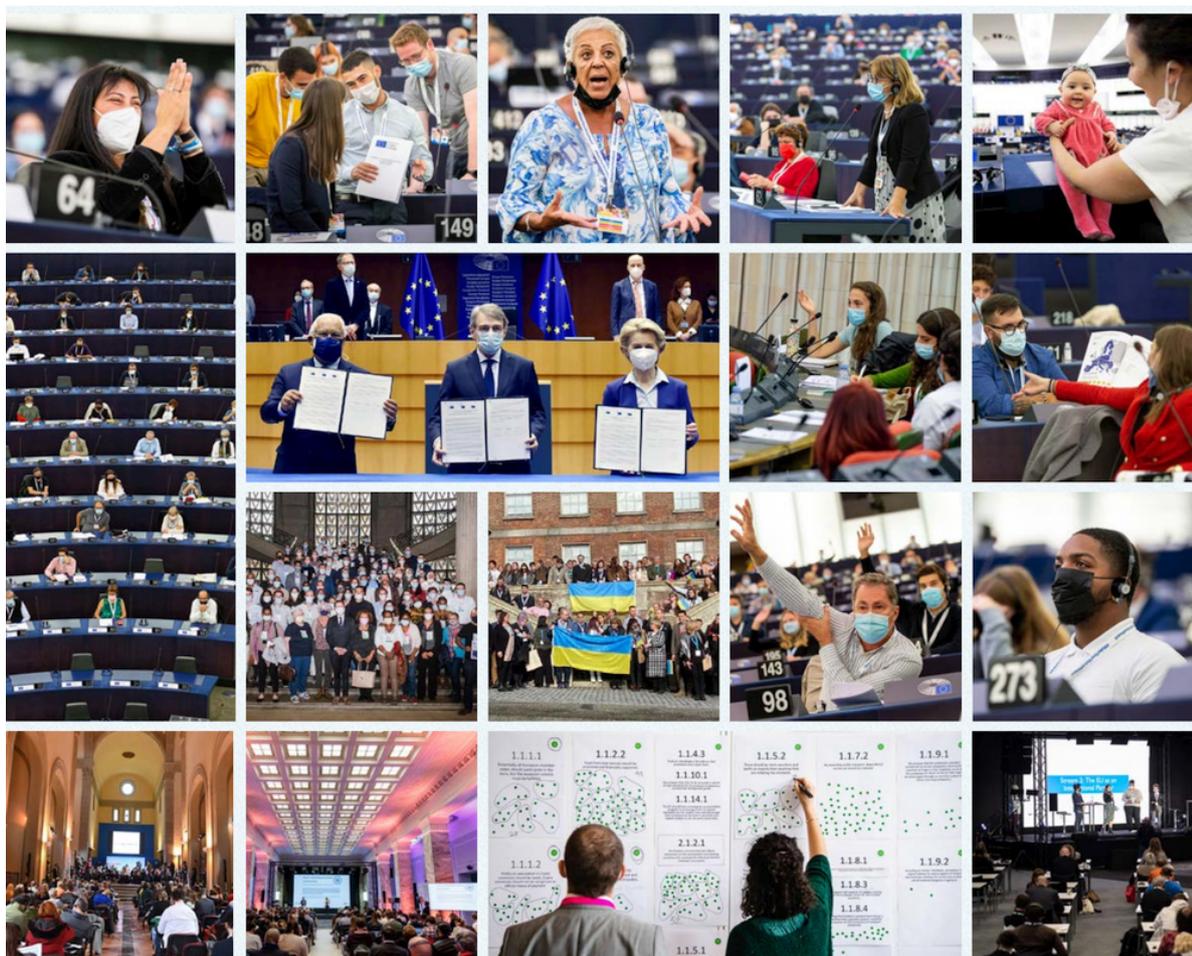


Conference on the Future of Europe

FINAL RESULTS REPORT

may 2022



The future is
in your hands

 Conference on
the Future of Europe



Eŭropo
Demokratio
Esperanto

**Document prepared by Pierre Dieumegard
for Europe-Democracy-Esperanto**

The objective of this “provisional” document is to enable more people in the European Union to understand the documents produced for the European Union (and financed by their contributions). The original document in French in pdf format has been formatted using Libre Office software. Translation into all the official languages of the European Union is made through <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/etranslation>.

We have done this work because of the need for better multilingualism in the European Union: without translations, a large part of the population is excluded from the debate. **It is desirable that the administration of the European Union should take over the translation of important documents, so that all Europeans can understand what this is about and discuss their common future together.**

For good direct communication between European citizens, for reliable translations, the international Esperanto language would be very useful because of its simplicity, regularity and precision.

On the Internet:

Federation Europo-Demokratio-Esperanto: <https://e-d-e.org/> (or www.demokratio.eu)

Association Europe-Democracy-Esperanto (France): <https://e-d-e.fr/>

European documents in all official languages: <http://www.europokune.eu/>

Compared to the original document, there are some changes (improvements?):

- some spelling errors have been corrected. Perhaps there have been other mistakes?
- the layout has been harmonised, and all pages are numbered appropriately (the initial document was a juxtaposition of separate pdf files with independent numberings).
- the end notes have been transformed into end-of-section notes (at the bottom of the pages).
- documents initially in the form of images have been transformed into tables to be easily translated.

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Introduction

On 10 March 2021, the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, Portuguese Prime Minister António Costa, on behalf of the Council of the EU, and the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, signed the Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe. The commitment they made was simple: it was a citizen-centred exercise based on a bottom-up approach to ensure that all Europeans have a say in what they expect from the European Union and play an increased role in shaping the future of the Union. Their task, on the other hand, was extremely difficult: the aim was to organise, for the first time, a transnational, multilingual and inter-institutional exercise of deliberative democracy involving thousands of European citizens as well as political actors, social partners, representatives of civil society and key stakeholders within the meaning of Article 16 of the Conference's Rules of Procedure.

On 9 May 2022, after months of intense deliberations, the Conference completed its work, presenting to the three EU institutions a report on its final results with 49 proposals. These proposals correspond to the expectations of European citizens on nine themes: A stronger economy, social justice and employment; Education, culture, youth and sport; Digital transformation; European democracy; Values and rights, rule of law, security; Climate change and the environment; Health; The EU in the world; and Migration. All these themes are set out in this final report, which also aims to provide an overview of the different activities undertaken in the context of this unique process, the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Led by three Co-Presidents (Guy Verhofstadt for the European Parliament; Ana Paula Zacarias, Gašper Dovžan and Clément Beaune, successively for the Council of the EU; and Dubravka Šuica for the European Commission) and led by an Executive Board (equally composed of representatives of the

three institutions as well as observers from the main stakeholders), the conference was an unprecedented experience of transnational deliberative democracy. It has also demonstrated its historical relevance and importance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russian aggression against Ukraine. The Conference on the Future of Europe resulted in the establishment of a multilingual digital platform for European citizens to contribute in all 24 EU languages and the organisation of four European citizens' panels, six national citizens' panels, thousands of national and local events and seven plenary assemblies of the conference. It is the result of an unprecedented willingness of the EU institutions, the Member States, but also and above all European citizens, to discuss the priorities of the European Union and the challenges it faces, and to adopt a new approach to the European project.

However, this is just the beginning. In accordance with the founding text of the conference, the three institutions will now quickly consider how to effectively implement the present report, each within its remit and in accordance with the Treaties. The determination of the three institutions in this regard is paramount.

I. The architecture of the conference

The Conference on the Future of Europe¹ was a new and innovative process, which opened up a new space for debate with citizens, in order to examine Europe's priorities and challenges, with a view to establishing the democratic legitimacy of the European project and fostering citizens' adherence to our common values and objectives. The conference was a citizen-centred exercise based on a bottom-up approach, aiming to ensure that Europeans have a say in what they expect from the European Union. It was a joint initiative of the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission, acting on an equal footing with the Member States of the European Union.

¹ <https://futureu.europa.eu/>

1. Joint Declaration

On 10 March 2021, the Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe (the “Joint Declaration”) was signed by the late President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, Portuguese Prime Minister António Costa, on behalf of the Council of the EU, and the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, paving the way for this unprecedented, open and inclusive European democratic exercise, which gives a central place to citizens.

The Conference was placed under the authority of the Presidents of the three Institutions, acting as Joint Presidency. The joint presidency was assisted by an Executive Board, co-chaired by one member from each of the three EU institutions.

In accordance with the Joint Declaration, the following structures have been set up:

- an executive board, which oversaw the organisation of the conference. It was composed of representatives of the three EU institutions (three members and four observers respectively), as well as observers from the Presidential Troika of the Conference of Community Affairs Bodies (COSAC) of the national parliaments of the European Union. The Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee and representatives of the social partners were invited as observers;
- a joint secretariat, ensuring equal representation of the three institutions, which supported the work of the Executive Board. In particular, the team — led by three co-chairs of the three institutions — oversaw the organisation and preparations for the meetings of the Executive Board, the Plenary Assemblies of the Conference and the European Citizens’ Panels. In cooperation with service providers, she was responsible for managing the multilingual digital platform and reporting on key milestones throughout the process. The unique composition of this team allowed for constant collegiality of the work and ensured synergies and efficiency gains in all areas;
- a plenary assembly of the conference (see Chapter III for more information), which allowed to discuss the recommendations made by the national and European citizens’ panels, grouped by themes, in full respect of the values of the EU and the conference charter^{II}, and without the outcome of the debates being determined in advance or their scope limited to predefined policy areas. Contributions collected on the Multilingual Digital Platform were also discussed, where appropriate. Nine thematic working groups have been set up to provide inputs to prepare the plenary’s debates and proposals.

II https://futureu.europa.eu/uploads/decidim/attachment/file/4595/Conference_Charter_fr.pdf



2. Rules of procedure

On 9 May 2021, the Executive Board approved the rules of procedure of the Conference, established in accordance with the Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe, which lays down the foundations and principles of the Conference.

The rules of procedure set out the framework for the work of the various conference structures and their interactions.

3. Events related to the conference

According to the Joint Declaration, each EU Member State or institution could organise events under the auspices of the Conference, depending on its national or institutional specificities, and make further contributions to the Conference (see Chapter II.C for more information).

EU institutions and bodies, Member States, regional and local authorities, organised civil society, social partners and citizens were therefore invited to organise events in partnership with civil society and stakeholders at European, national, regional and local level, in a wide variety of formats across Europe, and to publish the results of these events on the digital platform. Several thousand such events took place, in which some 650,000 participants took part.

4. Implementation of the multilingual digital platform

The multilingual digital platform (see Chapter II.A for more information) has been set up to allow citizens to share their ideas and send contributions online, in line with the Joint Declaration. It was the main hub for contributions and information to citizens about the different parts of the conference and an interactive tool to share and discuss the ideas and contributions of the multitude of events organised in the context of the conference. The Platform was officially launched on 19 April 2021. More than 17,000 ideas have been published on the platform.

Throughout the conference, reports were drawn up on the contributions presented on the platform.

The contributions collected through the Platform were taken into account by the European Citizens' Panels and were discussed and discussed in the Conference Plenary.

5. European Citizens' Panels

In line with the Joint Declaration, the European Citizens' Panels, organised around the main themes of the conference, were a central and particularly innovative element of the conference (see Chapter II.B for more information).

A total of 800 randomly selected citizens representing the EU's sociological and geographical diversity and grouped into four panels of 200 citizens met for three deliberative sessions per panel. The European Citizens' Panels made recommendations that fed into the general deliberations of the Conference, in particular at the Conference Plenary Assemblies.

The Co-Chairs of the Executive Board jointly established the practical arrangements for the organisation of the European Citizens' Panels, in accordance with the Joint Declaration and the Rules of Procedure, and informed the Executive Board in advance.

The Executive Board has been regularly informed of progress in setting up and organising European Citizens' Panels.

6. National Citizens Panels

According to the Joint Declaration, Member States could organise national panels. To assist Member States planning to organise national citizens' panels, guidelines were endorsed by the Co-Chairs and forwarded to the Executive Board on 26 May 2021 to ensure that the national panels are organised according to the same principles as the European Citizens' Panels. These guidelines included principles of good deliberation, based on the OECD Guidelines^{III}. Each Member State could decide whether or not to organise a panel of national citizens. A total of six Member States organised one (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania and the Netherlands).

In line with the Joint Declaration, the recommendations of the National Citizens' Panels were presented and discussed at the Conference Plenary Assemblies, in parallel with the recommendations of the European Citizens' Panels.

III III OECD, Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions, 2020 - <https://www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/innovative-citizen-participation-new-democratic-institutions-catching-the-deliberative-wave-highlights.pdf>.

NO, NO, NO, NO. Citizens' contributions to the conference

A. Multilingual digital platform

The multilingual digital platform was launched on 19 April 2021 and was the central point of contact of the conference. Through it, everyone was able to participate in the conference: all citizens in the EU and elsewhere, civil society, social partners and various other stakeholders.

The platform was developed specifically for the conference, using Decidim, a European free software dedicated to the participation of citizens. On such a scale and level of interactivity and multilingualism, this achievement was a first, not only European but also global. All contributions were available in all 24 official EU languages through machine translation. The debate was structured around ten themes: 'Climate change and environment', 'Health', 'A stronger economy, social justice and employment', 'The EU in the world', 'Values and rights, rule of law, security', 'digital transformation', 'European democracy', 'Migration', 'Education, culture, youth and sport' and 'Other ideas'.

It was possible to participate on the platform in several different ways.

Anyone who wanted it could share his ideas about one of the ten themes. It was also possible to comment on the ideas of others. The platform has thus made possible a real pan-European debate between citizens.

Participants could also endorse ideas, indicating that they supported input from another user.

Another important way to contribute to the conference was to organise events (virtual, face-to-face or hybrid), announce them on the platform, report on their results and link them to ideas. [Guides](#) and [information material](#) had been made available to the organisers on the platform to promote the participatory and inclusive nature of events.

The Platform has played a fundamental role in the transparency of the whole process and regarding the access of all to information related to the conference. This was where everyone could find information on the working methods and organisation of the conference itself, for example on the conference process itself (the conference plenary and its working groups, [European citizens' panels](#), [national](#)

[panels and events](#) and the [Executive Board](#)).

The debates of the plenary and its working groups were broadcast live on the internet, as were the meetings of the European Citizens' Panels. All this information will remain available on the platform.

Throughout the work, improvements were made to the platform whenever possible, by adding features or visual media, for example. Over time, the platform has also been made more accessible to people with disabilities.

All contributions on the platform were public: everyone could access them, as well as open data files linked to the digital platform, which ensured full transparency. In order to facilitate the collection and analysis of contributions, the Commission's Joint Research Centre had developed an automated text analysis tool and an analysis platform, which allowed multilingual interpretation and in-depth analysis of the platform's content. The analysis platform is a tool that has proven to be essential for providing regular reports of a uniform level of quality in all languages. In addition, a "datathon" organised in March 2022 by the European Commission encouraged new approaches in the analysis of the open data series and contributed to the transparency of the data analysis process.

In order to provide an overview of the contributions on the platform, an external service provider has prepared reports, which have been published on the platform itself.

A [first interim report](#) was published in September: it focused on contributions delivered until 2 August 2021. The [second interim report](#) was published in mid-October 2021, covering contributions submitted until 7 September 2021. The [third interim report](#) was published in December 2021 and covered contributions until 3 November 2021. As the work on the conference was entering its final phase, the latest report to inspire the work of the conference's plenary assemblies was published in mid-March 2022, taking into account contributions presented on the digital platform until 20 February 2022. This calendar was clearly announced on the platform and elsewhere, resulting in an increase in

contributions in January and February 2022. Contributions received up to May 9 will be dealt with in the additional report. Additional reports on the contributions presented on the Platform, by Member State, were also made available at the same time as the reports of September and December 2021 and March 2022.

The main focus of these reports was on a qualitative analysis of the contributions published on the platform, in order to provide a general overview of the scope and diversity of ideas proposed on the platform and discussed at the events. To this end, a manual textual analysis and a pooling of contributions were carried out by a research team, using analytical tools provided by the Commission's Joint Research Centre. This made it possible to

on their country of residence, level of education, age, gender and professional status; however, the optional nature of this information limits the clarity that can be drawn as to the profile of participants. For example, 26.9 % of all contributions came from participants who did not indicate their country of residence.



identify common topics and sub-categories of subject, which were described in detail under each theme and synthesised in conceptual schemas that allow them to be visualised quickly. In order to complement this qualitative approach with quantitative elements, themes, sub-themes or ideas that often came back or that were highly commented or supported were mentioned in each of the reports. The aim was to reflect the state of discussions at different stages of the conference, including the high level of interest or debate generated by certain ideas. The reports also provided an overview of the participants' socio-demographic data. Contributors were asked to provide information

Since the launch of the platform, the theme “European democracy” has been the one for which the largest number of contributions (ideas, comments and events) has been recorded. Second came the theme “Climate change and environment”. The contributions presented under “Other Ideas” came in third place, ahead of “Values and Rights, Rule of Law, Security” and “A Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment”.

The reports on the contributions collected on the Platform, including conceptual schemes, have made a valuable contribution to the work of the European Citizens’ Panels. At the beginning of each of the three panel sessions, the main findings of the report and the conceptual schemas were presented to the panels, which received links to the full reports. This is how many ideas that appeared on the platform are reflected in the recommendations made by the European Citizens’ Panels.

