

## Protection against statelessness database: brief explanation of methodology

Olivier Vonk and Maarten Vink

*This document provides a brief explanation of the comparative typology and data sources that were used to build the 'protection against statelessness' database, which was launched in 2012 by, then EUDO Citizenship, in collaboration with UNHCR. The document refers to the successor of EUDO Citizenship: the Global Citizenship Observatory (GLOBALCIT) and provides updated hyperlinks to reflect the website migration from [www.eudo-citizenship.eu](http://www.eudo-citizenship.eu) to [www.globalcit.eu](http://www.globalcit.eu) in 2018.*

### *A comparative typology*

The typology of modes of protection against statelessness is an analytical grid that outlines, in a systematic way, categories of persons that are at risk of being or becoming stateless and outlines, with reference to the most important international standards, the obligation of states with regard to national law on the acquisition and loss of citizenship. The typology of modes of protection against statelessness follows the logic of a more general typology on modes of acquisition of citizenship (<http://globalcit.eu/acquisition-citizenship/>) and modes of loss of citizenship (<http://globalcit.eu/loss-of-citizenship/>), as developed by the Global Citizenship Observatory.

The typology draws mainly, but not exclusively, on four major international conventions: the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child. A comprehensive list of relevant international norms is provided in the typology in the column 'International standards'. To determine the relevant standards under international law, the analysis not only refers to norms from international conventions, but also to norms from regional instruments that contain stricter rules with regard to protection against statelessness. In Europe, specifically the European Convention on Nationality is relevant. These international and regional norms are further operationalized for each respective mode of protection against statelessness (see the column 'Assessment categories' for each of the 17 tables).

The typology does not cover norms, which despite their strong normative value do not impose a concrete obligation on states. (For example, Art. 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Art. 29(1) of the Arab Charter on Human Rights provide that every person has the right to a citizenship, but do not impose a concrete obligation on states.)

### *Database: sources*

In order to develop the 'Protection against statelessness database' for 35 European countries, we have primarily relied on two sources. First, the Nationality Acts as available on the Global Citizenship website. The English translations of these acts generally fall into three categories: (1) translations commissioned by Global Citizenship; (2) translations available at Refworld (the website of UNHCR); and (3) translations available at legislationonline.org and the Council of Europe, among others.

Secondly, we make use of the already condensed information on national laws available in the Global Citizenship comparative databases on modes of acquisition of citizenship (<http://globalcit.eu/acquisition-citizenship/>) and on modes of loss of citizenship (<http://globalcit.eu/loss-of-citizenship/>). In particular, we draw on information from the following GLOBALCIT modes: A01, A03b, A03a, A22, A23, L01, L02, L03, L04, L07, L08, L09, L11, L12 and L13.

Thirdly, in addition to the wider literature on statelessness, we use three recent comparative studies on citizenship law, which are particularly relevant for the assessment of protection against statelessness:

G.R. de Groot (2011). Background Paper Preventing Statelessness among Children: Interpreting Articles 1-4 of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and Relevant International Human Rights Norms. Geneva: [UNHCR](#).

Vink, M. and G.R. de Groot (2010). Birthright Citizenship: Trends and Regulations in Europe. Comparative Report RSCAS/EUDO-CIT-Comp. 2010/8. Florence: EUDO Citizenship Observatory, pp. 35, <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/19578>.

De Groot, G.R. and M. Vink (2010). Loss of Citizenship: Trends and Regulations in Europe. Comparative Report RSCAS/EUDO-CIT-Comp. 2010/4. Florence: EUDO Citizenship Observatory, pp. 52, <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/19575>.

With regard to the time frame, the current database covers regulations in force on 1 May 2012. While in the long run we aim to make the database more dynamic by covering regulations on the protection against statelessness since the 1980s, the current database is static and only covers the most recent situation.

For further reading, about the comparative typology and main findings based on the information from the database:

Vonk, O., M.P. Vink and G.R. de Groot (2014). Benchmarking the Protection against Statelessness in Europe: Comparative Findings. [Tilburg Law Review](#) 19 (2014) 292-299.

Vonk, O.W., C. Dumbrava, M.P. Vink and G.R. de Groot (2016). Benchmarking the Protection against Statelessness in Europe. In: L. van Waas and M.J. Khanna, eds, [Solving Statelessness](#) (Oisterwijk: Wolf Publishers), pp. 163-190.