Reconsidering EU's Citizenship: An Initial Thinking on Applying Aristotle's Concept of Citizenship to the European Union's Immigration Crisis

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Abstract

The persistent issue of European civil rights concerning immigrants is rooted in the crisis generated by the migration and displacement of Syrian refugees. The prevailing body of literature in international relations predominantly adopts a Westphalian perspective and explanatory framework, thereby imposing limitations on the development of EU immigration policies in the present and future. This paper argues for a transformative shift in the understanding of immigrants through an examination of European Union law and Aristotle's writings in Politics, employing a method of textual interpretation. The analysis primarily centers on the concepts of citizenship and the criteria that define it. The investigation reveals that Article 20(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of

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the European Union establishes a constraint on European citizenship, contingent upon the citizenship of member states. In light of this, the paper suggests that by embracing Aristotle's definition of citizenship as outlined in Politics, Volume III, which emphasizes legislative and political participation, a preliminary framework for the governance of this supranational organization can be established. Consequently, the European Union would be better positioned to fulfill its objectives and uphold its core values, while effectively addressing conflicts arising from the comparative rights of immigrants and citizens of member states.

Keywords: EU, Aristotle, refugee, citizenship**.**

Introduction

An influx of migrants fleeing the Syrian civil war entered the European Union between 2015 and 2016. This significant movement of people not only posed administrative challenges within the European Union's administrative structure but also presented a profound test to the fundamental principles of human rights, human security, self-determination, and the belief base of member states. Referred to as the " Refugee Crisis," this situation confronted the delicate relationship between member states and the European Union, as well as the EU's connection with its populace.

While some advocate for the European Union to open its doors to migrants seeking refuge from places of suffering, others, including German leaders such as Angela Merkel, argue in favor of granting each member state the autonomy to decide whether to open or close their borders to immigration. This differing stance, exemplified by Hungarian leader Viktor Orbán, raises questions about the European Union's commitment to its ideal role as a global leader in human rights. It prompts speculation about whether the EU may be assuming a guise contrary to its proclaimed values (Lavenex, 2018; Owen, 2019; Thielemann, 2018).

The resulting chaos within the European Union, stemming from the migrant crisis, stems from the intricate relationship between the EU and the populations of its member states. The EU has established the concept of European citizenship, affording citizens certain rights and obligations, including the freedom to move across member states' territories and the establishment of a unified process for the entry of third-country nationals and other foreigners (Lavenex, 2018). Furthermore, as an autonomous institution distinct from its member states, the European Union relies on the financial contributions, personnel, and infrastructure of its constituent nations. Consequently, budgetary concerns have implications for the citizens of each state, as the funds allocated to the EU originate from the taxation of individuals within those states. This

misalignment between EU operational guidelines in various domains and the expectations of tax-paying citizens can lead to a perception that EU policies do not directly benefit them, unlike their respective national governments' public policies.

Given these circumstances, the very existence of the European Union, with its humanistic ideals, inevitably engenders complexities. The extensive efforts to raise awareness among citizens of the European Union have not yielded the anticipated results (Rhode-Liebenau, 2020). Brussels' implementation of various policies frequently faces scrutiny regarding their efficacy and the extent to which they serve the best interests of member states. When coupled with the challenges posed by the migration crisis, the relationship between the European Union, its citizens, and national governments encounters dilemmas, resulting in a protracted problem-solving process.

This article aims to recalibrate the European Union's approach to the migrant crisis, departing from the prevailing focus on the EU's relationship with immigrants, which mirrors the dynamics between a Westphalian state and its population. In this traditional paradigm, citizenship is conferred by the state, and citizens' rights are derived from that relationship. However, within the European Union, citizenship is tethered to the nationality held by individuals from member states. This

framework imposes limitations on policies or guidelines based on humanistic ideals, particularly in cases where EU operations involve non-citizens residing within member states. For example, the acceptance of immigrants into EU territory, utilizing resources mobilized from other member states, requires the immigrant to acquire citizenship from one of the member states to obtain EU citizenship. This process is often hindered by member states and their citizens who view the benefits of immigration as a rational choice that necessitates stringent considerations.

To address this predicament, this article proposes a reevaluation of the definition of European citizenship beyond the confines of state affiliation. Drawing inspiration from Aristotle's Politics, which explores the intricate interplay between citizens and their cities, this article seeks to redefine European citizenship in the context of the European Union, a unique political entity that transcends the traditional Westphalian framework. Aristotle's understanding of citizenship differs from the contemporary 21st-century notion, and his insights provide a valuable perspective for reimagining the concept within the EU context.