The reports were also discussed at the plenary meetings of the Conference, starting from the plenary of 23 October 2021, as well as in previous meetings of the working groups. The

As of 20 April 2022, nearly five million unique visitors had visited the multilingual digital platform, on which more than 50,000 participants were active, 17,000 ideas debated and more than 6,000 registered events. Behind these figures are thousands of committed citizens who share and debate many ideas and organise a multitude of original and innovative events in the different Member States.

In order to ensure that the Platform is a place where citizens from all walks of life and from all corners of Europe feel comfortable and encouraged to contribute to the debate, everyone using the Platform has had to subscribe to [the conference charter](#) and the [rules for participation](#). A moderation team has been set up and is working throughout the conference under the supervision of the Joint Secretariat on behalf of the Executive Board to ensure compliance with the Charter and Rules of Participation. No prior moderation of the content has taken place. When a contribution was hidden, the user received a message from the moderation team explaining the reason. Details on the principles and moderation process were made available in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) section of the platform. Between April 19, 2021 and April 20, 2022, 430 ideas (2.4 %), 312 comments (1.4 %) and 396 events (6.0 %) were masked. About 71 % of the ideas were masked because they did not contain proposals, whether they were spam, user requests, or because they contained personal information or an unsuitable associated image; about 17 % of hidden ideas were duplicates. Only 11 % of hidden ideas

What is happening at the Conference on the Future of Europe?		
52346	652532	17671
conference participants	participants in the event	ideas
21877	6465	72528
comments	events	approvals
State of participation as at 20 April 2022 (source: Conference on the Future of Europe (europa.eu))		

Platform’s contributions therefore continued to enrich the proposals developed in the Conference Plenary.

were because of their offensive content. The vast majority of events, 76 %, were masked because they were duplicates or because

information about the event was incomplete, at the request of the organisers or because they were not related to the conference.

The possibility of making contributions on the Platform remained open until 9 May 2022. An additional report is scheduled after that date to complete the summary of all contributions received during the conference.

Participation on the platform continued to increase throughout the conference, but remained uneven across Member States and the socio-demographic profiles of participants. In general, the platform has provided an innovative space for deliberation, which has enabled several thousand citizens and various stakeholders from across Europe and beyond to participate in an online multilingual debate on European issues in all Member States. It proved to be a valuable tool for deliberative democracy at EU level.



B. Citizens' Panels

1. European Citizens' Panels

The European Citizens' Panels were one of the main pillars of the conference, with the National Panels, the Multilingual Digital Platform and the Conference Plenary. They are at the heart of the Conference on the Future of Europe and brought together some 800 citizens from all backgrounds and regions of the European Union. While the concept of citizen panels or assemblies has been used for decades at municipal level and is increasingly visible at national or regional level, the pan-European dimension remains largely unexplored in this area. The European Citizens' Panels were the first transnational and multilingual experience of this magnitude and level of ambition. The remarkable system of interpretation that accompanied the process led to an inclusive, respectful and effective dialogue among stakeholders, ensuring respect for multilingualism.

The European Citizens' Panels were organised by the three institutions on the basis of the Joint Declaration, the Rules of Procedure and the arrangements established by the Co-Chairs, under the supervision of the Executive Board. They were supported by a consortium of external service providers composed of various experts in the field of deliberative democracy and a logistics support team. The Executive Board was kept informed of the work of the panels, updated practical arrangements were provided and adapted the provisional calendar of sessions of the European Citizens' Panels during the process, as needed.

Participants in the European Citizens' Panels were selected in the summer of 2021. EU citizens were randomly selected (mainly contacted by the 27 national survey institutes coordinated by an external service provider) with the aim of constituting "panels" that are representative of the EU's diversity, based on five criteria: gender, age, geographical origin (nationality as well as urban/rural environment), socio-economic background and level of education. The number of citizens per Member State was calculated according to the principle of degressive proportionality applied to the composition of the European Parliament, taking

into account that each panel should include at least one citizen and one citizen per Member State. Given that the conference paid specific attention to young people, one third of the citizens in each panel were between 16 and 24 years old. For each group of 200 people, 50 additional citizens were selected to set up a reserve.

Four European Citizens' Panels were organised. For each of them, the topics for discussion corresponded to the topics identified on the multilingual digital platform and were grouped as follows:

1. A stronger economy, social justice and employment; education, culture, youth and sport; digital transformation;
2. European democracy; values and rights, rule of law, security;
3. Climate change and environment; health;
4. The EU in the world; migration.

Each panel met for three weekends. The first series of sessions took place in Strasbourg, the second online and the third in four cities (Dublin, Florence, Warsaw/Natolin and Maastricht), in public higher education institutions and with the support of local authorities.

FIRST ROUND OF PANEL SESSIONS

For the first session of each panel, participants met physically in Strasbourg. The objective of the session was to define the agenda for the deliberations. The citizens participating in the panels began by reflecting and developing their vision of Europe, starting from a blank page and identifying the issues to be discussed, in the framework of the main themes of the panel. They then prioritised the topics on which they wished to focus in greater depth with a view to making specific recommendations to the EU institutions for follow-up. The discussions and collective work took place in the following two formats:

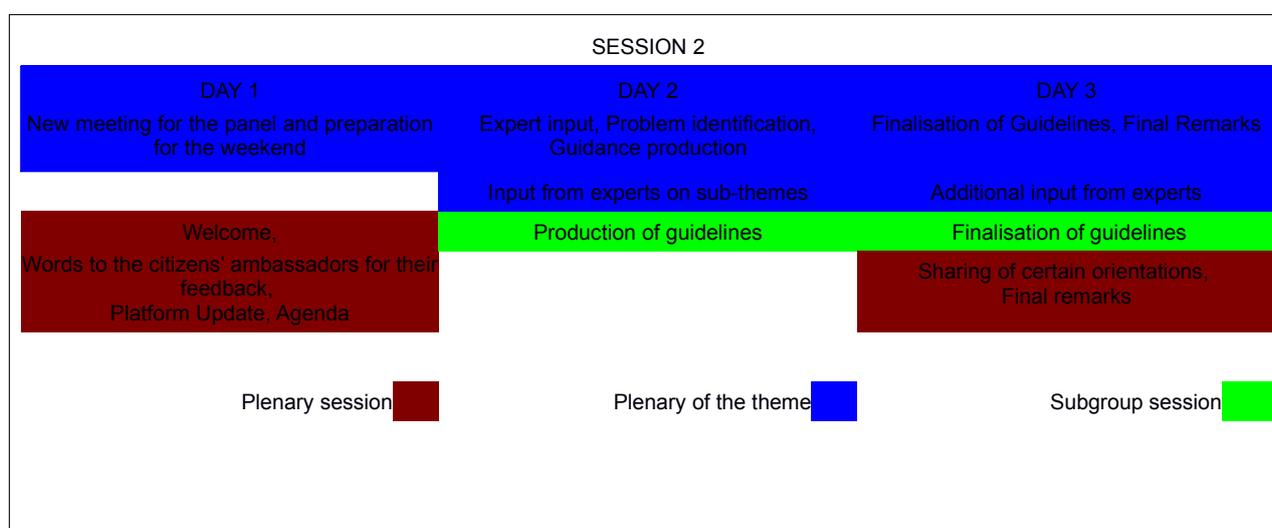
- in sub-groups composed of 12 to 14 citizens. Four to five languages were spoken in each subgroup, in which citizens could express themselves in their own language. The work of the subgroups was guided by professional

facilitators selected by the consortium of external service providers.

SECOND ROUND OF PANEL SESSIONS

The European Citizens' Panels continued their work by meeting online throughout November. A special scheme had been put in place for this purpose: a studio in Brussels hosted the main moderation and plenary sessions, while participating citizens from across the EU could intervene through a system of connection and interpretation.

In the second round of sessions, with the support of experts and fact-checkers, citizens identified and discussed a series of specific issues and developed guidelines for each of the thematic axes they had identified during the first session. Particular attention has been paid to gender and geographical balance within the



- in plenary, with all the participants. The plenary sessions were led by two main moderators. The priority themes resulting from the discussions were subdivided into "axis" (corresponding to the thematic clusters) and "sub-axis" and served as the basis for the second series of sessions. To this end, participants received background information on the themes, as well as relevant inputs, including analyses and conceptual schemas, from the first interim report of the Multilingual Digital Platform and presentations by high-level external experts. During the first sessions, the 20 persons asked to represent each of the panels at the plenary were selected from among the voluntary citizens; in doing so, he was watched for the diversity of age and gender.

expert group, and that each of these experts, through their contributions, informs citizens in depth by communicating facts and/or progress in the debate and refraining from giving personal opinions. Citizens were also provided with the interim reports of the multilingual digital platform.

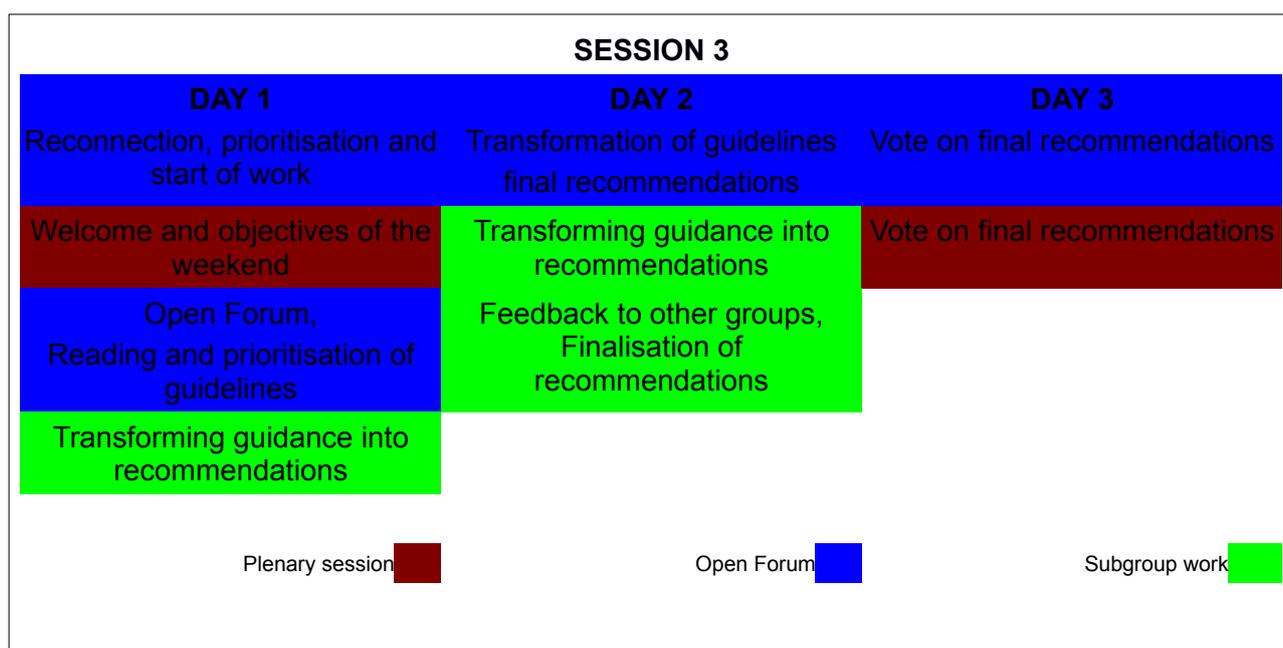
They were thus able to identify and discuss issues related to the themes assigned to them, building on the input of the experts on the topics covered and their own knowledge and experiences, during the deliberations held during the second round of sessions. Problems have been defined as problems requiring solutions or situations requiring change.

Citizens then addressed these issues by developing guidelines, the first step towards the formulation of recommendations, which was the

objective of the third series of sessions. Citizens were also asked to justify these guidelines.

The discussions and collective work took place in three formats:

- in plenary, with all participating citizens, to present and close the session. The plenary sessions were led by two main moderators of the consortium, with interpretation in the 24 official EU languages.



- in subgroups. Each of the fifteen subgroups consisted of twelve to fourteen citizens. Four to five languages were used in each subgroup to allow citizens to express themselves in their own language or in a language in which they felt comfortable. Each subgroup had a professional facilitator from the consortium of external service providers.
- in plenary session devoted to a work stream. Each plenary session devoted to a work axis brought together the subgroups working on the same thematic axis. The plenary sessions devoted to a work stream were facilitated by professional facilitators, with interpretation covering all the languages required by the participants.

THIRD ROUND OF PANEL SESSIONS

The third and final round of panel sessions took place in person in educational institutions in four Member States. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related measures in Ireland and the Netherlands, the third session of panels 1 (A stronger economy, social justice and employment); education, culture, youth and sport; digital transformation) and 4 (the EU in the world; migration) had to be postponed until February 2022, in consultation with national authorities and associated partners.

The discussions and collective work took place in the following formats:

- in plenary with all participants, at the beginning of the session to present the programme and at the end of the session, as explained below. The plenary sessions were led by two main moderators of the deliberation group, with interpretation in the 24 official languages of the EU.
- Citizens began by examining all the guidance developed by the panel during Session 2 as part of an “open forum”. Each citizen then gave priority to a maximum of ten orientations per axis of work. Once this prioritisation process was completed at the panel level, citizens joined the subgroup in which they had already worked during Session 2 and collectively took note of the group’s guidance that had been prioritised by the rest of the panel — an opportunity to compare this choice with their own assessment. For the preparation of the recommendations, each subgroup was given an indicative range of the number of recommendations to be drafted: from one to three, with a maximum of five.
- Each of the 15 subgroups worked to develop guidance for recommendations. Citizens discussed the guidelines that had received the most support (in their order of priority) and began the process of drafting the recommendations.

During the third series of sessions, expertise and information were not brought in direct interaction with citizens, but through a specially designed system, a “Resources and Information Point”. This system has been used to centralise all requests for information and fact-checking

on the spot and to provide brief and factual responses from experts and fact-checkers to the subgroups. This system has been designed to ensure that the inputs of experts and fact-checkers are prepared in accordance with the highest quality standards and to avoid undue influence at this stage of the process. Citizens were also provided with the interim reports of the multilingual digital platform.

During the subgroup work, feedback sessions were organised to help participants understand the work of the other subgroups and strengthen their recommendations.

The recommendations of each subgroup were then voted on by the panel on the last day of the session. Prior to the vote, all participants received a document containing all the draft recommendations produced the day before so that they could read them in their own language (automatic translation from English). Each recommendation was read in English in plenary to allow citizens to hear the interpretation simultaneously. One after the other, the recommendations were put to the vote of the participants using an online form.

Based on the results of the final votes, the recommendations were classified as follows:

The recommendations which received 70 % or more of the votes cast were adopted by the panel; recommendations that did not meet this threshold were considered not validated by the panel. In total, the European Citizens’ Panels adopted 178 recommendations.

The voting procedure was supervised by a voting committee composed of two citizens who had proposed to fulfil this role.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS’ PANELS IN THE PLENARY

The recommendations adopted by the four European Citizens’ Panels were then presented and discussed by the 80 representatives of the European Citizens’ Panels at the Conference Plenary and in the Working Groups on 21-22 January 2022 (Panel 2 and 3) and 11-12 March 2022 (Panel 1 and 4). The 80 representatives of the European Citizens’ Panels (on average 70 on the spot and 10 online) then continued to promote and explain the recommendations of the European Citizens’ Panels at three

consecutive meetings of the Plenary Assembly and the Working Groups (on 25-26 March, 8-9 April and 29-30 April).

They also held regular exchanges of views at meetings under the “citizens’ component” (in online preparatory meetings and on-site plenary meetings), with each other and with the 27 representatives of national events and/or national panels. On 23 April, representatives of the European Citizens’ Panels met online with all their counterparts to explain how the recommendations had been discussed and incorporated into the plenary proposals, and to receive feedback from other panel participants. A group of members of the joint secretariat and the consortium supported the citizens’ component during the plenary.

TRANSPARENCY OF THE PROCESS

The whole process was conducted in a transparent manner. The plenary meetings of the European Citizens’ Panels were live streamed, while the documents resulting from their discussions and deliberations were made available to the public on the multilingual digital platform. The final report of each of the panel sessions is available on the platform, along with the recommendations. The reports also contain information on all experts who supported the work of the panels.

As a true democratic innovation, European citizens’ panels have received a lot of attention from the scientific community. The researchers were able to attend the meetings of the European Citizens’ Panels and observe the conduct, in accordance with certain rules, of the work carried out and the privacy of the participants.

Panel 1

A stronger economy, social justice and employment; education, culture, youth and sport; digital transformation

The first session of the panel on 'A stronger economy, social justice and employment; education, culture, youth and sport; digital transformation' took place from 17 to 19 September 2021 in Strasbourg. This panel addressed the future of our economies and jobs, especially after the pandemic, paying due attention to related social justice issues. He also addressed the opportunities and challenges of digital transformation, one of the most important topics for discussion among those concerning the future.

The panel also discussed the future of Europe in the fields of youth, sport, culture and education. The citizens participating in the panel were welcomed by Co-Chair Guy Verhofstadt. The work of the first session concluded on the approval of the five strands of work: 'Working in Europe', 'An Economy for the Future', 'A Just Society', 'Learning in Europe' and 'An Ethical and Safe Digital Transformation'.

From 5 to 7 November 2021, Panel 1 met for the second time, this time in virtual format, and continued the deliberations of the first session. During the second session, the panellists set out "guidelines" to develop concrete recommendations (at their third session) for each of the five axes identified at the first session. In total, the citizens participating in Panel 1 produced 142 guidance groups.

