

## Project

### Right to Citizenship: The Problem, Principle and Politics of a New Law

Citizenship is essential for living a democratic life. To be a citizen means that one holds certain rights which enable one to participate as an equal in the governing of society. Yet, today many democratic countries witness people in their midst who lack full citizenship status. A growing number of migrants, refugees and stateless persons live under laws over which they have no democratic say. This condition does not only make them vulnerable to domination. The problem is that their exclusion from the political domain runs the risk of affecting the self-understanding of both citizens and non-citizens in a way that is detrimental to the preservation of a democratic society. In response to this problem, scholars, practitioners and activists have begun to make appeal to a new right: the right to citizenship. The right to citizenship does not refer to a civil, political or social right, but to the more fundamental right of human beings to belong to an organized community, and count as a citizen among others. Still, while the right to citizenship frequently is invoked to criticize practices of political exclusion, its status as a right is to date unclear. Its legitimacy is captured neither by national or international law. The purpose of this project is to examine the basis of the right to citizenship. More specifically, it has three aims: a) to examine the problem involved in identifying its status, b) to reconstruct the principle behind the right, and c) to apply the result of the previous two studies on Swedish law, and ask how it must be reformed in order to enable a legitimate politics on the distribution of citizenship.

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