The article proceeds by delving into Aristotle's concept of citizenship as elucidated in his Political writings, with a particular focus on volume three. Aristotle's objective was to formulate a comprehensive definition of citizenship that could encompass various political regimes.

Subsequently, the discussion shifts to an examination of EU treaties and laws that inform the contemporary understanding of European citizenship. By tracing the origins of the EU's definition of citizenship, we gain insights into its current framework and its potential limitations.

Finally, the article endeavors to apply Aristotle's conception of citizenship to the European Union's definition of citizenship, acknowledging the EU's distinctive characteristics as a political community. Given its flexible nature, the EU has the potential to accommodate Aristotle's definition and offer a novel approach to addressing the ongoing immigration crisis. By redefining European citizenship beyond mere state affiliation, the EU can adopt a more inclusive and adaptable framework that fosters cohesion, upholds humanistic principles, and navigates the complexities posed by the migration crisis.

In summary, this article aims to provoke a shift in the European Union's perspective on the migrant crisis. By reassessing the definition of European citizenship through the lens of Aristotle's political thought, it proposes a reconfiguration of the EU's understanding of citizenship beyond the confines of state status. Such a redefinition has the potential to offer innovative solutions to the current immigration crisis and enable the European Union to reconcile its humanistic ideals with the complexities of contemporary migration dynamics.

The concept of citizenship in Aristotle's Politic, volume Three

This section presents a discussion of Aristotle's concept of citizenship as expounded in Politics. The authors aim to emphasize the significance of civic matters to the regime and the notion of individuals residing in diverse political communities. Aristotle posed two crucial questions concerning citizenship: who qualifies as a citizen, and in what ways are good citizens similar to good human beings? This paper focuses on Aristotle's initial question regarding the definition of citizenship and its relevance to the issue of immigrant status in the European Union.

After exploring the concept of the regime/ politeia in Politics volume two, Aristotle proceeds in volume three to establish the foundations of the political community, as elucidated by St. Thomas Aquinas in his "Commentary on Aristotle's Politics." Citizenship, according to Aristotle, constitutes his endeavor to explicate the most fundamental aspect of governments (Aquinas, 2007, 181) . Aristotle conveys the following passage:

> "... and a constitution is a form of organization of the inhabitants of a state. But as state is a composite thing, in the same sense as any other of the things that are wholes but consist of many parts; it is therefore clear that we must first inquire into the nature of a citizen; for a

state is a collection of citizens, so that we have to
consider who is entitled to the name of citizen." (Aristotle,
1944, 173)

Determining who qualifies as Aristotle's citizens entails identifying
characteristics that facilitate discussions in cities with different forms of
governance (in the absolute sense). This is because, as Aristotle notes,
"people do not all agree that the same person is a citizen; often somebody
who would be a citizen in a democracy is not a citizen under an oligarchy"
(Aristotle, 1944, 173). Before delving into the issue of citizenship, Aristotle
mentions three common perceptions prevalent at that time: consideration
of residence, involvement in the process of judgment, and age criteria. He
states:

"We need not here consider those who acquire the title
of citizen in some exceptional manner, for example those
who are citizens by adoption; and citizenship is not
constituted by domicile in a certain place (for resident
aliens and slaves share the domicile of citizens), nor are
those citizens who participate in a common system of
justice, conferring the right to defend an action and to
bring one in the law-courts (for this right belongs also to
the parties under a commercial treaty, as they too can

sue and be sued at law,—or rather, in many places even the right of legal action is not shared completely by resident aliens, but they are obliged to produce a patron, so that they only share in a common legal procedure to an incomplete degree), but these are only citizens in the manner in which children who are as yet too young to have been enrolled in the list and old men who have been discharged a must be pronounced to be citizens in a sense, yet not quite absolutely, but with the added qualification of 'under age' in the case of the former and 'super-annuated' or some other similar term (it makes no difference, the meaning being clear) in that of the latter." (Aristotle, 1944, 173, 175)

It is important to note that Aristotle's statements above do not provide a complete definition of a citizen, as there are exceptions to each definition. Of particular interest is the third aspect, which pertains to the age criteria in defining citizens. On one hand, this definition encompasses all forms of government, asserting that individuals are fit for public action when they possess both a complete body and mind. On the other hand, it seems to be the definition employed by the city of Athens, where Aristotle primarily resided (Chaiyan Chaiyaporn, 2008, 2009). This aspect

led Aristotle to his definition of citizenship: "A citizen pure and simple is defined by nothing else so much as by the right to participate in judicial functions and in office" (Aristotle, 1944, 175).