From 25 to 27 February 2022, the citizens participating in Panel 1 met for the third time, continuing the deliberations held during

sessions 1 and 2. For this final session, panel 1 participants were hosted at Dublin Castle by the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA), with the opportunity to participate online. on the basis of the guidance they had developed at Session 2 as a basis for their work, citizens developed and approved 48 final recommendations.

Panel 2

European democracy; values and rights, rule of law, security

Session 1 of the panel on 'European democracy; values and rights, rule of law, security' took place from 24 to 26 September in Strasbourg. The panel focused on issues related to democracy, such as elections, participation outside electoral periods, perceived distance between citizens and their elected representatives, freedom of the media and disinformation. It also addressed issues related to fundamental rights and values, the rule of law and the fight against all forms of discrimination. At the same time, he focused on the EU's internal security, such as protecting Europeans from acts of terrorism and other crimes. The speakers were welcomed by Co-Chair Gašper Dovžan.

The work of this first session concluded on the approval of the five strands of work: "Ensuring respect for rights and non-discrimination", "Protecting democracy and the rule of law", "Reforming the EU", "Building European identity" and "Strengthening citizens' participation".

From 12 to 14 November 2021, Panel 2 met for the second time, in virtual format, and continued the deliberations of the first session. During the second session, the panellists set out "guidelines" to develop concrete recommendations (at their third session) for each of the five axes identified at the first session. In total, the citizens participating in Panel 2 produced 124 guidance groups.

From 10 to 12 December 2021, the citizens participating in Panel 2 met for their final session organised at the European University Institute in Florence, with the opportunity to participate online. On the basis of the guidance they had developed at Session 2 as a basis for

their work, citizens developed and approved 39 final recommendations.

Panel 3 Climate change and the environment; health

The panel on 'Climate change and the environment'; health" held its first session from 1^o 3 October in Strasbourg. The panel focused on the effects of climate change, environmental issues and new health challenges for the European Union. It also covered EU objectives and strategies, such as agriculture, transport and mobility, energy and the transition to post-carbon societies, research, health systems, responses to health crises, prevention and healthy lifestyles. The work of this first session ended on the approval of the five areas of work: "Better lifestyles", "Protecting our environment and health", "Reorienting our economy and consumption", "Towards a sustainable society" and "Care for all". The final report of the session is available on the multilingual digital platform.

From 19 to 21 November 2021, Panel 3 met for the second time, this time in virtual format, to continue the deliberations of the first session. During the second session, the panellists set out "guidelines" to develop concrete recommendations (at their third session) for each of the five axes identified at the first session. In total, the citizens participating in Panel 3 produced 130 guidance groups.

From 7 to 9 January 2022, the citizens of panel 3 gathered for the final session they organised at the College of Europe in Natolin and the Palace of Culture and Science, with the support of the city of Warsaw. It was possible to participate online. On the basis of the guidance they had developed at Session 2 as a basis for their work, citizens developed and approved 51 final recommendations.

Panel 4 The EU in the world; migration



Photography: panel 3 of European Citizens

The fourth panel, entitled 'The EU in the world'; migration" met for the first time from 15 to 17 October in Strasbourg, during which participants discussed in particular the role of the EU in the international arena.



In particular, the EU's objectives and strategies on security, defence, trade policy, humanitarian aid and development cooperation, foreign policy, EU neighbourhood policy and enlargement, and how the EU should deal with migration were discussed. Citizens were welcomed by Co-Chair Dubravka Šuica. The work of this first session concluded on the approval of the five strands of work: "Self-sufficiency and stability", "The EU as an international partner", "A strong EU in a world at peace", "Migration from a human point of view" and "Responsibility and solidarity throughout the EU". The final report of the session is available on the multilingual digital platform.

From 16 to 28 November 2021, Panel 4 held its second online session, based on the work done

during the first session. During the second session, the panellists set out “guidelines” to develop concrete recommendations (at their third session) for each of the five axes identified at the first session. In total, the citizens participating in panel 4 produced 95 guidance groups.

From 11 to 13 February 2022, panel 4 citizens gathered for their final session, organised at the Maastricht Exhibition and Conference Centre (MECC) by Studio Europa Maastricht, in cooperation with the University of Maastricht and the European Institute of Public Administration (IEAP). It was possible to participate online.

on the basis of the guidance they had developed at Session 2 as a basis for their work, citizens developed and approved 40 final recommendations.

2. National Citizens Panels

In line with the Joint Declaration, the Conference Plenary discussed recommendations from national and European citizens’ panels, grouped by theme. To assist Member States planning to organise national citizens’ panels, guidelines were endorsed by the Co-Chairs and forwarded to the Executive Board of principle included on an C Six Mer Gernar — orga respecti guidelin these n: and disc plenary working recommendations of the European Citizens’ Panels on the same topics.

IV OECD, Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions, 2020 - <https://www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/innovative-citizen-participation-new-democratic-institutions-catching-the-deliberative-wave-highlights.pdf>

1) BELGIUM



In October 2021, a citizens’ panel brought together over three weekends 50 randomly selected citizens, representative of the general population, to discuss the topic of European democracy and how citizens could be more involved in European affairs.

This panel was organised under the auspices of Sophie Wilmès, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs.

The citizens made recommendations on five themes they had chosen, namely:

- improving communication on the European Union,

2) GERMANY

In January 2022, the German Foreign Ministry organised a panel of national citizens. 100 randomly selected citizens, representative of the population, participated in this online panel.

On 5 and 8 January 2022, five launch workshops were organised online, each bringing together 20 participants on the following themes:

- the role of Europe in the world, the climate and the environment,
- the rule of law and values,
- a stronger economy and social justice.



Photography: German Citizens' Panel

The 100 randomly selected citizens met on 15 and 16 January 2022 to discuss the challenges related to these issues and possible solutions, and adopted their recommendations. Participants developed two specific proposals for each of the above themes.

The results were presented on 16 January at a final online conference attended by Annalena Baerbock, German Foreign Minister, and Anna Lührmann, Deputy Minister for Europe and Climate.

3) FRANCE

Citizens' panels were organised in France by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, with the support of the Ministry for Relations with Parliament and Citizen Participation.



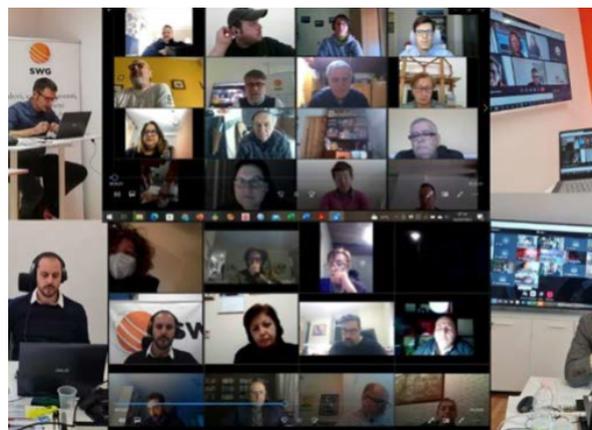
Photography: panel of French Citizens

Eighteen citizens' panels were organised in September and early October 2021 in all regions of France, metropolitan and overseas. Each panel brought together between 30 and 50 randomly selected citizens, representative of the diversity of the population of the regions. In total, more than 700 citizens participated in the panels. The work of the regional panels gave rise to a list of 101 aspirations, with 515 amendments and 1 301 specific proposals.

A total of 100 citizens representing the panels met in Paris on 16-17 October 2021 for the National Synthesis Conference to draft and adopt the recommendations. A total of 14 priority recommendations were identified as part of this process. Covering the nine themes of the conference, the recommendations were submitted to the French government, including Secretary of State Clément Beaune, and constituted the contribution of the French government to the conference.

4) ITALY

A citizens' panel was organised in March 2022



by an independent third party, under the supervision of the Italian Department of European Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

A total of 55 randomly selected citizens, representative of Italian society and its regions, participated. Participants were randomly selected to ensure the presence of different gender, age, social origin, place of residence and professional status.

Citizens met online on 11 and 12 March 2022 to discuss two themes of the conference:

- “A stronger economy, social justice and employment”, and
- “Europe in the world”.

On 12 March 2022, the panel adopted a total of 58 recommendations, including 33 on ‘A stronger economy, social justice and employment’ and 25 on ‘Global Europe’. On the last day, participants carried out the verification and validation of the first draft of the recommendations made during the first phase of the work.

5) LITHUANIA

On behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a national citizens’ panel was organised by an independent third party in January 2022.



Photography: Lithuanian Citizens’ Panel

It brought together a total of 25 randomly selected citizens aged 18 to 65, representative of the different socio-economic groups and regions of Lithuania.

On 4 January 2022, an opening session was organised online and citizens discussed two topics:

- the role and competences of the EU in foreign policy;
- the economic role of the EU.

On 15 January 2022, participants met in person to formulate the main conclusions of their discussions. On 25 January 2022, they adopted 21 recommendations at a virtual session, 10 of which focused on the role and competences of the EU in foreign policy and 11 on the EU’s economic role.

6) NETHERLANDS

The citizens’ panel was organised by an independent third party, with the dialogues entitled “Visions of Europe” starting on¹ September. They were split into several parts.

Launched on¹ September 2021, the online section included a questionnaire and a simplified selection tool allowing citizens to express their preferences, wishes and recommendations on the nine themes of the conference. The questionnaire was distributed to a selected representative and inclusive group of 4,000



citizens.

In October and November 2021, in-depth debates were held online and offline with citizens, in particular to reach young people and hard-to-reach target groups.

Two reports have been published, entitled ‘Our vision for Europe’; opinions, ideas and recommendations (Elze kijk op Europa; Meningen, ideeën en Aanbevelingen) and bringing together the 30 recommendations made by citizens on the nine themes of the conference.

Dutch Citizens’



C. Events organised in the framework of the conference

1. National events

Member States contributed to the conference through a wide range of events and initiatives. Several thousand citizens from across the EU participated in these events. A [specific heading](#) of the Multilingual Digital Platform provides an overview of the main activities that Member States' authorities have organised or supported. The events were presented at the plenary assemblies of the conference on 23 October



2021 and 25 March 2022 by representatives of national events and/or by national citizens' panels, but they also contributed to the conference through [Platform reports](#), thus enriching the debate at European level.

The main objective of these events and initiatives was to listen to citizens and involve them in debates on the European Union. Inclusion and dialogue with citizens were also a priority, with efforts to include people who are not usually involved in EU-related debates.

Different types of events took place, combining centralised and decentralised approaches, including with various forms of support for bottom-up initiatives. Activities and events in the Member States were organised by different institutions and actors, including national, regional and local authorities, civil society organisations, social partners, associations and citizens. In some cases, non-governmental organisations, cultural institutions, think tanks, universities and research institutes also actively participated in the organisation of events on the conference. In many of these activities and events, special emphasis has been placed on the participation of the younger generation.

Overview of the main events and initiatives in the Member States:

1 Belgium

Several events have been organised by the federal and regional authorities. Several debates with citizens took place, for example on the EU in the world and on climate change and the environment. A structured dialogue with citizens on “Living in a border region” and a hackathon on “The impact of healthy lifestyles and climate change on quality of life” and “barriers to youth employment” also took place.

In addition, an event on digitalisation and the sustainable economy was organised, and a series of debates between young people and politicians were held on the theme “Europe listening to you”.

2 Bulgaria

The Bulgarian exercise was launched at a ceremony entitled “How to hear the voice of citizens through the Conference on the Future of Europe?” involving public authorities and citizens’ representatives. As part of the events organised, a dialogue on demography and democracy was established.

Several local events took place in major university cities, with the help of Europe Direct Centres.

3 Czech Republic

The Czech Republic organised central discussions with the general public and information events for relevant stakeholders. These events were complemented by youth events and events with international participation. In particular, a transnational event with German and Czech citizens was organised. Several regional debates took place throughout the country, as well as regional seminars for secondary school students on the theme ‘Decide on Europe’.

4 Denmark

A broad and inclusive national debate, in which civil society and other non-governmental actors played a central role, was organised. A designated pool of public funds has been granted to a group of various organisations, including NGOs, the media, youth organisations, cultural institutions, think tanks

and research institutes to support debates and initiatives set up by non-governmental organisations. More than 180 debates took place, about half of which were specifically aimed at young people. In addition, the government and parliament organised a series of official events, such as citizen consultations and debates.

5 Germany

Events in Germany involved the federal government, the Bundestag, the federal states and civil society. In addition to the events set up by the federal government, more than 50 regional events were organised by Germany’s sixteen federal states and about 300 by civil society.

Cross-border events and dialogues with students and young people have been a central element of many initiatives, placing young people at the forefront of discussions aimed at shaping the future of Europe.

6 Estonia

Various events, seminars and debates were organised by the State Chancellery in collaboration with the European Commission Representation in Estonia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries, as well as civil society and youth organisations, among others. In particular, a discussion for high school students was conducted on key issues related to climate change, energy policies and the conference in general. A discussion on “Estonian diplomacy for achieving climate goals” was also initiated.

7 Ireland

Inclusion and dialogue with the whole population, especially young people, were the central theme of the activities organised in Ireland.

In cooperation with the European Movement Ireland (EMI), a programme of regional and sectoral commitments was launched in 2021 and 2022. The first phase of the regional meetings took place in June and July in the form of virtual consultations. The second phase of regional events took the form of face-to-face public meetings for the beginning of 2022. Since July, a program of government-led events has been underway.

8 Greece

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for coordinating the national dialogue. Central and local government agencies and civil society were strongly encouraged to organise discussions and other events. For example, events took place on Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, the Western Balkans, the demographic challenge, migration and democracy, involving citizens and various stakeholders.

9 Spain

The Spanish framework included six events at national level (e.g. a consultation of Spanish citizens on the future of Europe) and around 20 at regional level. An event was also organised with Portuguese and Spanish citizens to discuss key topics of interest to the future of their regions and to the EU. At regional and local level, events were organised by the authorities on several topics, such as cross-border cooperation, the impact of demographic change, sustainable transport and mobility, climate change, migration and the future of the outermost regions.

10 France

The French government conducted an extensive online consultation for young people from May to July 2021. Fifty thousand young French people expressed their views, endorsing sixteen main ideas for the future of Europe. The results of this exercise were compiled, together with the results of the French Citizens' Panel, in a final report, which constitutes France's contribution to the conference. The French government also encouraged all French actors who wished to do so (associations, local authorities, elected officials, representatives of civil society) to organise events.

11 Croatia

A working group for the coordination of activities has been established and has gathered ideas and plans to carry out activities at the national level. Ministries, central state offices, regional development agencies, universities, NGOs and institutes organised events in the form of conferences, citizen dialogues and debates with citizens, public discussions and educational workshops, with a particular focus on young people.

Topics covered include migration, demographics, climate neutrality and the circular economy. Some events were organised with other Member States and neighbouring non-EU countries.

12 Italy

Several events, focusing in particular on young people, have been set up to reach as many citizens as possible, including with the active support of local authorities. A media campaign was launched to raise awareness of these events as much as possible. These activities include the EU-Balkan Youth Forum, organised with young people from the Western Balkans, the Youth Forum "Med Dialogues", involving young people from the Southern Neighbourhood, as well as competitions for secondary and university students entitled "Europe is in your hands".

13 Cyprus

A number of youth-focused activities have been organised, involving many actors. A kick-off event took place, including a discussion with the younger generation about their expectations, concerns and vision for Europe and Cyprus within the EU. An open dialogue was also conducted on the role of young people in the debate on Europe and the problems they face at national and European level. An event also took place to discuss the future of European security and defence.

14 Latvia

Several events have been organised, including a nationwide online discussion with students entitled "The Future Is in Your Hands" on economic, social and security issues. A national survey and discussions in think tanks were set up to gather public opinion on citizens' views on the future priorities of the European Union on all themes of the conference. Regional face-to-face discussions were held to raise awareness of the conference among people aged 55 and over and face-to-face discussions were held with secondary school students.

15 Lithuania

The events were mainly organised on a decentralised basis and emphasis was placed on the different regions of Lithuania and young people (e.g. in the framework of the youth debate in the Baltic States). A series of citizens' dialogues (on democracy, digitalisation, climate

change, etc.), transnational dialogues (e.g. with France, Ireland and Italy) and civil society events took place. In addition, schools were encouraged to address the issue of the future of Europe.

16 Luxembourg

A number of events were organised at national level with an open, inclusive and transparent approach. For example, the parliament organised a number of events in new formats, such as “bistrot talks”. A hackathon for students and young entrepreneurs was also organised to discuss the digital compass and the EU industrial strategy.

In addition, a trinational exchange took place between German, French and Luxembourg high school students.

17 Hungary

A wide range of events across society (more than 800) were organised. Institutional events include high-level international conferences organised by several ministries (e.g. on EU enlargement and digital agenda) and round tables with students and youth organisations (e.g. on European integration). Several organisations held panels to discuss the following topics: the EU institutions; a stronger economy, social justice and employment, digital transformation, education, culture, youth and sport; values and rights, the rule of law and security; NGOs; migration; as well as demographics, family, health, climate change and the environment.

18 Malta

Following a kick-off event, a National Coordinating Committee was set up to promote the initiative through different communication channels and helped guide the debate through national and local events.

Thematic public dialogues (e.g. on health, European values and the future of work for a fair society), press conferences, consultations with stakeholders from the relevant sectors and interactive sessions with children and students were organised in physical or hybrid format.

