experience issues with recognition and coverage of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

They also have difficulties in obtaining the S1 form (entitling them and their dependents to health care), when moving to another Member State.

## Suggestions from ECAS

- There needs to be a raise of awareness on patients' rights to reimbursement (independently of possession of an EHIC) for cross-border health care to ensure that everyone who needs care knows his/her options.



## Entry: travel documents for EU nationals

Obstacles arise when EU citizens residing abroad need to renew or obtain new national identity documents and are not able to do so easily or within a reasonably short timeframe.

Other challenges arise due to the fact that authorisation to leave the country is not harmonised within the EU & there are no EU rules on airline travel procedures for unaccompanied minors.

## Suggestions from ECAS

- All consulates should provide their nationals with the opportunity to request ID documents via the Consulate.
- Authorisation to leave the country and airline travel procedures for unaccompanied minors should be harmonised at the European level.