However, Aristotle also acknowledges the problem inherent in this definition, as it appears biased towards citizens possessing the right to engage in public works in democratic cities. Nevertheless, cities with other forms of governance can also utilize this definition, as Aristotle indicates in the subsequent passage. Although certain regimes lack councils and court systems that enable members of the political community to fulfill their duties and thereby acquire citizenship, it must be noted that those occupying positions in the judiciary and city administration can be replaced. There are fixed terms of office and consultation with the rest of the city. Consequently, citizens are not merely those who currently hold positions but rather those who possess the right to engage in public affairs on both the judicial and administrative fronts of the city (Aristotle, 1944, 179; Aquinas, 2007, 184; Miller, Jr., 1996). Regarding the question of the number of citizens in these regimes, Aristotle refers to the notion of self-sufficiency introduced in Politics volume one. This concept implies that the number of citizens in a city depends on whether the city can sustain itself with an adequate number of individuals engaged in public work on both fronts (Collins, 2006, 120-121; Everson, 1988; Barnes, 2000, 128-129).

Based on the aforementioned points, when considering Aristotle's general definition, the authors must connect his idea of citizenship to the issue of immigration in the European Union, as it pertains to the acquisition of citizen rights. Initially, Aristotle argues for civil rights based on birth by highlighting that if citizenship were solely linked to ancestral ties, the question of citizenship in a revolutionary city would remain unresolved. Even if the people living in that city were the same, that city would not be entirely identical (Aristotle, 1944, 185). Thus, the inheritance of citizenship through descendants does not persist in such circumstances.

So how does citizenship come into being? Although Aristotle does not directly address this question, his political works imply that citizenship arises from the relationship between the population and the city or regime, wherein citizenship is granted to those residing in the city. Hence, the origin of citizens is determined by the relationship between individuals and the city (Frank, 2004, 91-104), and one becomes a citizen when one acts as a citizen (Winthrop, 1975). This entails performing public duties within the judiciary and city administration. Aristotle playfully phrases this idea as "citizen is a citizen in being a citizen" (Winthrop, 1975 cited in Frank, 2014, 93).

Interpreting the aforementioned points leads to the assertion that members of the political community attain citizenship when they actively

participate in the public affairs of a specific political community. However, following Aristotle's approach to public engagement also necessitates considering the issue of 'citizenship,' which encompasses citizens who do not hold office (Bradley, 1995, 35). Craftsmen exemplify this group, and Aristotle states:

> "While if even the artisan is a citizen, then what we said to be the citizen's virtue must not be said to belong to every citizen, nor merely be defined as the virtue of a free man, but will only belong to those who are released from menial occupations." (Aristotle, 1944, 197)

Aristotle mentions this because certain cities grant citizenship to individuals engaged in manual labor or occupations dependent on masters. Although this group possesses citizenship, they are not considered full citizens since they lack access to holding office. Thus, full citizenship implies engaging in public affairs within the courts and city administration (ruling). Aristotle also expands the concept of 'citizenship' to include 'being ruled' (Johnson, 1984). A good citizen is not only one who actively governs the city but also one who is well-governed.

Subordinates may not serve as custodians or adjudicate lawsuits, but they participate in consultations (deliberative) to guide the political community towards achieving the ultimate human goal (telos), which is to

lead a good life. At this juncture, citizenship and the city are inseparable, with each being an integral part of the other. Existing within the city becomes a necessity for every human being (Kraut, 2007) . These arguments yield two significant conclusions regarding Aristotle's conception of citizenship. First, citizens form the foundation of every political community. The existence of a political community relies on citizens adequately fulfilling public duties. Second, the definition of a citizen lacks definitive criteria; it depends on the regime in which an individual resides (Chayanin Nunsindhu, 2010, 40-41).

The consideration of citizenship in Western political philosophy has inherited ideas from Cicero, Lipsius, and Thomas Hobbes (Burchell, 2002). These thinkers distinguished between 'active' and 'passive' citizens. Hence, Aristotle's definition of citizenship pertains to the active engagement of individuals within the political community and encompasses citizens who fulfill their duties but may delegate or transfer those duties to more vigilant citizens (Stuurman, 2019).