19 Netherlands

In the Netherlands, emphasis was placed on the organisation of the “Visions of Europe —

Kijk op Europa” national citizens’ panel, which took place both online and face-to-face. It was based on a two-phase approach: the first was to gather the reflections and opinions of citizens on the ‘what’, namely what they expected and wanted; the second phase then sought to understand their underlying views (the “why” and “how”) through group dialogues.

20 Austria

Discussions took place in different formats, at the federal, regional and local levels. “Future labs” and “future dialogues” allowed for in-depth exchanges with high-level experts on different topics and to seek more comprehensive solutions for the future. In addition, a number of events were organised by and for Austrian municipal councillors in charge of European affairs. Several events addressed directly to young people and students.

21 Poland

The events were mainly organised as part of a decentralised approach. At the regional level, the regional centres for international debate organised public events in the 16 Polish regions in physical and virtual format. The topics for discussion covered the thematic areas of the conference, such as solidarity in times of crisis, agriculture and new technologies.

A national debate was also held on climate, digitalisation, the internal market, health, the EU in the world and migration.

22 Portugal

Following the first citizens’ event in Lisbon, which kicked off citizens’ participation in the conference, many events were organised in partnership with local authorities, universities, schools, social partners, youth organisations and local civil society organisations, among others. For example, a transnational event was organised with Spain to discuss key topics of interest to the future of the regions of both countries and the EU. In addition, decentralised national events took place on various topics such as migration and international partnerships, the future of European democracy and digital transformation.

23 Romania

The events were mainly organised or co-organised by the administration and institutes in

particular, with the active participation of civil society and youth organisations.

Discussions focused on a wide range of topics, such as digital transition, education, health, environment, sustainable development, economy, agriculture and EU strategic partnerships. The events took place in the capital and at the local level, and all age groups participated.

24 Slovenia

The idea was to encourage a broad debate in which civil society played a central role, as well as the participation of young people in particular.

The government organised a kick-off event, which was followed by several initiatives, such as the Bled Strategic Forum, whose main theme was the future of Europe, with a particular focus on EU

“WeAreEU” project, focused on the general public, including discussions with students and public consultations, and including a series of regional events organised as part of the WeAreEU Road Show. The second pillar was the national convention on the EU, focusing on expert inputs and analyses on topics such as the single market, disinformation and populism, and the digital and ecological transitions.

26 Finland

A series of regional consultations, including “the event of the most northern conference in the EU”, was organised by the government on various topics, such as sustainable growth, education and the rule of law. A survey was also put in place to inform the discussion.



enlargement and the Western Balkans. Other events focused on topics such as monetary policy, climate neutrality, youth and the role of the EU in a multipolar international environment.

25 Slovakia

The events organised were organised around two main pillars. The first pillar was the

Events were organised by the government in cooperation with cities, local authorities, universities, NGOs and youth organisations, as well as with the Finnish Parliament, the European Parliament and the European Commission Information Offices in Finland.

27 Sweden

The events were mainly organised on a decentralised basis as a joint exercise between the government, the national parliament, political parties, social partners, local and regional representatives, civil society organisations and other relevant actors in society.

For example, the Swedish Minister for European Affairs discussed the future of Europe with students from different schools and participated in meetings at municipal level to discuss the future of Europe and democracy with citizens. Digital media has also been used to participate in dialogues with citizens through, for example, Q & A sessions.

The above descriptions are not exhaustive. More information on national events can be found in a specific section of the Multilingual Digital Platform.

2. Meeting of young Europeans

The [European Youth Event \(EYE 2021\)](#) took place on 8-9 October 2021 and brought together 10,000 young people online and the European Parliament in Strasbourg to shape and exchange ideas on the future of Europe. *The EYE was a unique opportunity for young people aged 16 to 30 to interact in person and online, to inspire each other and to exchange views with experts, activists, influencers and decision-makers, at the very heart of European democracy.*

Since May 2021, in collaboration with pan-European youth organisations, more than 2,000 proposals from young citizens from across the European Union have been collected online. In addition, several sessions, both online before the event and during the EYE in Strasbourg, focused on the Conference on the Future of Europe. After the event, the 20 main ideas raised by participants, two ideas per theme of the conference, were collected in the [Youth Ideas Report for](#) the Conference on the Future of Europe, published in 23 languages.

The Youth Ideas Report was presented to the Conference Plenary on 23 October by young



participants from the European Citizens' Panels who also took part in EYE 2021. All ideas collected are available on: search.youthideas.eu.

3. Other events

In addition to the above events, many other institutions and stakeholders brought together citizens to discuss the future of Europe^V.

^VVisit the multilingual digital platform to access all the information about these events.

Throughout the Conference on the Future of Europe, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has worked to make it known and to help its extensive network of civil society organisations in the Member States to organise national consultations. In total, it supported the deployment of 75 events, including 33 at national level and 42 at central level. Of these events, 60 % published reports on the conference platform and these 45 events alone brought together more than 7,300 participants. In particular, the EESC launched its activities in June 2021 with a major conference — [Bringing the European project back to citizens](#) — and organised the “[Connecting EU](#)” seminar in Lisbon in November 2021 and a high-level event in Brussels in February 2022 “[Shaping Europe Together](#)”. The Committee also encouraged the use of the online platform, where it uploaded 60 new ideas, and launched an extensive social media communication campaign, with a potential audience of 32 million people on Twitter alone, to promote national events in English and in the local language and provided information before and after each plenary assembly and conference-related meeting.

The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) organised thematic debates in its commissions and plenary sessions, as well as 140 events at local, cross-border and interregional level involving 10,000 citizens and 200 local politicians. In addition, the first [ever survey of 1.2 million local politicians](#) in the EU-27 on their views on the future of Europe was published in October 2021. In addition, the CoR proposed [44 ideas](#) on the multilingual digital platform. In early 2022, [an independent high-level group on European democracy](#) presented ideas on how to improve democracy in the EU. A resolution with proposals for the final report of the conference was adopted by the CoR and a [12-point](#) manifesto drafted on behalf of the million local and regional politicians in the EU was endorsed at the [European Summit of Regions and Cities](#) in March 2022. A report [entitled Citizens, local politicians and the future of Europe](#) (March 2022) summarises all CoR activities in the context of the conference.

The three employers’ organisations associated with the EU Social Partnership,

[BusinessEurope](#), [SGI Europe](#) and [UEAPME](#), all published their priorities and contributions on the digital platform and presented them to the relevant working groups and plenary. In addition, all promoted the conference, both internally and externally, and organised events and engaged in dialogue with stakeholders in different fora. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) mobilised to contribute to the conference and participated in meetings of the Plenary Assembly and Working Groups. ETUC identified trade union proposals for a fairer future for Europe and published them on the online platform (these were among the most supported proposals). ETUC and its affiliates organised events and communication activities to present and discuss trade union proposals.

Civil society representatives — [the Civil Society Convention for the Conference on the Future of Europe](#) and the [European International Movement](#) — organised [numerous events](#) across Europe and were [active at plenary level](#). Civil society has involved hundreds of civil society organisations in a bottom-up approach through [thematic groups](#) to develop joint and comprehensive proposals in [various policy areas covered by the conference](#). The ideas fed the conference through the platform, working groups, plenary meetings and in direct contact with the Executive Board, Co-Chairs and the Joint Secretariat.

European Commission Representations in Member States, Europe Direct Centres, European Documentation Centres and EP Liaison Offices actively informed citizens about the Conference on the Future of Europe. The European Commission Representations reported 1400 activities that helped communicate and implement the conference across Europe. They organised or actively participated in more than 850 events, of which about 65 % targeted young people and women to encourage their participation in the conference in general. The EP Liaison Offices have organised more than 1300 promotional activities across the Member States.

Thematic workshops on the main topics of the conference were also organised in the presence of MEPs, citizens, stakeholders, national and regional authorities and local media, in order to increase the visibility of the conference. The European Documentation

Centres reported more than 120 actions related to the communication of the conference.

Europe Direct Centres reported more than 1000 thematic events on the conference and more

than 600 promotional activities, including a wide range of youth groups and organisations. The European Documentation Centres reported more than 120 actions related to the communication of the conference.

III. The Plenary Assembly of the Conference

A. Role and functioning of the plenary assembly

A plenary assembly of the conference was set up to discuss the recommendations made by the national and European citizens' panels, grouped by theme, and without the outcome of the debates being determined in advance or their scope limited to predefined policy areas.

Contributions collected on the multilingual platform were also discussed, as appropriate. The plenary assembly had a unique composition: it included, for the first time, citizens representing European and national citizens' events and panels, representatives of the EU institutions and its advisory bodies, elected representatives at national, regional and local level, as well as representatives of civil society and social partners.

The recommendations were presented by the citizens and discussed with them; the plenary then had to present its proposals on a consensual basis^{VI} to the Executive Board. The Conference Plenary met seven times between June 2021 and April 2022.

The plenary assembly of the conference consisted of 108 representatives of the European Parliament, 54 representatives of the Council and three representatives of^{VII} the European Commission, as well as 108 representatives of all national parliaments on an equal footing, and citizens.

Eighty representatives of the European Citizens' Panels, of which at least one third were under 25, the President of the European Youth Forum and 27^{VIII} representatives of national events and/or national citizens' panels also participated.

Eighteen representatives of the Committee of the Regions and 18 representatives of the Economic and Social Committee, six elected representatives of regional authorities and six elected representatives of local authorities, 12 representatives of the social partners and eight representatives of civil society also participated. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy was invited to discuss the EU's international role.

Representatives of key stakeholders, such as representatives of partners from the Western Balkans, Ukraine, religious, philosophical and non-confessional groups were also invited.

The meetings of the Plenary Assembly were jointly chaired by the Co-Chairs of the Conference. The plenary meetings of the conference took place in the European Parliament buildings in Strasbourg. Due to the applicable health and safety regulations, the first five meetings of the Conference Plenary were held in a hybrid format, while the last two were held in person. The conference plenary meetings were live streamed and all meeting documents were made available to the public on the multilingual digital platform.

VI A consensus was to be reached between, at least, representatives of the European Parliament, the Council, the European Commission, and representatives of national parliaments, on an equal footing. If the position of citizens' representatives of national events and/or European or national citizens' panels was manifestly diverging, this position should be included in this report.

VII Other members of the European Commission were invited to the plenary, especially when issues within their portfolios were discussed.

VIII One per Member State.

B. Working groups

In accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference, the Co-Chairs proposed to the Conference Plenary that nine thematic working groups be set up, on the basis of the themes of the Multilingual Digital Platform, in order to provide input to prepare the debates and proposals of the Conference Plenary, in accordance with the parameters of the Joint Declaration. In October 2021, the Co-Chairs agreed on the mandate for the working groups. The various working groups covered the following themes: Climate change and the environment; Health; A stronger economy, social justice and employment; The EU in the world; Values and rights, rule of law, security; Digital transformation; European democracy; Migration; and Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

The Working Groups presented their contribution to the Conference Plenary by examining the recommendations of the respective national and European Citizens' Panels, as well as the contributions published on the Multilingual Digital Platform on the nine themes gathered in the framework of the Conference. The members of the plenary assembly of the conference were divided among the nine working groups as follows: twelve members per working group for the European Parliament and national parliaments, six for the Council, three for representatives of national citizens' panels or national events, two for the Committee of the Regions and two for the Economic and Social Committee, one or two for the social partners, one for civil society and one for elected members of local and regional authorities, and representatives of

European citizens' panels. Representatives of the European Citizens' Panels participated in the work of the working group responsible for their panel. In addition, specific arrangements have been made to allow members of the College of Commissioners to participate in working groups according to their portfolios.

The Working Groups held lively debates and worked on draft proposals prepared under the guidance of the Chair and Spokesperson, selected from among the representatives of the European Citizens' Panels in the Working Group, with the assistance of the Joint Secretariat. The working groups were to work on the basis of the consensus set out in Rule 17 of the Conference's Rules of Procedure. The Chair and the Spokesperson then presented the results of the Working Group to the Plenary Assembly. The Chair of the Working Group was assisted by the Joint Secretariat. The joint conference secretariat prepared the synthesis reports of each meeting of the working group under the guidance of the chair and in consultation with the members of the working group.

The working groups met on the margins of the Conference plenary meetings between October 2021 and 8 April 2022, as well as online in December 2021. Some working groups held additional meetings. The working group meetings were broadcast live from 20 January 2022. Their synthesis reports have been duly published in the "Conference Plenary Assembly" section on the Multilingual Digital Platform.

C. Chronological summary

INAUGURAL PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CONFERENCE, 19 JUNE 2021

The inaugural plenary of the conference was held on 19 June 2021 in a hybrid format^{IX}. It allowed members of the plenary to listen to a presentation and hold a general debate on the purpose and expectations of the conference. The Co-Chairs underlined the unprecedented nature of this exercise of deliberative democracy at EU level, which strengthened representative democracy, placing citizens at the heart of policy-making in the European Union. The Co-Chairs also outlined the functioning of the three pillars of the conference: the multilingual digital platform, the European and national citizens' panels and the plenary assembly.

In addition, members of the plenary were informed of the intention to set up nine thematic working groups as well as the calendar of the conference. In the ensuing debate, in which more than 150 participants took the floor, a wide variety of topics were discussed. As the selection of participants in the European Citizens' Panels has not yet been completed, the President of the European Youth Forum and 27 representatives of national events and/or national citizens' panels participated to represent the citizen component.

SECOND PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CONFERENCE, 22-23 OCTOBER 2021

The second plenary assembly of the conference was held on 22-23 October 2021 in a hybrid format, with the participation, for the first time, of representatives of the European Citizens' Panels. Members of the plenary had the opportunity to hear a presentation on the state of play of the four European Citizens' Panels and hold a debate. In addition, representatives of national events and panels were able to present the events organised at national level. A report on the European Youth Event (EYE) was presented to the Conference Plenary; it provided an overview of the 20 concrete ideas selected by the young citizens who participated in the meeting.

^{IX} A first event dedicated to European citizens took place on 17 June 2021 in Lisbon in hybrid format, ahead of the inaugural plenary of 19 June, in order to launch citizens' participation in the conference.

In the ensuing debate, emphasis was placed on the innovative nature of the multilingual digital platform, which gave citizens a voice in the chapter and a place to debate in all the official languages of the EU. This debate was based on the second interim report on the Platform. Western Balkan partners were invited to participate in this plenary meeting as key stakeholders.

THIRD PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CONFERENCE, 21-22 JANUARY 2022

The third plenary assembly of the conference, which took place on 21-22 January 2022, was the first dedicated to the official presentation of recommendations from European citizens' panels, as well as related national citizens' panels. This plenary was the first to take place after the final finalisation of the recommendations of some European citizens' panels, namely: panels 2 (European Democracy; values and rights, rule of law, security) and 3 (Climate change and environment; health). The plenary was held in a hybrid format, with the participation of more than 400 members of the conference plenary either on-site or remotely.

This plenary was also marked by the death, shortly before, of the President of the European Parliament, David Maria Sassoli. The Co-Chairs paid tribute to his memory at the opening of the meeting. The debates of this plenary were organised by theme, on the topics covered by the European Citizens' Panels 2 and 3.

The discussions took place in an innovative interactive format, including moments devoted to citizens' feedback as well as a special system of "blue card" questions that allowed spontaneous and lively exchanges on recommendations made by citizens.

FOURTH PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CONFERENCE, 11-12 MARCH 2022

The fourth plenary assembly of the conference was also devoted to the presentation of recommendations from the European Citizens' Panels, as well as related national citizens' panels. This plenary took place after the final finalisation of the recommendations of the two remaining European Citizens' Panels, namely: panels 1 (A Stronger Economy, Social Justice

and Employment; education, culture, youth and sport; digital transformation) and 4 (the EU in the world; migration).

As at the January plenary, the debates of this plenary were organised by theme. The topics discussed this time were those of the European Citizens' Panels 1 and 4. Discussions on the recommendations made by citizens again gave rise to lively and in-depth exchanges, supported by an innovative interactive format.

FIFTH PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CONFERENCE, 25-26 MARCH 2022

The fifth plenary assembly marked the entry of the conference into its next phase, with the launch of the process of defining the proposals of the plenary on the basis of recommendations made by citizens. Therefore, the members of the plenary, having prepared themselves in the smaller thematic framework of the working groups, held, for the first time, debates on the nine themes of the conference: a stronger economy, social justice and employment; education, culture, youth and sport; digital transformation; European democracy; values and rights, rule of law, security; climate change and the environment; health; the EU in the world; migration. This plenary was also an opportunity for representatives of national events organised in the 27 EU Member States to present the results of their initiatives.

SIXTH PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CONFERENCE, 8-9 APRIL 2022

At the sixth plenary meeting of the conference, the finalisation of the draft proposals of the plenary was completed.

Once the last meetings of the thematic working groups were completed, all members of the

plenary, through nine substantive debates, expressed their views and comments on the draft proposals they had prepared in recent months. This exchange was also an opportunity for them to reflect on the unique process of drawing up the plenary's proposals, based on citizens' recommendations, and on the work carried out since their formulation. Citizens, in particular, stressed the unique human experience and added value of this deliberation process, which united them around this joint project. This debate fed into the final draft proposals to be submitted to the Conference's most recent plenary assembly.

SEVENTH PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CONFERENCE, 29-30 APRIL 2022

The seventh and final plenary assembly of the Conference on the Future of Europe was an important milestone, concluding a process of intense deliberations that lasted several months with the formulation of 49 proposals. The 49 proposals were presented and formulated by the plenary to the Executive Board on a consensual basis. This consensus was reached between the representatives of the European Parliament, the Council, the European Commission and the national parliaments.

