

EU Commission candidate backs call for European NATIONALITY - 'Not a bad idea'

EUROPEAN Commission candidate Violeta Tomic expressed her support for creating a "European nationality", suggesting a European Union-wide policy on nationhood could lead to citizens being more independent.

European Commission Violeta Tomic voiced her support for the concept of a "European nationality" to allow citizens to be independent from an individual country. Nationals of European Union member states are currently granted EU citizenship as part of their countries' membership of the bloc, which grants them the freedom to reside and travel to all countries in the union. Asked whether she would back plans for a new nationality plan free from single country's legal requirements and constraints, Ms Tomic told Euronews: "It is possible, and it's not a bad idea."

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Ms Tomic cited the mass expulsion of 25,000 Bosniak citizenship-holders from the Srebrenica area of Bosnia-Herzegovina during the 1992-1995 Bosnian War as an example supporting proposals for European citizenship.

The Slovenian politician, who is running to replace European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker when he retires in October, appeared to suggest a new nationality policy granting EU nationals the right to claim a form of citizenship independent from individual member states could help protect people at risk of losing their social rights.

She continued: “During the Yugoslavia years, we had nationalities – we had a Serbian nationality and also others, and when it was forced apart it was very important to say which nationality you had.

“Overnight we expelled 25,000 people’s based on nationalities – and that’s what I’m concerned about with the UK now.”

British citizens will lose their European Union citizenship rights once the United Kingdom goes through the final phase of the Brexit process.

Jean-Claude Juncker “would recommend” to EU countries they force voters to take part in the European parliamentary election scheduled for May 23-May 26.

The former Luxembourg Prime minister suggested that government follow in his country’s footsteps and making voting compulsory.

Mr Juncker called on Europeans to stop eurosceptic attempts to undermine the

Brussels project with their votes.

Speaking to German magazine Bunte, Mr Juncker said the decision will be “up to the national governments and parliaments”.

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He added: “Every European who is interested in the future of his continent must go to the polls.

“Every individual is Europe, and should not leave the election to the extremes who want to demand more nationalism and destroy Europe.”

The centre-right European People’s Party (EPP) and centre-left Social & Democrat (S&D) are set to lose its majority for the first time in the upcoming May elections after dominating the EU parliament for 40 years.

A survey commissioned by the parliament, whose projections were on the money in the 2014 election, shows the EPP and centre-left S&D losing 37 seats each and hence the majority.

With Nigel Farage's Brexit Party, Italy's populist ruling League and, at times, France's far-right National Rally topping national opinion rankings, polls show a surge for eurosceptics in the EU elections.

But pro-EU parties could still be able to hold a majority of seats, mainly due to the likely gains of the liberal ALDE group.

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