The conclusions drawn from Aristotle's two concepts of citizenship provide an opportunity for the authors to examine the current status of immigrants in the European Union. While the notion of citizenship in the 21st century differs from its ancient BC counterparts, its civic aspect,

tied to the modern post-Westphalian state, may not accurately describe this type of political community, as discussed in the subsequent section.

Immigrants and Citizens: Considerations from EU Treaties and International Law

As indicated in the initial section of the report, the European Union (EU) is confronted with the issue of migrant movements from the Middle East, particularly Syria, as a consequence of the prolonged political conflict that commenced in the early 2010s. This situation has resulted in the highest level of population mobility in the EU since World War II. To comprehend the conceptualization of migrant citizens and EU citizens, it is essential to examine immigration issues within the existing legal and political structures.

The EU has established a legal framework concerning immigration and migration, known as the "Global Approach to Migration," which was introduced in 2005 and subsequently evolved into the more comprehensive "Global Approach to Migration and Mobility" in 2011 (European Commission, 2011). Initially designed to address population mobility comprehensively, this document aimed to consolidate legal and policy entities under a unified administrative framework. However, the

development of this general legal framework occurred prior to the 2015-2016 immigration crisis, which imposed a burden on member states. Consequently, in 2016, the EU's policy and operational systems regarding immigration acceptance were reassessed (European Commission, "Common European Asylum System").

In addition to the general legal framework, the issue of immigrants is also reflected in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) , specifically in Section 7 9 [1], which prioritizes EU agencies in

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[1] *Treaty on the Functioning of the European*

Article 79

1. The Union shall develop a common immigration policy aimed at ensuring, at all stages, the efficient management of migration flows, fair treatment of third-country nationals residing legally in Member States, and the prevention of, and enhanced measures to combat, illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings.

2. For the purposes of paragraph 1, the European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, shall adopt measures in the following areas:

    a. the conditions of entry and residence, and standards on the issue by Member States of long-term visas and residence permits, including those for the purpose of family reunification;

    b. the definition of the rights of third-country nationals residing legally in a Member State, including the conditions governing freedom of movement and of residence in other Member States;

processing and handling immigrant- related matters. Furthermore, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, specifically in Section 15(3) and Section 45(2) [2], outlines the rights of non-EU citizens to live, travel, and work within the EU.

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    c.   illegal immigration and unauthorised residence, including removal and repatriation of persons residing without authorisation;

    d.   combating trafficking in persons, in particular women and children.

3. The Union may conclude agreements with third countries for the readmission to their countries of origin or provenance of third-country nationals who do not or who no longer fulfil the conditions for entry, presence or residence in the territory of one of the Member States.

4. The European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, may establish measures to provide incentives and support for the action of Member States with a view to promoting the integration of third-country nationals residing legally in their territories, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States.

5. This Article shall not affect the right of Member States to determine volumes of admission of third-country nationals coming from third countries to their territory in order to seek work, whether employed or self-employed.

[2] *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union* (Official Journal of the European Union, 2012, 398, 404)
Article 15 Freedom to choose an occupation and right to engage in work

The consideration of immigrant-related issues from both legal frameworks sheds light on the EU's perspective regarding individuals who do not hold the citizenship of member states. Consequently, nationality has become a crucial determinant of EU citizenship, linking this status to the sovereignty of the Westphalian state. On one hand, this approach reaffirms the nature of the post-World War II political community and emphasizes the principle of the right to self-determination of the state. However, the authorization of certain powers by EU member states to a supranational entity does not automatically confer EU citizenship, but

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1. Everyone has the right to engage in work and to pursue a freely chosen or accepted occupation.

2. Every citizen of the Union has the freedom to seek employment, to work, to exercise the right of establishment and to provide services in any Member State.

3. Nationals of third countries who are authorised to work in the territories of the Member States are entitled to working conditions equivalent to those of citizens of the Union.

Article 45 Freedom of movement and of residence

1. Every citizen of the Union has the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States.

2. Freedom of movement and residence may be granted, in accordance with the Treaties, to nationals of third countries legally resident in the territory of a Member State.

rather establishes an additional layer of citizenship without replacing national citizenship. The definition of EU citizens is outlined in Section 20(1) of the TFEU as follows:

> "Citizenship of the Union is hereby established. Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall be additional to and not replace national citizenship."