Representatives of the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, regional and local elected representatives as well as representatives of the social partners and civil society also expressed their support for the process and supported the proposals.

The citizen component presented its final position on the proposals (see key messages below).

At the closing plenary (29-30 April 2022), the 108 citizens of the citizens component presented their final position on the plenary proposals. Their presentation was conceived collectively and presented by 17 of them in the form of a narrative speech, during the final debate. The text below is a summary of the key messages of their interventions.

**

We begin by thanking the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission for giving us the opportunity to help shape Europe's future. We have met with European colleagues from across the Union, from different panels and events, with political representatives and social actors, and have broadened our horizons. We grew up as Europeans. For this, we have all made sacrifices: we were taken out of our daily lives, taken days off and spent, for the members of the European Citizens' Panels, nine weekends away from our families. But we had an incredible and unique experience. For us, it wasn't a waste of time.

There were ups and downs along the way. We did not always get an answer to our questions. We know that it will take time for the proposals to be implemented. But we are convinced that you will do what it takes to

achieve this, out of respect for our joint work. If we, the citizens, have been able to overcome our differences, language barriers, to work together and raise ourselves to your level, you can too.

**

We have all come a long way and now that our work in plenary is over, we can be proud of it. We see 8 cross-cutting themes that give a clear and strong mandate for the future of Europe.

First, a European Union based on solidarity, social justice and equality. Indeed, a great concern for citizens is to find equal conditions and rights in different areas: health care, social services, lifelong learning, equal opportunities for people living in rural and urban areas, taking into account demographic considerations. In the future, Europeans in all Member States and regions should no longer be discriminated against on account of their age, place of residence, nationality, sex, religion or political preferences. They should be offered decent living standards, wages and working conditions. The EU must be more than an economic union. Member States need to show more solidarity with each other. We are a family and we must behave as such in crisis situations.

Secondly, the EU must dare and act quickly to become a leader in the environment and climate, accelerating the transition to green energy, improving its rail network, encouraging sustainable transport and a truly circular economy. There's no time to waste. The EU needs to drive change in many policy areas: agriculture, biodiversity, economy, energy, transport, education, health, digital transformation and climate diplomacy. We have the research capabilities, economic strength and geopolitical leverage to do so. If we make climate a priority, we can hope for a prosperous future.

Thirdly, Europe needs a more democratic Union. European citizens love the EU, but let's be frank: it's not always easy. You called on us to help you and you asked us: what should European democracy look like in the future? And we answered you: We, the citizens, want a Europe in which decisions are taken in a transparent and speedy way, where the principle of unanimity is reconsidered and in which we, the citizens, are regularly and seriously involved.

Fourthly, the EU needs more harmonisation in some areas, and to get closer as a Union. The war strikes at our gates in the East, which calls for us to be more united than ever and to give the EU more foreign affairs skills. This conference can serve as a basis for the creation of a more united and politically coherent Europe. It all comes down to this word: Union. We cannot describe ourselves as such if we fail to achieve the collaboration that this conference has illustrated.

Fifthly, the EU must gain autonomy and ensure its global competitiveness. Throughout this process, we talked about achieving this goal in key strategic areas: agriculture, energy, industry, health. We must avoid being dependent on third countries for many sensitive products. We need to build on the talent of our workforce, prevent brain drain and provide adequate skills training to citizens at all stages of their lives, regardless of where they live in the EU. We cannot have huge disparities within the EU and young people without perspective in one country, forced to go to another.

Sixth, the future of the EU is based on its values. These have guided our work. When we started, no one could have imagined that a war would break out on our continent. This fight for freedom makes us aware of the chance we have to live in a peaceful union. Behind all our proposals, these values are expressed: a humane and dignified reception of migrants, equal access to health, the fight against corruption, the call for the protection of nature and biodiversity, and a more democratic Union.

Seventh, in the future, citizens should feel more European and get to know the EU better. This is a cross-cutting issue that has underpinned the work of all panels. Digital transformation, education, mobility and exchanges can give substance to this European identity, which complements, without calling them into question, our national identities. Many of us did not feel European before this Conference: it emerged here, slowly, by exchanging with each other. We were lucky enough to have this opportunity, but many don't. This is why information, communication and awareness are so important.

Finally, an **eighth** cross-cutting theme, extremely important to us, is education and the empowerment of citizens in general. For this conference, you decided to invite citizens from the age of 16. We are grateful for this because, more than ever, it is necessary to empower young people. The high rate of youth abstention shows us that the link between youth and politics needs to be reconnected. They must also be economically and socially accountable: it is still too difficult to enter the labour market, to assert one's social rights. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they felt abandoned and many still suffer the consequences for their mental health. But all Europeans need to be empowered, not just young people: through mobility programmes and lifelong learning, we need to broaden the horizons of all Europeans. We must also train citizens in democracy, civic participation and media literacy. We need a truly holistic approach.

**

No one knew what the result would be. 27 countries, 24 languages, different ages. And yet, when we worked together, we felt connected: our brains, our thoughts, our experiences. We are not experts from the EU or one of the themes of the conference, but we are real life experts, and we have our stories. We go to work, we live in the countryside and in the suburbs, we work at night, we study, we have children, we take public transport. We can rely on our diversity. Consensus was reached on the proposals between the four different components, and within the citizen component. We agree and support all the proposals that are now in your hands. We express a diverging position on Measure 38.4, third point, because it does not emanate from European panels or national panels and has not been sufficiently discussed in the Working Group of the Whole. That is why we do not comment on the substance or the relevance of this measure. With this in mind, we invite you to consider these proposals as a whole, to implement them, and not just those that suit you most and are easily applicable. Do it transparently. We have worked on these proposals with dedication and passion, we are proud of our work: respect him.

The Conference on the Future of Europe went through a pandemic and witnessed a war in Europe, demonstrating its full solidarity with the Ukrainian people. The year was hectic for the participants, and for all Europeans. But the Conference continued its work, against the winds and tides. On behalf of the citizens of the Conference, allow us to conclude by sending you a simple message: we feel European, we feel committed and listened to in the democratisation process, we believe in the EU and we want to continue to believe in it. So, from the bottom of our hearts, read the proposals well and implement them, for the sake of Europe's future.

Representatives of the Council component of the Plenary Assembly abstained from commenting on the substance of the proposals, but instead supported and encouraged citizens' activities and took note of their recommendations. After 9 May 2022, the Council will determine how to follow up on the outcome of the Conference, within its own sphere of competence and in accordance with the Treaties.

The Executive Board of the Conference on the Future of Europe takes note of the proposals made by the Plenary Assembly and presents them as the final outcome of the Conference. Providing guidance on the future of Europe, these proposals were obtained after almost a year of deliberations, within the framework set by the Joint Declaration and the Rules of Procedure of the Conference.



IV. The proposals of the plenary assembly



Climate change and environment

1. Proposal: Agriculture, food production, biodiversity and ecosystems, pollution

Objective: Safe, sustainable, fair, climate-responsive and affordable food production that respects the principles of sustainability and the environment and protects biodiversity and ecosystems while ensuring food security.

Measures:

1. Bring the concepts of green and blue economies to the forefront by promoting efficient and environmentally and climate-friendly agriculture and fisheries in the EU and around the world, including organic farming and other innovative and sustainable forms of agriculture, such as vertical agriculture, which allow more production with fewer inputs while reducing emissions and environmental impacts, but by continuing to ensure productivity and food security (Panel 3 — Recommendations 1, 2 and 10; panel 2 — Recommendation 4).
2. Redirect subsidies and strengthen incentives for organic and sustainable agriculture that meet specific environmental standards and contribute to achieving global climate goals (Panel 3 — Recommendations 1 and 12).
3. Apply the principles of the circular economy to agriculture and encourage measures to combat food waste (debate in the WG, Multilingual Digital Platform — NPC).
4. Significantly reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers, in line with existing objectives, while continuing to ensure food safety, and support research to develop more sustainable and nature-based alternatives (panel 3 — Recommendation 10, debate in the WG).
5. Introduce certification of carbon removals based on robust, robust and transparent carbon accounting (plenary debate).
6. Increase research and innovation, in particular in technological solutions related to sustainable production, resistance to pests and precision agriculture, as well as communication, advisory systems and training for farmers and by farmers (panel 3 — recommendation 10, debate in the WG, plenary debate).
7. Eliminate social dumping and promote a just green transition to better jobs in the agricultural sector, with high-quality safety, health and working conditions (debate in the WG).
8. Discuss aspects such as the use of plastic in agricultural films and ways to reduce water consumption in agriculture (PNM).
9. Reasoned meat rearing and production focused on animal welfare and sustainability through measures such as clear labelling, high quality and common animal husbandry and transport standards, strengthening the link between livestock and feed (panel 3 — Recommendations 16 and 30).

2. Proposal: Agriculture, food production, biodiversity and ecosystems, pollution

Objective: Protect and restore biodiversity, landscape and oceans, and eliminate pollution.

Measures:

1. Creating, restoring, managing and expanding protected areas for biodiversity

conservation (Recommendation FR, Panel 3 — Recommendation 11).

2. Set up a coercion and reward system to combat pollution, applying the polluter pays principle, which should also be integrated into tax measures and with better awareness and incentives (panel 3 — recommendation 32, FR recommendation, plenary debate).
3. Broaden the role of municipalities in urban planning and the construction of new buildings that support blue and green infrastructure, avoid further sealing of land and put an end to it, mandatory green spaces for new constructions in order to promote biodiversity and urban forests (panel 3 — recommendation 5, panel 1 — recommendation 18, recommendation FR).
4. Protect insects, in particular native and pollinating species, including through protection against invasive species and better enforcement of existing rules (panel 1 — Recommendation 18).
5. Support afforestation and reforestation, including forests destroyed by fire, apply responsible forest management and encourage better use of wood to replace other materials. Set binding national targets in all EU Member States for reforestation by native trees and local flora, taking into account different national situations and specificities (panel 3 — recommendation 14, panel 1 — recommendation 18).
6. Enforce and extend the ban on single-use plastics (SMP).
7. Protecting water sources and combating river and ocean pollution, including through research and combating microplastic pollution, and promoting environmentally friendly transport using the best available technologies and setting up Union research and funding for alternative maritime fuels and technologies (NMP, debate in the WG).
8. Limit light pollution (debate in the WG).

3. Proposal: Climate change, energy, transport

Objective: Increasing European energy security and achieving the Union's energy independence while ensuring a just transition and providing sufficient sustainable and affordable energy for Europeans. Tackling climate change by giving the EU a global leadership role in sustainable energy policy and respecting global climate protection objectives.

Measures:

1. Achieve and, where possible, accelerate the green transition, including by investing more in renewable energy, in order to reduce external energy dependence, also recognising the role of local and regional authorities in the green transition (debate in the WG).
2. Examine, within energy policies, the geopolitical and security implications of all energy suppliers from third countries, in particular in terms of human rights, ecology, good governance and the rule of law (debate in the WG).
3. Reduce dependencies on oil and gas imports through energy efficiency projects, support for affordable public transport, a high-speed freight rail network and the expansion of clean and renewable energy supply (panel 4 — recommendation 2, panel 1 — recommendation 10, FR and DE recommendations).
4. Improve quality and interconnectivity, ensure maintenance and transform electricity infrastructure and grids in order to enhance security and enable the transition to renewable energy sources (panel 1 — recommendation 10, debate in the WG).
5. Invest in technologies capable of producing renewable energy, such as efficient production of green hydrogen, especially in sectors that are difficult to electrify (panel 3 — recommendation 31, debate in the WG).
6. Invest in the exploration of new energy sources and environmentally friendly storage methods and, pending a tangible solution, make additional investments in existing optimal energy production and storage solutions (Panel 3 — Recommendations 9 and 31).
7. Make CO₂ filters^{mandatory} in fossil fuel power plants and provide financial support to Member States that do not have financial resources to implement CO₂ filters (panel 3 — Recommendation 29).
8. Ensuring a just transition, protecting workers and jobs through adequate funding for transition and further research, reforming the tax system through fairer taxation and anti-tax fraud measures and ensuring an inclusive approach to governance in policy-making at all levels (e.g. ambitious retraining and upskilling measures, strong social protection, keeping public services in the hands of the state, maintaining health and safety rules at work) (Plenary debate, debate in the WG, NPC).
9. Introduce an investment package for climate-friendly technologies and innovations, which should be financed through climate-related import duties and climate-related carbon adjustment levies (DE Recommendation).
10. At the end of a transition period, fossil fuels should no longer receive subsidies and no funding for traditional gas infrastructure should take place (debate in the WG).
11. To increase the EU's leadership and role and responsibility to promote ambitious climate action and a just transition and to contribute to responding to loss and damage on the international stage, where the UN must be at the heart of the action (NL Recommendation, WG debate).

4. Proposal: Climate change, energy, transport

Objective: Provide modern, safe, ecological and quality infrastructure that ensures connectivity, including in rural and island areas, including through affordable public transport.

Measures:

1. Support public transport and develop an efficient, reliable and affordable European public transport network, particularly in rural and island areas, through additional incentives for the use of public transport (panel 3 — Recommendation 36, panel 4 — recommendation 2).
2. Invest in high-speed night trains and set a single standard of environmentally friendly rail technology in Europe to offer a credible alternative and facilitate the possibility of replacing and discouraging short-haul flights (debate in the WG, NPM).
3. Encourage the purchase, taking into account their affordability for households, and the (shared) use of electric vehicles that meet a good battery life standard as well as investments in the necessary charging infrastructure and investments in the development of other clean technologies for vehicles whose electrification is difficult to achieve (panel 3 — recommendation 38).
4. Establish broadband connectivity to the internet and mobile network in rural and island areas (panel 3 — Recommendation 36).
5. Improve existing transport infrastructure from an ecological point of view (panel 3 — Recommendation 37).
6. Require urban development programmes for “greener” cities with fewer emissions, with specific areas without cars in cities, without harming commercial areas (panel 3 — recommendation 6).
7. Improve the infrastructure for bicycles and give more rights and legal protection to cyclists and pedestrians, especially in the event of accidents with a motor vehicle, ensuring road safety and providing training on the road code (Panel 3 — Recommendation 4).
8. Regulate the mining of cryptocurrencies, which use a considerable amount of energy (PNM).

5. Proposal: Sustainable consumption, packaging and production

Objective: Improve the use and management of materials in the Union in order to foster the circular economy, become more autonomous and be less dependent. Develop a circular economy by encouraging sustainable production and products in the Union. Ensure that all products placed on the Union market comply with common Union environmental standards.

Measures:

1. Stricter and harmonised Union production standards and transparent labelling scheme for all products sold on the EU market with regard to their sustainability/environmental footprint and longevity through a QR code and an ecoscore or digital product passport (panel 3 — recommendations 8, 13, 20 and 21, panel 1 — recommendation 16, panel 4 — recommendation 13).
2. Review global supply chains, including in agricultural production, to reduce EU dependency and shorten circuits (PNM).
3. Further prevent waste generation by setting prevention and reuse targets and setting quality standards for waste sorting systems (debate in WG, FR Recommendation).
4. Phase out unsustainable forms of packaging, regulate environmentally friendly packaging and avoid waste of materials in packaging through financial incentives and sanctions as well as investment in alternative research (panel 3 — recommendations 15 and 25, panel 1 — recommendation 12, panel 4 — recommendation 16).
5. Introduce a European packaging deposit system and advanced standards for containers (panel 3 — recommendations 22 and 23, NPC).
6. Launch an EU knowledge platform on how to ensure the sustainable and long-term use of products and how to 'repair' them, including information available from consumer associations (panel 3 — Recommendation 20).
7. Introduce measures to combat early or premature obsolescence, including planned obsolescence, ensure longer safeguards, promote the right to repair and ensure the availability and accessibility of compatible spare parts (panel 3 — recommendation 20, FR recommendation, recommendation DE, panel 1 — recommendation 14).
8. Create a market for secondary raw materials taking into account mandatory rates of recycled content by encouraging reduced use of raw materials (debate in the WG).
9. Swift implementation of an ambitious textile strategy and definition of a mechanism for consumers to know that the product meets sustainability criteria (panel 3 — recommendation 28, debate in the WG).
10. EU measures to allow consumers to use products longer and encourage them to do so (panel 3 — Recommendation 20).
11. Strengthen environmental standards and enforce regulations on the export of waste in the EU and to third countries (panel 4 — Recommendation 15, NPC).
12. Introduce measures to limit the advertising of environmentally harmful products by introducing a mandatory disclaimer for products particularly harmful to the environment (panel 3 — Recommendation 22).
13. Apply stricter manufacturing standards and fair working conditions along the entire production and value chain (panel 3 — Recommendation 21).

6. Proposal: Information, awareness, dialogue and way of life

Objective: Encourage knowledge, awareness, education and dialogue on the environment, climate change, energy use and sustainability.

