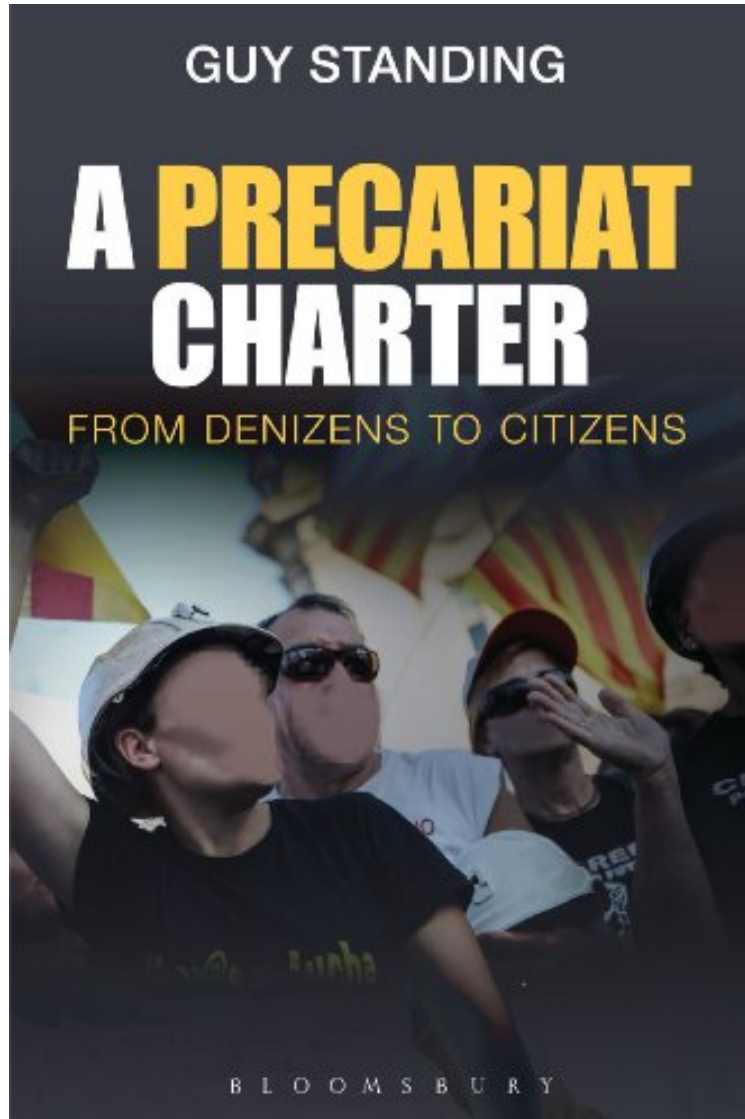


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## A Precariat Charter: From Denizens to Citizens

*Guy Standing*

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**Guy Standing : A Precariat Charter: From Denizens to Citizens** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Precariat Charter: From Denizens to Citizens:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Read this book after, or before, reading PikettyBy Shayn McCallumThis is a very important book. Right now a lot of attention is being directed, quite deservedly, towards Thomas Piketty's "Capital in the Twenty-First Century" but, whereas Piketty's analysis of the problem is strong, his policy recommendations are rather weak. Professor Standing, focusing on the specific issue of the "precariat" (the new class of working poor created by the ruthlessness of neo-liberal assaults on wages, social security and working conditions) offers a number of excellent, practical solutions in his proposed charter for a progressive, more egalitarian

and democratic society. One can only hope that social-democratic policy-makers read and digest the advice offered in this book. Proposals such as a universal basic income, as well as social dividends from sovereign wealth funds, and a number of other eminently reasonable and feasible policy solutions offer much more than Piketty's fairly unconvincing, and limited ideas concerning wealth taxes. For those who are unconvinced or find notions such as guaranteed basic income too radical, I can only urge that you take the trouble to examine Prof. Standing's arguments in detail. It is hard to overestimate the potential effects of even apparently small policy steps taken in a liberatory direction. The combined effect of the measures advocated in this charter would, I believe, indeed be to reestablish citizenship as an active, participatory concept at the heart of social life. The basic principle is that the "citizen", as opposed to "denizen", is an author of society not its mere object and, as such, must be free from servitude to the economic pressures imposed by poverty, want and uncertainty to realise his/her full potential as an individual who is, it must be recognised, inextricably bound to a broader social collective. This book is a recipe for taking the first steps towards freedom from the tyranny of economics and towards a sane society where people come before profits and economic security is a right endowed by citizenship. This is a book of practical, feasible policy solutions relevant for the era we live in, not an exercise in theory. The solutions offered are not perfect, they are not the basis for a utopia and do not claim to be. What they are, however, are a clear set of feasible proposals for a better kind of society. For those of us who want to live in such a "good society", peopled by citizens rather than stressed, insecure and angry denizens in a social climate marked by peace, solidarity and political participation, there is much to thank Professor Standing for in this book. I would urge lecturers in political science, sociology and economics to add it to their reading lists and social-democratic politicians, policy advisors and activists to discuss and work on plans to programme and implement the eminently practical measures it advocates.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Finally! A roadmap.  
By Bill Sams  
There is no shortage of books that describe the problems of today's Capitalism. This is the only book that offers both new terminology to describe the problem and also a reasonably coherent roadmap to its solution.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A MUST READ for anyone concerned about the fate of civilization  
By Greg Daneke  
One of the most important books in recent years.