Consequently, EU citizenship is contingent upon the citizenship of member states. According to the written law, an immigrant entering the EU can acquire citizenship when granted by a member state. However, this issue has led to challenges within the Union. When immigration rules are restricted by quotas, each state must accept immigrants based on factors such as economic development and unemployment rates. As a result, conflicts have arisen among member states, particularly between frontier countries like Greece and the Balkans, which already face challenges such as sovereign debt crises or a lower economic status compared to neighboring countries like Austria and Germany. These conflicts have contributed to Brexit and unrest within the EU as a whole.

This section highlights the legal provisions within EU treaties that confine the definition of citizenship within the framework of the Westphalian state. The nature of the modern state's political community inherently presents limitations when confronted with transnational issues such as the movement of Syrian refugees. Moreover, the EU's political community is founded on fundamental ideologies regarding human rights and human security, which compels the Union to grapple with this burden. Exploring the issue of immigrants through the lens of citizen definitions may offer a potential solution for the EU, considering that the EU regime and its member states are not entirely based on the same ideology. Although the EU emerged from the integration of Westphalian- style member states with distinct geographical territories, its political sphere is not limited by geographical factors. The EU has the capacity to admit additional members even if the state is not located on the continent, as exemplified by Israel's expressed interest in joining. Consequently, the EU regime's definition of citizenship can also exhibit flexibility to accommodate these dynamics.

Immigrant Citizenship in the EU: Aristotle's Politics Considerations

The authors engage in a comprehensive discussion regarding the limitations of the EU citizen definition. Specifically, they shed light on the

inherent restriction outlined in Article 20(1) of the Treaty on the Operation of the European Union, which circumscribes Union citizenship within the framework of member state citizenship. According to this provision, individuals seeking EU citizenship must first acquire citizenship in a member state. This condition presents significant challenges for the EU's management of immigration matters, as the Council and Parliament, the Union's executive bodies, are compelled to distribute the number of immigrants in accordance with the economic capacities of member states.

In order to address the question of whether immigrants can acquire EU citizenship without being initially bound by member state prerequisites, it is essential to delve into the complexities of citizenship issues within the contemporary political context. This analysis can be approached from two distinct perspectives. First, the authors examine the historical transition from birthright- based citizenship to the current emphasis on nationality. Under international law, individuals are deemed citizens if they possess nationality conferred by a sovereign state. Second, the authors explore a definition of citizenship that aligns closely with Aristotle's conception in Politics. According to this viewpoint, citizenship entails the right to engage in political activities, such as voting and political participation, thereby embodying the essence of a model citizen.

By framing citizenship in terms of nationality, modern regimes have been able to extend political rights to previously marginalized groups, including people of color, women, and even animals, as elucidated in Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka's influential work, "Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights" (Hinchcliffe, 2 0 1 5) . However, this conceptualization of citizenship exhibits a significant weakness as it hinges on the state as the sole arbiter and bestower of citizenship (Kukathas, 1997).

The second perspective on citizenship centers around the notion of contributing to public works. Contemporary public works encompass more than governmental agencies responsible for policy formulation and administration. They encompass a range of activities such as military service, jury duty, and tax payment (Isin & Turner, 2 0 0 7 ; Smith, 2 0 0 2). Fulfilling these duties signifies an individual's status as a citizen of the state. This understanding of citizenship is intrinsically tied to demographic factors such as age and gender, with conscription often being limited to adult males, although certain states like Israel mandate conscription for all citizens. Additionally, tax payment serves as a determinant of citizenship, as it reflects an individual's income reaching the taxable threshold. Moreover, this perspective unavoidably associates citizenship with a person's birth, as individuals retain their membership in the political

community, certified by state registration, even if they are unable to fulfill certain public duties due to age or other factors. Consequently, the state remains an indispensable institution for acquiring citizenship under this definition.

In contemporary state-based political communities, both perspectives on citizenship coexist, with the state continuing to serve as a crucial reference point for citizens, shaping their rights and responsibilities (Hindess, 1998). Nevertheless, defining citizenship with respect to immigrant status or statelessness poses particular challenges, as these individuals may not be acknowledged as fully human in certain situations, as argued by Hannah Arendt (Balibar, 1988; Macklin, 2007). While the first perspective seeks to maximize citizens' rights, its application to immigrants is not straightforward, given that acceptance by the state remains the prerequisite for citizenship. Consequently, an alternative definition of citizenship is required to address the question of whether immigrants can attain EU citizenship without initially being bound by member state requirements.