Measures:

1. Create an interactive platform whose facts have been verified in order to provide diverse and regularly updated scientific information in the field of the environment (panel 3 — recommendation 33).
2. Support ecological awareness campaigns, including a long-term European campaign for sustainable consumption and lifestyle (Recommendations DE, NL and FR, Panel 3 — Recommendation 7).
3. Encourage and facilitate dialogue and consultations between all levels of decision-making, in particular with young people and at local level (DE, NL and FR Recommendations, Panel 3 — Recommendations 27 and 35, plenary debate).
4. Definition by the Union, with the assistance of the Member States, of a common European Charter targeting environmental issues and promoting environmental awareness among all citizens (panel 3 — recommendation 7).
5. Provide training courses and teaching materials for all in order to improve knowledge on climate and sustainability and to enable lifelong learning on environmental issues (panel 1 — recommendations 15 and 35, panel 3 — recommendation 24, WG debate).
6. Integrate food production and biodiversity protection into the education system, including the benefits of unprocessed food over processed food, and encourage the creation of school gardens and grants for urban gardening projects and vertical agriculture (panel 3 — recommendation 5, panel 1 — recommendation 18). Consider making biodiversity a compulsory subject in schools and raising public awareness of biodiversity through media campaigns and 'competitions' promoted across the EU (local government competitions) (panel 3 — recommendation 5, panel 1 — recommendation 18).
7. Strengthen the role and action of the Union in the field of environment and education by extending the competences of the Union in the field of education for climate change and the environment and by extending decision-making by qualified majority to topics defined as 'European interest', such as the environment (NL and FR recommendations).
8. Promote a plant diet for reasons of climate protection and environmental preservation (PNM).



“Health”

7.Proposal: A healthy diet and a healthy lifestyle

Objective: Ensure that all Europeans have access to healthy eating education and access to healthy and affordable food as a basis for a healthy lifestyle, in particular through the following measures:

Measures¹:

1. Establish minimum standards of food quality and traceability, in particular by limiting the use of antibiotics and other veterinary medicinal products to what is strictly necessary to protect the health and welfare of animals, instead of using them in a preventive manner, and to ensure the strengthening of controls in this regard. [#23, #17]
2. Educate citizens about healthy habits to adopt from an early age, and encourage them to make safe and healthy choices by taxing processed foods that are not and making health information about food easily accessible; to this end, establish a European-wide assessment system for processed foods based on scientific and independent expertise, as well as a label on the use of hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors in food production, and in this regard strengthen the monitoring and enforcement of existing rules and consider strengthening them. [#18, #19, GT]
3. Encourage dialogue with actors in the food chain, from production to sale, as part of corporate social responsibility for healthy food. [#19, GT]
4. Support, at Union level, the provision of healthy, varied and affordable food in public service establishments, such as school canteens, hospitals or healthcare facilities, including through specific funding. [#3, Plenary, WG]
5. Invest in research on the consequences of the use of antibiotics and the effects of

hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors on human health. [#17, #18]²

8. Proposal: Strengthening the health care system

Objective: Strengthening the resilience and quality of our health systems, including through:

Measures³:

1. The creation of a European Health Data Area, which would facilitate the exchange of health data; individual medical records could be made available — on a voluntary basis — using an EU individual electronic health passport, in compliance with data protection rules. [#41, GT]
2. Adequate working conditions, in particular through strong social dialogue, including wages and working arrangements, and harmonisation of training and certification standards for health professionals; networking and exchange programmes should be developed, such as an Erasmus for medical schools, which would contribute significantly to skills development. In order to retain talent in Europe and enable young professionals to broaden their knowledge and gain professional experience, EU exchange programmes should be put in place to ensure that our best life sciences brains are not attracted to third countries. [#39, GT]
3. Ensure strategic autonomy at Union level in order to avoid dependence on third countries [NL2]⁴ for medicinal products (in particular active ingredients) and medical devices (including raw materials); in particular, a list of essential and priority medicines and treatments, but also of innovative medicines and treatments (such as biotechnological solutions) should be established at Union level, building on existing European agencies and HERA, in order to ensure their availability for citizens. Consider organising a coordinated strategic storage throughout the Union. In order to achieve the necessary coordinated and long-term action at Union level, include health and healthcare among the competences shared between the Union and its Member States by amending Article 4 TFEU. [#40, #49, plenary, WG]
4. Continue the development, coordination and funding of existing health research and innovation programmes without compromising other health-related programmes, in particular for the European Reference Networks, as they form the basis for the development of health care networks for highly specialised and complex treatments. [#42, #43, GT]
5. Invest in health systems, in particular in the public and not-for-profit domain, infrastructure and digital health and ensure that healthcare providers respect the principles of full accessibility, affordability and quality of services, thus ensuring that resources are not drained by health professionals with little or no concern for the public interest. [#51, GT]
6. Make firm recommendations to Member States to invest in efficient, accessible, affordable, quality and resilient health systems, including in the context of the European Semester. The impact of the war in Ukraine on public health demonstrates the need for further development of resilient health systems and solidarity mechanisms. [#51, GT]

9. Proposal: A broader view of health

Objective: Adopt a holistic approach to health by addressing, in addition to diseases and treatments, health culture and prevention, and by promoting a common understanding of the problems faced by sick or disabled people, in line with the One Health approach, which should be underlined as a cross-cutting and fundamental principle encompassing all Union policies.

Measures⁵:

1. Improve understanding of mental health issues and how to address them, including early childhood and early diagnosis, building on good practices established across the Union, which should be easily accessible through the Public Health Good Practice Portal. In order to raise awareness, the Union institutions and relevant stakeholders should organise events for the exchange of best practices and help their members to disseminate them in their own constituency. An EU action plan on mental health should be developed, which would provide a long-term strategy on mental health, including research, and also address the availability of professionals, including for minors, and the establishment of a European Year of Mental Health in the near future.
2. Develop, at EU level, a standard educational programme on healthy lifestyles, which also covers sex education. The programme should also include actions aimed at both a healthy lifestyle and the protection of the environment, and how they can help prevent many diseases, such as cycling as a healthy means of daily travel. It would be available free of charge to Member States and schools which could, where appropriate, use it in their programmes. Such a program would address stereotypes about people who are sick or disabled. [#46, GT]
3. Develop practical first aid training, which would be offered free of charge to all citizens, and consider the possibility of regular courses as a common practice for students as well as in the workplace. A minimum number of defibrillators should also be available in public places in all Member States. [#50]
4. Expand the Health Week initiative, which would take place throughout the Union in the same week and during which all health issues should be addressed and discussed. Also consider initiatives of the Year of Health, starting with the Year of Mental Health. [#44, GT]
5. Recognise as a regular medical treatment for taxation hormonal contraceptive products used for medical reasons, for example in cases of fibromyalgia and endometriosis, as well as feminine hygienic products. Ensure access to reproductive treatments for all people with fertility problems. [#45, GT]



A Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment

Introduction

We live in exceptional circumstances and the European Union will be judged on its efforts to emerge stronger from the current crises, with a more sustainable, inclusive, competitive and resilient growth model. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic have changed the face of the EU. The conference will also have to address the social and economic consequences of this war in an already very difficult post-pandemic context. At the same time, climate change still poses a threat to humanity and will have a dramatic impact on the economy and our societies. It is clear from the recommendations received that citizens call for stronger EU action. Unresolved transnational challenges, such as inequality, competitiveness, health, climate change, migration, digitalisation or fair taxation, require appropriate European solutions. It is also clear from the recommendations and discussions that we need a comprehensive strategy to ensure greater well-being for European citizens in different aspects of their lives. Some elements of this strategy are included in existing policies and can be achieved by making full use of the existing institutional framework at European and national level; others will require new policies and, in some cases, treaty changes. However, new policies and treaty changes should be seen as means of improving well-being and not as ends in themselves. It is both possible and necessary to redefine the Union so as to guarantee its strategic autonomy, its sustainable growth, the improvement of living and working conditions and human progress, without exhausting or destroying the resources of our planet, under a renewed social contract. These recommendations aim to achieve these objectives. The proposals below should be read taking into account that citizens across Europe have made a variety of views and recommendations. It is this diversity of views that is one of Europe's incomparable assets.

11. Proposal: Sustainable growth and innovation

Objective: We propose that the EU support the transition to a sustainable and resilient growth model, taking into account the green and digital transitions with a strong social dimension in the European Semester and empowering citizens, trade unions and businesses. Conventional macroeconomic indicators and GDP could be complemented by new indicators to respond to new European priorities, such as the European Green Deal or the European Pillar of Social Rights, and to better reflect the green and digital transitions and people's well-being. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures⁸:

1. Promote greener production processes by companies, help companies find the best solutions and provide positive and negative incentives. (PCE 11 and 12), and increase local production and consumption (discussions).
2. Working towards a more sustainable and circular economy by addressing the problem of planned obsolescence and guaranteeing the right to reparation (PCE 14).
3. Examine the economic governance of the Union and the European Semester to ensure that the green and digital transitions, social justice and social progress go hand in hand with economic competitiveness, without ignoring the economic and budgetary nature of the European Semester. In addition, there is a need to better involve social partners and local and regional authorities in the implementation of the European Semester in order to improve its application and accountability (e-platform, discussions).
4. Combat the use of single-use plastic packaging/containers (PCE 12).
5. Expand the use of European technology and make it a viable alternative to foreign technology (discussions).
6. Promote research into new materials and technologies, as well as innovative use of existing materials, while avoiding duplication of research efforts (PCE 9, NL 1).
7. Consider sustainability, affordability and accessibility of energy, taking into account energy poverty and dependence on third countries, by increasing the share of sustainably produced energy (CEP 10, LT 3, IT 1.1).
8. Raise awareness among businesses and citizens to adopt more sustainable behaviour and ensure a just transition based on social dialogue and quality jobs (CEP 12 and online platform).
9. Include ambitious social, labour and health standards, including health and safety at work, in new EU trade agreements. (LT8)

12. Proposal: Strengthening the Union's competitiveness and further deepening the single market

Objective: We propose to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the EU economy, single market and industry and to address strategic dependencies. We need to promote an entrepreneurial culture in the EU, in which innovative companies of all sizes, in particular micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups, are encouraged and can thrive in order to contribute to more resilient and inclusive societies. A strong and viable market economy is needed to facilitate the vision of a more social Europe. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures⁹:

1. Develop a clear vision of the European economy and build on Europe's strengths, quality and diversity, while taking into account economic and other differences between Member States, and promote cooperation and competition between businesses. (NL 1 & 2)
2. Consolidate what has been done with regard to the single currency and the interconnection of payment systems and telecommunications. (IT 4.a.2)
3. Reduce the standardisation of products and recognise local and regional specificities in terms of culture and production (respect for production traditions). (IT 2.2)
4. Strengthen upward social and economic convergence within the Single Market, completing existing initiatives such as the Banking Union and the Capital Markets Union and implementing a forward-looking reform of our Economic and Monetary Union (discussions).
5. Promote policies for a strong industrial base and innovation in key enabling technologies, as well as a forward-looking climate policy, coupled with industrial competitiveness with a strong social dimension, based on social dialogue and well-functioning industrial relations (discussions).
6. In all new initiatives, pay particular attention to SMEs, which are the backbone of our economy. The principle of "thinking SMEs first" must be respected in all EU legislative proposals and the SME test should be reinforced in the Commission's impact assessments, in line with clear principles, while fully respecting social and environmental standards and consumer rights (discussions).
7. Ensure the participation of SMEs in funding applications, calls for tenders and networks, with the least administrative effort possible. Access to finance for SMEs with high-risk innovation projects should be further developed by entities such as the European Innovation Council and the European Investment Bank (discussions).
8. Create a better framework for investment in R & I to build more sustainable and biodiversity-rich business models (CEP 10, 11 and 14); focus on technology and innovation as drivers of growth. (IT 1.3)
9. Promote collective economic performance through an autonomous and competitive industry. (FR3)
10. Identify and develop strategic sectors, including space, robotics and AI. (En 3 & 9)
11. Invest in the tourism and cultural economy, also valuing the many small destinations in Europe. (IT 1.2)
12. Ensure security of supply by diversifying input/raw materials sources and increasing the manufacturing of essential goods in Europe, such as health, food, energy, defence and transport. (EN 9, LT 1, IT 1.4)
13. Promoting the digitalisation of European businesses, for example by means of a specific scoreboard allowing companies to compare their degree of digitalisation, with the overall aim of increasing their competitiveness. (FROM 2.1)
14. Promote digital cohesion in order to contribute to economic, social and territorial cohesion as defined in the Treaty on the

Functioning of the European Union (discussions).

15. Strengthen cross-border cooperation in order to strengthen cohesion and resilience within and outside the regions, by encouraging the European cross-border mechanism and similar tools (discussions).
16. Strengthen and promote cross-border training opportunities in order to upgrade the skills of the European workforce and increase competitiveness, while strengthening citizens' skills in the economic field. (DE 2.2, LT7). Promote trade between workers in Europe through a European Employment Centre; (IT 6.1) encourage young people to study scientific subjects. (IT 1.5)
17. Reduce bureaucracy (authorisations, certifications) where it is not essential. (IT 2.1)
18. Fight against counterfeiting and unfair competition. (IT 2.4)
19. Ensure greater participation of start-ups and SMEs in innovation projects, as this strengthens their innovation strength, competitiveness and networking (e-platform, discussions).
20. The consolidation and protection of the single market should remain a priority; measures and initiatives taken at national and Union level should not prejudice the single market and should contribute to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital (discussions).
21. New EU policy initiatives should be subject to a "competitiveness check" in order to analyse their impact on businesses and their business environment (cost of economic activity, innovation capacity, international competitiveness, level playing field, etc.). This monitoring is in line with the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, including gender equality, and does not undermine the protection of human rights, social and labour rights, or environmental and consumer protection standards. To this end, we also propose the creation of a European Competitiveness Advisory Body to monitor

how competitiveness monitoring is carried out and, in particular, to assess the cumulative effects of legislation, as well as to put forward proposals to improve the appropriate framework conditions for the competitiveness of EU businesses. This body should include organised civil society and social partners in its governance; (discussions)

13. Proposal: Inclusive labour markets

Objective: We propose to improve the functioning of labour markets to ensure fairer working conditions and promote gender equality and employment, especially for young people and vulnerable groups. The EU, Member States and social partners need to work to end workers' poverty, strengthen the rights of platform workers, ban unpaid traineeships and ensure fair labour mobility in the Union. We must promote social dialogue and collective bargaining. We need to ensure the full implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, including its relevant 2030 headline targets, at European, national, regional and local levels in the areas of "equal opportunities and access to the labour market" and "fair working conditions", while respecting the competences and principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, and include a Protocol on social progress in the Treaties. In doing so, it is necessary to respect national traditions and the autonomy of the social partners and to cooperate with civil society. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures¹⁰:

1. Ensure that statutory minimum wages guarantee each worker a decent and similar quality of life in all Member States. Clear criteria (e.g. cost of living, inflation, a level above the poverty line, average and median wages at national level) should be defined to be taken into account when setting the minimum wage level. The levels of statutory minimum wages should be reviewed regularly in the light of these criteria in order to ensure their adequacy. Particular attention should be paid to the effective implementation of these rules and to monitoring and monitoring the improvement of living standards. At the same time, collective bargaining should be strengthened and promoted throughout the Union (PCE 1 and 30; 4.2; online platform).
2. Take stock and further strengthen the implementation of the Working Time Directive (Directive 2003/88/EC) and other relevant legislation that ensure a healthy work-life balance, while considering new national policies in this area (CEP 2).
3. Introduce or strengthen existing legislation on "smart work", and encourage companies to promote this new way of working. (PCE 7) The Union should guarantee the right to disconnect, do more to tackle the digital divide in the workplace and assess the health, working time and performance implications of remote work. There is a need to ensure fair digitalisation based on human rights, improved working conditions and collective bargaining (discussions).
4. Integrating employment policies at EU level, where active labour market policies remain central and increasingly coordinated (IT 6.2), while Member States focus on further reform efforts to create favourable conditions for quality job creation (discussions).
5. Take measures to ensure that social rights are fully protected and take precedence over economic freedoms in the event of conflict, including by introducing a protocol on social progress in the treaties (online platform, discussions).
6. Ensuring gender equality, in line with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. The Union should continue to measure gender equality through a gender equality index (attitudes, pay gap, employment, leadership, etc.), monitor the strategy annually, be transparent about the results achieved, encourage the sharing of expertise and best practices, and set up a possible direct mechanism for citizens' feedback (e.g. an ombudsperson) (ECP 28; It 5.a.1). There is a need to address the gender pay gap and to introduce quotas for senior management posts. Women entrepreneurs should benefit from increased support in the business environment, as should women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (discussions).
7. Promote youth employment, inter alia through financial support to businesses, but also by providing additional support to employers and workers (NL 4) and support to young entrepreneurs and young self-

employed workers, for example through educational tools and courses (discussions).

8. Promote employment of disadvantaged groups (NL 4), especially for people with disabilities (online platform).
9. Promote employment and social mobility so that people have every opportunity for personal development and self-determination. (IT 5.a.4 and IT 6.1) There could be a long-term strategy to ensure that anyone in our society has the right skills to find a job and grow their talent, especially the younger generation (discussions). It is important to invest in skills adapted to changing labour market needs and to promote lifelong learning through, inter alia, an exchange programme at all stages of life, and to guarantee the right to lifelong learning and the right to training. (FR 6; To this end, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between businesses, trade unions and providers of vocational education and training services (discussions).

