

I wanted to give you an update on British in Europe, which is not a member org, but rather the European-level association defending the rights of UK nationals living in the EU and EEA member states and Switzerland, of which British in France was a founder member, represented by me, in 2017. British in Europe is a French-registered *association loi 1901* and its members are physical persons representing organisations like the BCC or at least people with an interest in defending the rights of UK nationals living in Europe.

Alongside the BCC, back in 2017, there were other founder members in other member states, including Spain, Italy, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, which led to the setting up in those countries, and in other member states, of national organisations, most of which took names on the model of British in France, e.g. British in Germany, British in Denmark, British in Italy, etc.

Now, following British in Europe's lobbying work on the Withdrawal Agreement, voting rights, university home fees and the like, British in Europe has become the only civil society organisation recognised by the EU and the UK as representing UK WA beneficiaries in Europe, and which is regularly invited to attend meetings, in an observer capacity, of the **Specialised Committee on Citizens Rights**, now that's an important sub-committee of the Joint Committee on the Withdrawal Agreement, which is co-chaired by officials from the EU Commission and the UK Cabinet Office.

On the ground, what British in Europe is trying to do now, is to make its network of UK nationals in EU member states a physical reality, rather than just being a virtual network. At the moment it is doing that by bringing together as many country representatives as possible to meetings in central locations – last year Brussels and Berlin, and this year Athens – with travel and legal expenses paid for by a grant from the European Commission. Because although we UK nationals lost our EU citizenship because of Brexit, we still live here, and the EU has a Charter on Fundamental Rights, which applies to us *because we are EU residents*.

Among the various things the Charter does, it intersects with the rights of UK beneficiaries of the WA in the EU, and the EU is therefore interested in how the Charter can support WA implementation. British in Europe's current 2024-2025 project, under the EU grant, also monitors the **implementation of free movement rights for UK/EU dual citizens**, as well as the question of **multiple statuses** under EU third-country-national long-term residence policies, and other relevant policies and national immigration laws.

Lastly, looking forward to the period 2026 to 2028, British in Europe is about to apply to the EU for a 3-year framework partnership agreement, which would make it possible to continue to grow the physical network of UK nationals in EU and EEA member states and Switzerland. The application is about to be submitted and British in Europe is putting up representatives from 15 member states, but is still open to accepting new volunteers, especially from France.

Volunteers would have to sign up to the following:

- Commit to the project until at least the end of 2026 (and possibly to 2028 if they are willing to do so).
- Be willing to do a minimum amount of work related to the project every month as a volunteer (for the current 2024-2025 it is around an hour a week) and sign a declaration to that effect. This could be any work related to what they already do on citizens' rights and the WA, or it could be attending a webinar on one of the topics of the project etc.
- Attend a minimum of one meeting in person per year or participate in any events and meetings remotely (but attendance at the kick off meeting in person in Q1 2026 would be important).

Claire Godfrey, our regional rep for South West France, has already indicated her willingness to sign up as a volunteer, but more volunteers from France would be very welcome, as long as they identify themselves in the next couple of days, so that they can be mentioned in the application for the 3-year framework partnership agreement, which must go in by Monday 27th.