

Which specific aspects of the ILEC project is your research covering?

The ILEC project is a very interesting and important project. It is funded by the European Union, which indicates the Union's interest in questions related to involuntary loss of European citizenship. This is a contested question because the legal competence of the EU in this matter is far from obvious. Questions related to loss of nationality are still very much arranged by the member states legislations. However, EU citizenship is derivative of member states' nationality and therefore it is very important that we also study and analyze how member states actually attribute and withdraw nationality to individuals.

I am interested in the comparative aspect of the ILEC project. In particular my research in the project covers two specific aspects: first of all, what are precisely the different ways in which member states regulate the involuntary loss of nationality? We see actually that there is a lot of variation both in terms of the grounds for loss, so there are many ways in which you can lose your nationality and therefore your European Union citizenship. Which kind of grounds exist across EU Member States as regards loss of nationality and EU citizenship? What are the different procedural safeguards and guarantees in place to make sure that if someone loses her/his nationality and therefore European citizenship, which is actually done in line with the relevant safeguards? Secondly, my research has looked at the statistics. In particular, what do we know about how many people lose their member state nationality and therefore also how many people lose their European Union citizenship?

Are there already any preliminary research results which you would underline?

We have collected a lot of data. There is a wealth of information regarding the two aspects that I have previously mentioned. Our preliminary assumption has been confirmed and exceeded: because loss of nationality remains a national competence in the EU there is a very high degree of difference as regards grounds of loss and procedural guarantees across the Union. There is a huge variation in what concerns grounds of loss of nationality in EU Member States. In what concerns statistical knowledge, we see that there is very little information publicly available. This was something that we had already anticipated in the ILEC project because this is not something that it is regulated very strictly at the European level, although the European Union actually has a regulation in place on this collection of statistics on migration data. We see that the statistics on the loss of nationality are much less complete than the statistics on the acquisition of citizenship. So we know actually quite a lot about the statistics on the acquisition of nationality but much less on the statistics on the loss of the nationality. This is worrying as it is fundamental to know more not only as regards the differences in the rules but also what the differences in practice when comparing EU Member States are. How many people actually do lose member state nationality on the basis of all these different grounds? In the ILEC project we will collect all the relevant information that is available and will signal the gaps in the available data and the difficulties that we encounter to collect the statistics on these issues.