14. Proposal: Stronger social policies

Objective: We propose to reduce inequalities, fight social exclusion and poverty. We need to put in place a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy that could include, inter alia, a strengthening of the Child Guarantee and the Youth Guarantee, the introduction of minimum wages, a common European framework for minimum income schemes and decent social housing. We need to ensure the full implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, including its relevant 2030 headline targets, at European, national, regional and local levels in the areas of “social protection and inclusion”, while respecting respective competences and the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, and include a Protocol on social progress in the Treaties. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures¹¹:

1. Strengthen the competences of the Union in the field of social policies and propose harmonised Union-wide legislation to promote social policies and ensure equal rights, including health rights, taking into account adopted regulations and minimum requirements throughout the territory. (CEP 19 & 21) The EU could support and complement Member States’ policies, inter alia by proposing a common framework to ensure a minimum income so that no one is left behind. These actions should be carried out as part of the full implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and its Action Plan (discussions).
2. Do not compromise on social rights (public health, public education, labour policies). (IT 4.a.1)
3. Promote social and health research in the EU, following priority lines considered to be of public interest and approved by the Member States, and provide for appropriate funding. This could be partly achieved by strengthening cooperation between areas of expertise, countries and study centres (universities, etc.) (CEP 20).
4. Grant access to medical services to all persons under the age of 16 across the EU if these services are not available in the national context (discussions).
5. Ensure that the EU, together with the social partners and national governments, supports targeted access to decent social housing for citizens, according to their specific needs; the financial effort should be shared between private donors, homeowners, beneficiaries of housing, Member State governments at central and local level and the European Union (ECP 25).

15. Proposal: Demographic transition

Objective: we propose to address the challenges arising from the demographic transition as a critical component of Europe's overall resilience, in particular low birth rates and the constant ageing of the population, providing support to people throughout their lives. This should be a comprehensive action aimed at all generations, from children and young people to families, the working-age population, the elderly still ready to work and those who are retired or in need of care. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures¹²:

1. Ensure quality, affordable and accessible childcare services across the EU, so that mothers and fathers can confidently reconcile work and family life. Where appropriate, this could include childcare opportunities in or near the workplace. In some Member States, overnight childcare is also available, which should serve as an example. In addition, these measures could be accompanied by support measures such as reduced VAT rates on equipment needed for children. It is essential to prevent child poverty and social exclusion. (CEP 22-26) Strengthen the Child Guarantee, by ensuring access for children in need to services such as education and childcare, health care, nutrition and housing, could be an instrument to achieve this (e-platform, discussions).
2. Set up specific support and protection of work for young people. Measures targeting the working-age population should include access to knowledge for mothers and fathers upon return to work (CEP 22). Strengthening the Youth Guarantee could be an instrument to improve access for young people under the age of 30 to a good quality offer of employment, continuous education, apprenticeships or traineeships. (discussions)
3. Promote the right to free movement of education within the Union, in particular through the mutual recognition of diplomas, grades, competences and qualifications. (discussions)
4. Improve legislation and its implementation in order to provide support to families in all Member States, for example with regard to parental leave and childbirth and childcare allowances. (PCE 26 and IT 5.a.1) Housing plays a crucial role in supporting families and should be addressed (online platform, discussions).
5. Take measures to ensure that all families enjoy the same family rights in all Member States. This should include the right to marriage and adoption. (PCE 27)
6. Promote a flexible retirement age taking into account the specific situation of older people. When determining the retirement age, it is necessary to differentiate according to the profession and, therefore, to take into account a particularly demanding work, both mental and physical. (PCE 21 and IT 5.a.1)
7. Prevent poverty among older people by introducing minimum pensions. Those minimum levels should take into account the standard of living, the poverty line and the purchasing power in the Member State concerned. (PCE 21)
8. Ensure appropriate social assistance and health care for the elderly. In doing so, it is important to focus on both community care and residential care. Similarly, the measures must take into account both care recipients and care providers. (PCE 23)
9. Ensure the sustainable development and demographic resilience of lagging regions in order to make them more dynamic and attractive, including through cohesion policy. (online platform and discussions)
10. Take coordinated action at European level to collect data disaggregated by factors such as gender and analyse demographic trends, share best practices and knowledge and assist Member States in developing and implementing adequate policies, including by establishing an EU body specialised in this field. (online platform and discussions).

16. Proposal: Fiscal and fiscal policies

Objective: we propose that the EU encourage forward-looking investments focusing on green and digital transitions with a strong social and gender dimension, taking into account the examples of Next Generation EU and the European Instrument for Temporary Support to Mitigate Unemployment Risks in Emergencies (SURE). The Union must take into account the social and economic impact of the war against Ukraine and the link between its economic governance and the new geopolitical context, by strengthening its own budget with new own resources. Citizens want taxation to turn away from citizens and SMEs and target tax fraudsters, big polluters and digital giants, while wanting the EU to support the ability of Member States and local authorities to finance themselves and use EU funds. This objective should be achieved through the following measures:

Measures¹³:

1. Harmonise and coordinate tax policies within EU Member States to prevent tax evasion and avoidance, avoid tax havens within the EU and target relocation within Europe, including by ensuring that tax decisions can be taken by qualified majority in the Council of the EU. On the other hand, there are recommendations from citizens' panels that taxation falls within the competence of different countries, which have their own objectives and circumstances. (PCE 13 and 31, IT 4.b.3, NL 2.3)
2. Promote cooperation between EU Member States in order to ensure that all EU companies pay their fair share of taxes; introduce a common corporate tax base (CCTB) or a minimum effective rate. (NL 3)
3. Ensure that companies pay taxes where profits are made. (PCE 13)
4. Ensure that tax policy supports European industry and prevents job losses in Europe. (PCE 13 and 31)
5. Explore in more detail the possibility of joint borrowing at Union level, with a view to creating more favourable borrowing conditions, while maintaining responsible fiscal policies at Member State level. (LT 9)
6. Strengthen the monitoring of the absorption and use of Union funds, including at local and municipal level.(LT 10)



“The EU in the world”

17. Proposal: Reducing the EU’s dependence on foreign actors in strategic sectors from an economic point of view

Objective: We propose that the EU take steps to strengthen its autonomy in key strategic sectors such as agricultural products, strategic economic goods, semiconductors, medical products, innovative digital and environmental technologies and energy, through the following measures:

Measures:

1. Promotion of research, development and innovation activities and collaboration between public and private partners in this field.
2. Maintaining an ambitious agenda for trade negotiations that can help strengthen the resilience and diversification of supply chains, especially for raw materials, while sharing the benefits of trade more fairly and with more partners, thus limiting our exposure and dependence on a small number of suppliers who may present a risk¹⁴.
3. Greater resilience of EU supply chains by promoting investment in strategic sectors in the Union, storing critical production and devices and diversifying sources of supply of critical raw materials.
4. New investments in the completion of the internal market and the creation of a level playing field to make the production and purchase of these items more attractive in the European Union.
5. Support enabling these products to be available and affordable for European consumers and helping to reduce external dependencies, for example through structural and regional policies, tax breaks, subsidies, infrastructure and research investments, boosting the competitiveness of SMEs, as well as education programmes in order to maintain the corresponding skills and jobs in Europe, which are relevant to ensuring basic needs¹⁵.
6. A European programme to support small local producers in strategic sectors in all Member¹⁶States, making greater use of EU programmes and financial instruments, such as InvestEU.
7. Better cooperation between Member States to manage supply chain risk management.¹⁷

18. Proposal: Reducing the EU's dependence on foreign energy actors

Objective: We propose that the EU achieve greater autonomy in terms of energy production and supply, in the context of the ongoing ecological transition, through the following measures:

Measures:

1. The adoption of a strategy to make it more autonomous in its energy production. A European body should integrate existing European energy agencies, coordinate the development of renewable energy and promote knowledge sharing¹⁸.
2. Active support for public transport and energy efficiency projects, a high-speed European freight transport rail network, the expansion of clean and renewable energy supply (including solar and wind energy), alternative technologies (such as hydrogen or energy recovery of waste), and the transition in urban areas from a single car culture to a culture of public transport, electric car sharing and cycling¹⁹.
3. Ensuring a just and fair transition, in particular by supporting vulnerable citizens, who are facing the greatest challenges in the transition to climate neutrality and who are already suffering from higher energy prices due to energy dependence and the recent tripling of energy prices.
4. Increased collaboration in assessing the use of nuclear energy in the context of the ongoing green transition to renewable energy in Europe, examining the collective issues it could solve or create, as it is still being used by many Member States²⁰.
5. Cooperation with international partners to commit them to achieving more ambitious climate change targets in various international fora, including the G7 and the G20.
6. Linking external trade to climate change policy measures (e.g. by launching a package of investment measures for climate-friendly technologies and innovations, including financing programmes)²¹.
7. Joint purchases of imported energy and sustainable energy partnerships, in order to

reduce Europe's dependence on energy imports, notably in the field of gas and oil, and to develop the EU's domestic energy sources.

19. Proposal: Setting standards within and outside the EU in trade and investment relations

Objective: We propose that the EU strengthen the ethical dimension of its trade and investment relations through the following measures:

Measures:

1. The preservation and reform of our rules-based multilateral international trade architecture, and partnership with like-minded democracies.
2. Effective and proportionate EU legislation to ensure that decent work standards are fully applied throughout global value chains, including in EU production and supply processes, and that imported goods comply with qualitative ethical standards, sustainable development and human rights standards, including labour and trade union rights, by offering certification for products in line with this EU legislation²² and engaging in an EU-wide dialogue process aimed at informing and educating on the environmental and ethical effects of strategic changes in international trade.
3. Restrictions on the import and sale of products from countries allowing forced labour and child labour, a regularly updated blacklist of businesses and consumer awareness of child labour through information published through official EU channels²³.
4. Monitoring and enforcement of enforceable trade and sustainable development chapters in EU free trade agreements, including the possibility of a sanctions-based mechanism of last resort.
5. The reform of the EU's Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) to include strict cross-compliance provisions and effective and appropriate monitoring, reporting and dialogue processes to improve the impact that the GSP can have on trade, human rights and development in partner countries, with the possibility to withdraw trade preferences in case of non-compliance.

20. Proposal: Setting standards within and outside the EU for environmental policies

Objective: We propose that the EU strengthen the environmental dimension of its trade relations through the following measures:

Measures:

1. Harmonisation and strengthening of eco-labelling and mandatory display of a European environmental impact indicator (ecoscore) on all consumer products. The ecoscore would be calculated on the basis of emissions from production and transport, as well as the harmfulness of the content, based on a list of hazardous products. The Ecoscore should be managed and monitored by a European authority²⁴.
2. Higher environmental standards for the export of waste as well as stricter controls and sanctions to stop illegal exports. The Union should encourage Member States to recycle their own waste and use it to produce energy²⁵.
3. The definition of an objective of eliminating polluting packaging through the promotion of less polluting packaging or more environmentally friendly packaging²⁶ and the establishment of partnerships with developing countries, by supporting their infrastructure and by considering mutually beneficial trade agreements, in order to assist them in their transition to green energy sources²⁷.
4. The possibility of rewarding countries with high sustainability standards by providing additional access to the EU market for their durable goods and services, either unilaterally through the GSP+ Generalised System of Preferences, or bilaterally through negotiated trade agreements or multilaterally through initiatives within the World Trade Organisation.

21. Proposal: Decision-making and cohesion within the Union

Objective: We propose that the EU improve its capacity to take swift and effective decisions in the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) by speaking with one voice and acting as a truly global actor, so as to have a positive role in the world and by making a difference in response to any crisis, including:

Measures:

1. By ensuring that, in particular in the area of the CFSP, matters currently taken by unanimity are normally taken by qualified majority²⁸.
2. Basing the cooperation on security and defence policy on the recently approved strategic compass and using the European Peace Facility²⁹.
3. Strengthening the role of the High Representative in ensuring that the EU speaks with one voice³⁰.
4. Agreeing on a strong vision and a common strategy to consolidate the EU's unity and decision-making capacity in order to prepare the Union for further enlargements³¹.
5. By rapidly ratifying recently concluded trade agreements, without renouncing appropriate consideration and discussion.

22. Proposal: Transparency of the EU and its relations with citizens

Objective: we propose that the EU, in particular in its actions at international level, including trade negotiations, increase its accessibility to citizens by improving information, education, citizen participation and transparency, in particular by:

Measures:

1. Strengthening links with citizens and local institutions in order to improve transparency, reach citizens and better communicate and liaise with them on concrete EU initiatives at international level³².
2. Greater participation of citizens in EU international policy and events of direct citizen participation, such as the Conference on the Future of Europe, organised at national, local and European level³³ and with the active participation of organised civil society³⁴.
3. The full support of all relevant stakeholders to citizens who choose to participate in organised civil society organisations, as has been the case with COVID-19 and Ukraine.
4. The allocation of a specific budget for the development of educational programmes on the functioning of the EU and its values, which it could propose to Member States if they so wish, so that they can integrate them into their curricula (primary, secondary and university). In addition, a specific course on the Union and its functioning could be offered to students wishing to study in another European country through the Erasmus programme. Students who choose this course would be given priority in order to benefit from the Erasmus programmes.
5. Improving the EU's media strategy through greater visibility in social media and active promotion of its content; promoting innovation by improving the accessibility of the EU's social media presence³⁵.

23. Proposal: The EU as a world leader in peace and security

Objective: we propose that the EU continue to act to promote dialogue and ensure peace and a rules-based international order, strengthening multilateralism and building on the long-standing EU peace initiatives that contributed to the award of the Nobel Prize in 2012, while strengthening its common security through the following measures:

Measures³⁶³⁷:

1. Common armed forces, used for self-defence purposes and intended to prevent any aggressive military action of any kind, having the capacity to provide assistance in times of crisis, including in the event of a natural disaster. Outside European borders, they could be deployed in exceptional circumstances, preferably under a legal mandate of the United Nations Security Council and therefore in compliance with international law³⁸, without competing with NATO or duplicating NATO and respecting the various national relations with NATO; in this regard, an assessment of the EU's relations with NATO should be carried out in the context of the debate on the EU's strategic autonomy.
2. A leading role in building the post-war global security order in Ukraine, based on the recently adopted EU strategic compass.
3. The protection of its strategic research and capabilities in priority sectors such as the space sector, cybersecurity, the medical sector and the environment³⁹.
4. The strengthening of the operational capacities necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the mutual assistance clause provided for in Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union, which guarantees adequate EU protection to any Member State attacked by a third country.
5. A reflection on how to combat disinformation and propaganda in an objective and factual way.

24. Proposal: The EU as a leading global player in building relationships

Objective: We propose that the EU, in its relations with third countries:

Measures:

1. Make greater use of its collective political and economic weight, speaking with one voice and acting in a united manner, without some Member States dividing the Union by inappropriate bilateral interventions⁴⁰.
2. Strengthens its capacity to sanction States, governments, entities, groups or organisations as well as individuals who do not comply with its fundamental principles, agreements and laws, and ensures that existing sanctions are swiftly implemented and enforced. Penalties imposed on third countries should be proportionate to the action that triggered them, be effective and be applied in a timely manner⁴¹.
3. Promotes sustainable and rules-based trade while opening up new trade and investment opportunities for European businesses. While bilateral trade and investment agreements are essential to promote European competitiveness, standards and rules are needed to ensure a level playing field. The EU must remain an active and reliable partner in negotiating, concluding and implementing trade agreements that also set high sustainability standards.
4. Concluded the main international cooperation agreements by representing the European Union rather than individual countries⁴².
5. Reform the EU's trade and investment policy to relaunch global multilateralism, with the objectives of creating decent jobs and protecting fundamental human rights, including workers' rights and trade union rights, preserving the environment and biodiversity and respecting the Paris Agreement on climate change, ensuring quality public services, and strengthening Europe's industrial base. The EU should contribute to a relaunch of global multilateralism, through deep reform based on democracy and peace, solidarity and respect for human rights, social and environmental rights, and a strengthened role for the ILO.
6. Includes the fight against trafficking in human beings and irregular immigration, as well as cooperation in possible return operations, in cooperation and investment agreements with third countries.
7. Develop partnerships with developing countries to support their infrastructure and consider mutually beneficial trade agreements to assist them in their transition to green energy sources⁴³.
8. Develops a more effective and united policy towards autocratic and hybrid regimes and develops partnerships with civil society organisations in these countries.
9. Increases the resources of EU Election Observation Missions.
10. Offers a credible prospect of accession to candidate and potential candidate countries in order to foster peace and stability in Europe and bring prosperity to millions of Europeans⁴⁴.

NOTE: Several members of the Working Group consider that the proposals “Reducing EU dependence on foreign actors in the field of energy” and “Transparency of the EU and its relations with citizens”, in particular, fall under other working groups. Some members wished to mention, in addition to qualified majority voting, alternatives to unanimity in the Council, such as variable geometry, non-participation clauses and enhanced cooperation. Some members of the Working Group called for the use of the term “sustainable” rather than “ethical” in the proposal “Defining standards within and outside the EU in trade and investment relations”. There is a divergence of views on whether the accession of new Member States should continue to require the unanimous agreement of all current Member States. A variety of views emerged as to the desirable degree of joint armed forces. Two members referred to the prospect of Irish unity in the event that Northern Ireland would vote in this direction in accordance with the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement and the need for the Union to be prepared for such an eventuality.