The authors propose an experimental definition of citizenship rooted in Aristotle's Politics, which posits an inseparable link between citizenship and governance. According to this perspective, the existence of one necessitates the existence of the other. Although the European Union

emerges through the integration of member states that recognize and grant status to Union institutions, its formation is not solely a result of state-to-state interactions. Supranational organizations, such as those within the EU framework, involve citizens from member states as well (Natthanan Kunnamas, 2012). By defining citizenship based on the political rights individuals exercise vis-à-vis the state, such as through elections, citizens of member states express their political agency on two levels. They elect representatives at the national level based on their nationality, and they select representatives to represent them in the European Parliament. In this way, individuals can possess EU citizenship without necessarily relying on their nationality (Schaffer, 2019).

Furthermore, in terms of the EU's approach to welcoming or restricting migrants fleeing conflicts in the Middle East, the Union acknowledges the status and existence of this particular group. By allowing them to enter EU territory and providing various forms of assistance, including the potential expansion of human rights considerations, the EU effectively confers a form of citizenship upon immigrants (Oberman, 2017). International law and treaties pertaining to human rights and the mobility of persons recognize the humanity of immigrants and stateless individuals, emphasizing their status beyond citizenship of any specific state (Ignatieff, 1987).

Therefore, upon revisiting Aristotle's Politics and contemplating the definition of a citizen as "one who has the right to participate in judicial functions and in office" (Aristotle, 1944, 175), the authors underscore the significance of participatory rights. Aristotle rejected the notion of birthrights being inherited solely from citizen parents or indigenous inhabitants without alignment with the state's prestige. He likened such individuals to "alien settlers without honor," as expressed through Homer's words (Aristotle, 1944, 199). Consequently, the right to participate in judicial and administrative proceedings should not solely derive from city guarantees or the state itself. Instead, it should be a collective endeavor aimed at the realization of complete humanity.

Applying the principle of citizenship based on the Westphalian state to the EU's acceptance of migrants would lead to immediate chaos (Orgad, 2019). However, by returning to Aristotle's definition of citizens, which seeks to achieve the good of human beings, it can be inferred that a small percentage of immigrants, along with their assets, may become EU citizens. By participating in the administration and deliberation of the European Union, they can contribute to the ultimate goal of humanity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the examination of the limitations of EU citizenship and the potential for immigrants to acquire it without initial restrictions highlights the multifaceted nature of citizenship in the contemporary political landscape. The EU's definition of citizenship, constrained by Article 20(1) of the Treaty on the Operation of the European Union, currently ties Union citizenship to membership in a specific state. This requirement poses challenges in managing immigration within the EU, as immigrants must first obtain citizenship in member states before being eligible for EU citizenship. Consequently, the allocation of immigrants is based on member states' economic capacities, which can impede a unified and equitable approach to immigration.

Analyzing citizenship from two perspectives reveals significant aspects of its conceptualization. The traditional view, rooted in birthright and nationality, grants citizenship through the recognition of a sovereign state. While this approach has enabled the extension of political rights to previously marginalized groups, it is limited by its dependence on state approval, making it a vulnerable aspect of citizenship. On the other hand, a more contemporary perspective, drawing inspiration from Aristotle's idea of a "perfect citizen" who actively participates in political activities, emphasizes the individual's contribution to public works and their

engagement in civic duties. Although this perspective also connects citizenship with birth and state registration, it recognizes the importance of the state as a fundamental institution for citizenship.

The acceptance of migrants by the EU and the potential for them to acquire EU citizenship demonstrate the acknowledgement of their existence and rights. By opening its doors to these individuals and providing assistance in various areas, including human security and potentially extending to human rights issues, the EU implicitly grants a form of citizenship to immigrants. This recognition aligns with international law and treaties that emphasize the protection of immigrants and stateless persons as human beings, irrespective of their citizenship in a particular state.

This complexity and dynamics of EU citizenship necessitate a reevaluation of existing definitions and the exploration of alternative approaches that reflect contemporary political, social, and human rights considerations. By embracing a broader understanding of citizenship that transcends mere nationality, the EU can foster a more inclusive and participatory society. Such an approach would allow immigrants to contribute to the EU's goals and aspirations while advancing the principles of equality, human rights, and collective prosperity. Through this evolution, the EU can strive towards the fulfillment of its vision for a

unified and diverse community of individuals who are recognized as equal members of the political and social fabric of Europe.

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