

World Citizenship

As of yet, World Citizenship is not a recognized legal category widely on the Earth. The phrase “world citizenship,” like all general designations, carries with it a variety of meanings. We have summarized three basic ones for the purposes of this article.

1. World citizenship is a “natural” category for anyone born on planet Earth.

Hence, all people are already world citizens from birth. Many thinkers today are recognizing that our primary “reality” as human beings is that we are one species (*homo sapiens*) who have evolved out of the immense journey of life on the Earth, and have colonized the planet, all of whom have the same fundamental characteristics, basic needs, and basically similar potentialities.

This natural status of human persons is more fundamental than the arbitrary (and conventional) division of human beings into different nationalities, races, religious, cultures, etc. What is more fundamental and more “real” about human beings is that we are all citizens of the Earth. This “natural” world citizenship often overlaps with the moral and legal senses of the term.

2. World citizenship as a “moral” category for all persons on Earth.

The word “citizenship” has the connotations of citizens participating in, and responsible to, a common public good. People recognizing a common public good (e.g. freedom for all, human rights, justice, education, etc.) may volunteer in *pro bono* activities to help the disadvantage, try to protest or change bad laws or unjust social situations, or participate in elections, campaigns, and the social mechanisms set up in many countries for citizen participation.

To call oneself a “world citizen,” therefore, may mean that one is involved with *global issues* such as poverty, climate collapse, war, terrorism, resource scarcity, etc. It means to recognize a common public good for the people of Earth, such as rights to basic necessities, rights to freedom and dignity, or the needs for education, health-care, a protected environment, etc. People in this category of world citizenship may attend the world social forum, belong to groups like Amnesty International, Greenpeace, the Union of Concerned Scientists, or Citizens for Global Solutions. They may do volunteer work for the World Constitution and Parliament Association (WCPA) or some other organization working for democratic world law. They may work to reform the UN, educate the public, protest the policies of the nation-states or UN, etc. “World Citizenship” here takes the form of a choice, or a commitment, in ways that overlap with the “natural” and “legal” definitions of world citizenship.

3. World citizenship as a “legal” category for all persons on Earth.

The first two categories of world citizenship are much more widely recognized and practiced than world citizenship as a legal category. Although some countries have been known to recognize a World Passport as issued, for example, by the World Service Authority (see below), there is little general recognition or even discussion among nations of a legal category of “world citizen.” The assumptions behind the international system of so-called “sovereign nation-states” tends to militate against such recognition. For each nation has its own laws recognizing people born in its territory (and some others legally defined as “dual citizens,” for example) as having the rights and duties of “citizens” (a nation-state legal category) and therefore subject to its laws.

The outstanding exception here is the *Earth Constitution* (the *Constitution for the Federation of Earth*) which recognizes every human being born anywhere on the planet as having the legal rights and duties as a world citizen with an obligation to participate in governing the world through involvement with the World Parliament in one way or another. However, even though the *Constitution* recognizes the universal category of World Citizenship, the *Constitution* itself has not yet been ratified and implemented in the form of an Earth Federation Government. Hence, this legal category at present remains ambivalent. Nevertheless, many thousands of persons from around the planet have signed the Pledge of Allegiance to the *Earth Constitution*. By doing this they have explicitly committed themselves to world citizenship and to obedience to the procedures and processes for world government as outlined in the *Constitution*.

Yet there is another aspect of world citizenship as a legal category articulated by Dr. Glen T. Martin in such works as *One World Renaissance* (IED Press, 2015-16). Martin argues that universal democratic world law is the presupposition of our humanity: embedded in the very concept of humanity as a conscious, social, and language-using reality shared by all persons. Even if the militarized sovereign nation-states (hopelessly fragmented and ignorant of their common humanity) do not yet recognize universal democratic world law with its inherent universal citizenship, this legal presupposition nevertheless is embedded within our common humanity. This presuppositional truth inherent within our common humanity reveals that we are all already legally world citizens under the presuppositional status of world law.

4. Some arrangements for recognizing world citizenship provided by different organizations:

4.1 World Constitution and Parliament Association (WCPA) (www.worldparliament-gov.org) (locations in Virginia, Costa Rica, Chennai, Togo, Bangladesh, etc.). WCPA supports the *Constitution for the Federation of Earth*. Become a signatory, a personal ratifier. Get your group or community to ratify as a group. Under the *Earth Constitution*, all people are already world citizens (in the natural and legal and moral categories). However, since the *Constitution* needs dissemination, support and ratification, people can explicitly sign the *Constitution*. They usually do this by signing the Pledge of Allegiance to the Earth Constitution (found on the websites) and sending it (by surface mail or email) to world headquarters in Virginia.

One can also do volunteer work for the World Constitution and Parliament Association (WCPA) by organizing locally and promoting the Earth Constitution on electronic media. People are working worldwide to promote and support ratification of the *Earth Constitution* and sessions of the Provisional World Parliament. And one can donate to the Institute on World Problems (IOWP) (www.worldproblems.net), a tax-deductible organization in the US that helps educationally support the work of WCPA, the Constitution, and the Parliament. Indeed, to be a voting delegate to the Provisional World Parliament requires that one has signed the Pledge of Allegiance. WCPA invites participation from people in all walks of life around the world. We believe the future of the world depends on ratification of the *Earth Constitution* within the relatively near future. (See also www.radford.edu/gmartin; www.earthfederation.info).

4.1 The World Service Authority (www.worldservice.org) (Vermont and Washington, DC). They have no Constitution for the Earth but look forward to the world someday having a democratic constitution participated in directly by world citizens. They sell world citizen ID cards and passports.

4.2 The World Citizens Registry (www.recim.org/cdm/registry.htm) (Paris). They believe that people identifying themselves as world citizens earn the right to participate in electing representatives to write a Constitution for the Earth and eventually develop democratic world government. They also sell world citizen ID cards and passports.

4.3 The World Philosophical Forum (www.wpf-unesco.org/), (Moscow, Athens). They support the UNESCO effort to educate people to become world citizens. One can take their course and qualify as a world citizen by passing the course. They look forward to a world government run by an elite who most deeply understand global and universal issues. Under their idea of a “Universal Constitution for the Earth,” the majority of humanity, those who have not passed the world citizenship course, will have a minimum of political power and participation.