Guy Standing's immensely influential 2011 book introduced the Precariat as an emerging mass class, characterized by inequality and insecurity. Standing outlined the increasingly global nature of the Precariat as a social phenomenon, especially in the light of the social unrest characterized by the Occupy movements. He outlined the political risks they might pose, and at what might be done to diminish inequality and allow such workers to find a more stable labour identity. His concept and his conclusions have been widely taken up by thinkers from Noam Chomsky to Zygmunt Bauman, by political activists and by policy-makers. This new book takes the debate a stage further, looking in more detail at the kind of progressive politics that might form the vision of a Good Society in which such inequality, and the instability it produces, is reduced. A Precariat Charter discusses how rights - political, civil, social and economic - have been denied to the Precariat, and argues for the importance of redefining our social contract around notions of associational freedom, agency and the commons.

A Precariat Charter is that rare thing: a text from the left that does not yearn for a lost past, but energetically embraces the future. It offers progressive politics a revived purpose: not a surrender to economic practices as if they were forces of nature, but the pursuit of a common security that would enhance our humanity - because, as he puts it, "knowing that your fellow citizen has the same rights as you do humanises us all". -- John Harris *The Guardian*

Standing follows his influential analysis of the precariat as the 'new dangerous class' with a comprehensive list of demands and suggestions for how this class can 'abolish itself' through a struggle for rights, eroded by neo-liberal austerity that has caused widespread existential insecurity. Standing's insightful and encouraging book will be welcomed not only by members of the precariat but equally by non-precarians on the left seeking inspiration for a new progressive programme. Claus Offe, Emeritus Professor of Political Science, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, Germany

In his call for 'social empathy' in politics, Standing offers an important corrective to decades of neoliberalism, while his demand for rethinking of the nature of work rightly seeks to undo centuries of damaging thought on the issue. The Charter offers a series of positive steps towards reshaping society to provide a better life for the vulnerable majority in our societies. Natalie Bennett, Leader of the Green Party of England and Wales

This is an impressive book ... [in which] Standing puts forth some thought-provoking and compelling ideas ... The proposals are written in a simple and accessible way, and they make for a powerful, if sobering read ... With a long history working on and researching these issues and with much direct experience out 'in the field', there can be few people better qualified to speak to these important issues [than Standing]. -- Tracy Shildrick, University of Leeds, UK

Sociology This is without doubt one of the most important and powerful books I have read in a long time. Building on his influential thesis about the precariat Professor Standing provides not only a graphic account of the increasing insecurity and poverty facing many people in the contemporary age, but he also points to clear and workable solutions to many entrenched problems. The book brings into sharp relief the declining fortunes of the ordinary citizen and the role of governments in defining ever harsher life and working conditions for many. Whilst there is much in the book which is depressing this is ultimately

an inspiring work which is full of promise. I have little doubt that it will become a classic of the future but its real potential lies in its clear and convincing mandate for political change. Quite simply, a tour de force. Tracy Shildrick, Professor of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds, UK, and co-author of *Poverty and Insecurity: Life in low-pay, no-pay Britain* Building on the success of his much-discussed *The Precariat*, Guy Standing has now elaborated a brave and imaginative program that could bring protection to the denizens of the world and save us all from the destructiveness of neoliberal capitalism. A terrifying catalogue of destitution and dispossession. Michael Burawoy, University of California, Berkeley, USA No one interested in the fate of labor in the 21st century can ignore Guy Standing's *The Precariat*, which transformed both scholarly and political debates about the future of work in capitalist societies. A *Precariat Charter* is equally indispensable, not only updating and elaboration the earlier book's theoretical framework but also offering a detailed political program to attack the extreme inequalities and insecurities that neoliberal globalization has unleashed. For Standing, the precariat is not merely a victim but also a dynamic agent of social change. Building on the groundwork laid by Occupy Wall Street and similar movements around the world, this Charter is a gift to all who aspire to forge a new society in which human work has meaning and workers' rights are fully respected. Ruth Milkman, Professor of Sociology, City University of New York Graduate Center and the Murphy Labor Institute, USA A *Precariat Charter's* core purpose is to outline principles that will help us become an ethically transformed society - through steps that are broadly encompassing, inspiring and easy to imagine. -- Steve Rushton [www.occupy.com](http://www.occupy.com) The charter itself is a positive and hopeful document because it charts a way forwards. Now all we need to do is to make it happen. Citizen's Income Trust Newsletter About the Author Guy Standing is Professor of Development Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, UK. He has previously been Professor of Economic Security at the University of Bath, UK, Professor of Labour Economics at Monash University, Australia and Director of the Socio-Economic Security Programme of the International Labour Organization. He is co-president of the Basic Income Earth Network. His recent books include *Work after Globalization: Building Occupational Citizenship* (2009) and *Beyond the New Paternalism: Basic Security as Equality* (2002).