Values and rights, rule of law, security

25. Proposal: Rule of law, democratic values and European identity

Objective: Systematically uphold the rule of law in all Member States, including:

Measures⁴⁵:

1. Ensuring that the values and principles enshrined in the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union are non-negotiable and irreversible, and constitute sine qua non conditions for membership and accession to the Union. EU values must be fully respected in all Member States; they should also act as an international standard and represent a pole of attraction through diplomacy and dialogue. Enlargement of the Union should not undermine the EU acquis as regards fundamental values and citizens' rights⁴⁶.
2. By making European values a tangible reality for EU citizens, in particular through more interactive and direct participation, European citizenship should be strengthened, for example through a status of Union citizen with citizens' rights and freedoms, as well as a statute for European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations. Similarly, European values should be promoted by means of an "integration briefcase" comprising educational elements and information material for citizens. Finally, a European public sphere of audiovisual and online media should be created through new EU investments, the improvement of existing media platforms and increased support for the more than 500 European Liaison Offices present at local level⁴⁷.
3. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union should be universally applicable. In addition, annual rule of law conferences (following the Commission's Rule of Law Report) should be organised, bringing together delegations from all Member States, composed of citizens, officials, parliamentarians, local authorities, social partners and civil society, selected in a random and diverse manner. It is also important to further support organisations, including those of civil society, which promote the rule of law on the ground⁴⁸.
4. By effectively applying the so-called Cross-compliance Regulation, assessing the scope of that Regulation and other rule of law instruments, as well as considering extensions of their scope to new areas, regardless of their relevance to the Union budget. All necessary legal remedies, including amendments to the Treaties, should be considered to penalise violations of the rule of law⁴⁹.
5. Promoting educational and media programmes that place Union values at the heart of the migrant integration process and encourage interaction between Union citizens and migrants, with the aim of enabling their successful integration into Union societies and raising awareness of migration issues among Union citizens.⁵⁰

26. Proposal: Data protection

Objective: ensure a more protective and better data processing policy for citizens, in particular:

Measures⁵¹:

1. By fully implementing and reviewing existing data protection legislation in order to assess the need for enhanced enforcement mechanisms for entities processing personal data, which currently fall within the competence of independent national data protection authorities respecting the principle of subsidiarity. Those entities should be penalised more strictly than in the current application of the rules, in proportion to their annual turnover (up to 4 %), or even by a ban on their activities, and should be subject to an independent annual audit⁵²⁵³.
2. By giving greater effect to the principle of privacy by design or by default, for example by evaluating and developing data consent forms that are easy to understand, concise and intuitive, and clearly indicate what is needed and what is not. Users must be able to give or withdraw their consent to the processing of data in a simple, fast and permanent manner.^{54 55}
3. Assessing and introducing clearer and more protective rules on the processing of data relating to minors, possibly in the EU GDPR, in particular by creating a special category for sensitive data of minors and harmonising the minimum age of consent in the Member States. While most of the implementation of privacy and awareness-raising rules should continue to fall within the competence of the Member States, notably through increased investment and resources at national level, the Union should also play a more important role, for example by creating European competences in civic education on data protection⁵⁶.
4. Better compliance with the eligibility criteria applicable to European and national data protection authorities, in terms of qualifications and suitability, in order to ensure maximum independence of their members.^{57 58}

27. Proposal: Media, fake news, disinformation, fact-checking, cybersecurity

Objective: Combating disinformation through increased promotion of media independence and pluralism and media literacy, in particular:

Measures⁵⁹:

1. Introducing legislation to combat threats to media independence through minimum standards applicable throughout the Union, including a review of the media business model in order to ensure the integrity and independence of the European media market⁶⁰.
2. Rigorously applying EU competition rules in the media sector in order to prevent the creation of large media monopolies and to ensure media pluralism and independence from any unwanted interference by the political, business and/or foreign countries. Quality journalism, with recognised and high standards of ethics and self-regulation, should also be encouraged⁶¹.
3. Establishing an EU body to combat targeted disinformation and interference, improving situational perception and strengthening fact-checking organisations and independent media. “Emergency numbers” and sites, such as Europe Direct, allowing citizens and national media to request and receive verified information on EU strategies and policies should also be further supported and promoted more actively.^{62 63}
4. Encouraging media literacy and public awareness of disinformation and the unintentional spread of news, including through compulsory school education. Member States should also be encouraged to devote adequate human and financial resources to this end.⁶⁴
5. Building on existing initiatives, such as the Code of Practice against Disinformation and the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO), to oblige online platforms to publish clear information about the algorithms they use (with a choice for users to consent or not) and the risks of disinformation to which users are exposed, while preserving the right to freedom of speech and the right to privacy.^{65 66}

28. Proposal: Media, fake news, disinformation, fact-checking, cybersecurity (bis)

Objective: strengthening the Union's role in tackling cybersecurity threats, in particular:

Measures:

1. Strengthening the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) to better protect individuals, organisations and institutions against cyber security breaches and the use of artificial intelligence for criminal purposes. At the same time, the confidentiality and protection of personal data should be preserved.^{67 68}
2. Improving the coordination of national cybersecurity authorities and making additional efforts to ensure effective implementation of Union rules at national level.^{69 70}

29. Proposal: Combating discrimination, equality and quality of life

OBJECTIVE: Take measures to harmonise living conditions throughout the Union and improve the socio-economic quality of life of its citizens, in particular:

Measures⁷¹:

1. Developing transparent quality of life indicators including economic, social and rule of law criteria, in consultation with experts and social partners, in order to establish a clear and realistic timetable for raising social standards and establishing a common socio-economic structure of the Union, including through the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. These measures should be integrated into the economic governance framework and the European Semester process⁷²⁷³.
2. Increasing and facilitating direct public investment in health, education, physical infrastructure and care for the elderly and persons with disabilities. Additional investments should also aim at ensuring a satisfactory work-life balance for citizens. These investments should be carried out in a fully transparent way to monitor the whole process⁷⁴.
3. Encouraging taxation of large companies, combating access to tax havens and eliminating their existence in the EU with a view to increasing public investment in priority areas such as education (study grants, Erasmus) and research. The fight against tax evasion at EU level should also be a means of raising funds for publicly funded initiatives⁷⁵⁷⁶.
4. By establishing Union-wide criteria to combat discrimination in the labour market, and by encouraging the hiring by private companies of people who are generally the most affected by discrimination (including young people, the elderly, women and persons from minorities), including through subsidies, and, secondly, temporary quotas. The social partners should be closely involved in these efforts. Discrimination outside the labour market should also be prohibited by law, and equality should be encouraged⁷⁷.
5. Ensuring the creation and facilitating the existence of affordable kindergartens, both public and private, as well as free childcare services for those in need⁷⁸.

30. Proposal: Animal rights, agriculture

Objective: Take decisive measures to promote and ensure more environmentally friendly and climate-friendly agriculture, in particular:

Measures⁷⁹:

1. By laying down detailed, measurable and time-bound minimum criteria for the protection of farm animals, with the aim of ensuring higher animal welfare standards in line with the introduction of sustainability targets and on the basis of an integrated approach to the food system^{80 81}.
2. Introducing financial penalties for adverse effects caused by agricultural activity (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions, pesticide use, excessive water consumption, long-distance transport, etc.) depending on their impact on the environment. Agricultural products imported into the Union should also be assessed on this basis, including through customs duties, in order to eliminate any competitive advantage arising from less stringent environmental standards⁸².
3. Reducing subsidies for mass agricultural production when it does not contribute to a sustainable transition, and redirecting these resources to support environmentally sustainable agriculture, while ensuring the affordability of food products.^{83 84}



“Digital Transformation”

Europe must be at the forefront of the world and set standards for digital transformation, and it must chart a European path towards an ethical, human-centred, transparent and secure society. Europe must adopt an ambitious approach and make full use of the opportunities offered by digitalisation, while at the same time managing the risks and challenges posed by digitalisation. Digitalisation concerns all areas of our society and needs to be systematically taken into account. In this regard, reference has been made to the European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade and it has been suggested to consider in the future the possible elaboration of a Digital Rights Charter.

The Russian aggression in Ukraine only confirms many elements addressed in the proposals, such as the need for digital sovereignty, increased attention to cyber defence and protection against disinformation. It also proves that contemporary conflicts have consequences in the digital sphere and raises new questions, such as the long-term consequences of the misuse of personal information and the illegitimate use of this data in the future.

31. Proposal: Access to digital infrastructure

Objective: Equal access to the internet is a fundamental right for every European citizen. We propose that everyone in Europe has effective access to the internet and digital services and that the sovereignty of the EU’s digital infrastructure be strengthened, by implementing the following measures:

Measures⁸⁵:

1. Investing in high-quality and innovative European digital infrastructure (including the development of 5G and 6G in Europe) (Recommendations 40 and 47 of ECP 1 and No 1 of the Dutch NCP).
2. Ensure fast, affordable, secure and stable internet access throughout the Union, including roaming, with priority given to the establishment of internet connections in ‘white/dead zones’, rural and remote and peripheral areas in order to address the digital divide between and within Member States and to ensure that no one is left behind (Recommendations 17 and 47 of the Dutch NCP 1 and No 1).
3. Advance the deployment, in public and private spaces, of digital and electrical infrastructure enabling the use of electric and autonomous vehicles (debate in the WG)⁸⁶.
4. Take measures to ensure fair and open competition and prevent monopolies, dependence on suppliers, data concentration and reliance on third countries on infrastructure and services; improving markets from a consumer perspective (CEP Recommendation No. 17 1).
5. Make children, families, the elderly and vulnerable groups a priority in terms of access to the Internet and IT equipment, including access to education, public services and health (CEP 1 Recommendation 17 and discussion in the WG).
6. Improve digital access, with full accessibility, to essential public and private services for citizens and businesses, e.g. with regard to administrative procedures, and ensure access to and support associated with these services for all, e.g. through support services (debate in the WG, multilingual digital platform).

7. Harmonise high-quality digital standards and improve secure data mobility in order to facilitate cross-border interoperability (debate in the WG, multilingual digital platform).
8. Reflect on the environmental impacts of digital infrastructure and digitalisation in order to make the digital transformation sustainable and move towards a green digital society (debate in the WG, multilingual digital platform).

32. Proposal: Digital knowledge and skills that empower people

Objective: We propose that the EU ensure that all European citizens can take advantage of digitalisation by empowering them to acquire the necessary digital skills and opportunities by implementing the following measures:

Measures⁸⁷:

1. Ensure access to training and education, including school, formal and non-formal curricula, to life-long digital skills and knowledge, based on existing initiatives at European level, paying particular attention to the inclusion of people belonging to vulnerable groups and older people, as well as to strengthening children's digital skills in a way compatible with their proper development and tackling digital inequalities, including the digital divide between men and women (ECP Recommendation No. 8, Recommendation 5.2 of the Italian NCP and debate in the WG).
2. Ensure sound use of the internet by encouraging Member States to develop digital skills training for all age groups with harmonised programmes and content at European level, such as internet risks and opportunities, users' online rights and netiquette (CEP 1 Recommendation 47 and debate in the WG).
3. Take all necessary measures to ensure that the digitalisation of society does not exclude older people and that technology is accessible to them by encouraging relevant programmes and initiatives, such as courses tailored to their needs. At the same time, it should be ensured that essential services are also accessible in person and in a non-digital manner (CEP Recommendations 34 and 47).
4. Introduce in schools a European certification on digital skills that will prepare young people for the future labour market (CEP Recommendation 8 1).
5. Implement coordinated training initiatives at Union level for the reskilling and upskilling of workers to remain competitive in the labour market, especially in view of the skills and qualifications needed in small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as with a view to training digital specialists (CEP Recommendation 8 and debate in the WG).
6. Publicise existing digital platforms that connect citizens with employers and help them find jobs in the EU, such as EURES (CEP Recommendation No 8 1).
7. Increase investment and efforts to stimulate the digitalisation of education, including higher education (debate in the WG/multilingual digital platform).

33. Proposal: A secure and trustworthy digital society — cybersecurity and disinformation

Objective: we propose that, in order to create a secure, resilient and trustworthy digital society, the EU should ensure the effective and timely implementation of existing legislation and have more competences to strengthen cybersecurity, combat illegal content and cybercrime, address and address the consequences of cyber threats from non-state actors and authoritarian states, and combat disinformation, by implementing the following measures:

Measures⁸⁸:

1. Strengthen the capacities of Europol/European Cybercrime Centre in terms of financial and human resources, in order to enable a more proactive approach to cybercrime and to strengthen common European cyber defence capabilities against large-scale attacks, including through better cooperation (ECP Recommendation No 39, Recommendation 2.6 of the Lithuanian NCP and NCP 1 of the Netherlands NCP and debate in the WG).
 2. Take the necessary measures to be prepared for large-scale attacks and service disruptions and to be able to overcome them quickly, for example by ensuring the existence of resilient infrastructure and alternative communication channels (debate in the WG).
 3. Ensure similar sanctions and their swift and effective enforcement in the Member States in case of cybercrime through improved coordination of local, regional and national cybersecurity centres and authorities (CEP Recommendation No 39 1).
 4. Improve digital knowledge and critical thinking as a means to combat disinformation, online threats and hate speech, as well as rigged interfaces and preferential prices (debate in the WG).
 5. Tackling disinformation by adopting legislation and guidelines that ensure that online platforms and social media companies address their disinformation vulnerabilities and apply transparency measures, including, for example, artificial intelligence-based algorithms that can highlight the reliability of information on social media and new media, by providing the user with verified sources of information.
 6. Support digital platforms that contribute to media pluralism and provide resources and initiatives to assess the reliability and impartiality of information from traditional media (television, print, radio) and other media in full respect of the principle of media freedom and to provide citizens with information on the quality of information (CEP Recommendation 46).
- When algorithms are used, the ultimate control in decision-making processes should be the responsibility of human beings (CEP 1 Recommendation 46 and discussion in the WG).

34. Proposal: A secure and trustworthy digital society — data protection

Objective: We support people’s data sovereignty, better awareness and more effective implementation and enforcement of existing data protection rules (GDPR) in order to strengthen people’s control over their data and limit the misuse of data, by implementing the following measures:

Measures⁸⁹:

1. Better explain data protection rules (GDPRs), increase transparency and improve communication by developing guidelines for informed consent texts that use simple, clear and understandable language, including a more visual presentation to consent to the use of data, accompanying them with an information campaign, as well as ensuring that data controllers have the necessary skills and advise those in need of assistance (Recommendations 42 and 45 of the Dutch NCP 1 and No 2).
2. Ensure the enforcement of the existing prohibition of default consent for re-use or resale of data (CEP Recommendation No. 42 1).
3. Ensure that requests from users for final deletion of data are granted within a specified timeframe (CEP Recommendation No. 42).
4. Provide users with clear and concise information on how the data will be used and by whom (CEP Recommendation No. 42 1)
5. Ensure that non-European companies comply with European data protection rules (CEP 1 Recommendations 42 and 43).
6. Encouraging the establishment of a certification scheme at EU level that attests compliance with the GDPR in an accessible, clear and simple way, is visible on websites and platforms and should be issued by an independent certifier at European level. This should not pose a disproportionate burden on small and medium-sized enterprises (CEP 1 Recommendation 44 and discussion in the WG).
7. Ensure efficient and timely assistance to citizens who encounter difficulties in objecting to the processing of their data or revoking their consent. To this end, it is necessary, at European level, to better define intrusive behaviour and to develop guiding principles and mechanisms allowing citizens to oppose the processing of their data and obtain their erasure as well as to identify and sanction fraudsters (CEP Recommendation 43 and debate in the WG).
8. Provide for penalties, including a fine proportional to the turnover of companies and limitations on their activities, for example temporary or definitive prohibitions on unwanted data processing, and to assist the European Data Protection Supervisor and national agencies in ensuring their implementation (CEP 1 Recommendations 42 and 43 and debate in the WG).

35. Proposal: Digital innovation to strengthen the social and sustainable economy

Objective: We propose that the EU promote digitalisation measures that strengthen the economy and the single market in a fair and sustainable way, make Europe more competitive in the fields of technology and innovation, improve the digital single market for businesses of all sizes and place Europe at the global forefront of digital transformation and human-centred digitalisation, applying the following measures:

Measures⁹⁰:

1. Introduce legislation or strengthen existing legislation on 'mobile work' (human-centred), taking into account its impact on workers' physical and mental health, for example by guaranteeing a right to disconnect. A 'human-centred' approach presupposes the principle of 'human control' (PCE 1 Recommendation No 7 and debate in the WG)⁹¹.
2. Legislating at EU level to encourage companies to be socially responsible and to maintain quality 'mobile jobs' in Europe, thus avoiding the relocation of these jobs to countries at a lower cost. Incentives can be of a financial nature and/or impact on the corporate image and should take into account internationally recognised environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria. To this end, the Union should set up a working group composed of experts from all interested parties to review and strengthen this legislation (CEP Recommendation 7).
3. Ensure human control over decision-making processes using artificial intelligence in the workplace and transparency of the algorithms used; take into account the harmful effects of boundless digital surveillance in the workplace; informing and consulting workers before the introduction of digital technologies that have an impact on working conditions; ensure that new forms of employment, e.g. platform work, are in line with workers' rights and provide suitable working conditions (debate in the WG).
4. Take initiatives to help support remote work, for example by creating office spaces with fast and reliable internet access, organising digital training and providing resources for ergonomic equipment for work at home (CEP 1 Recommendation 17 and discussion in the WG).
5. Set up a publicly available digital scoreboard, which creates a ranking system indicating and comparing the current level of digitisation of EU companies (German NCP).
6. Building a strong and competitive digital economy and sharing the benefits of digital transformation equitably across Europe by focusing on technology and innovation as drivers of growth, encouraging transformative cutting-edge research, as well as providing space for innovation ecosystems in all regions by improving the operating environment of SMEs and start-ups and fair access to finance and removing legal or other burdens that hinder cross-border activities (Italian NCP Recommendation 1.3, WG debate and multilingual digital platform). Building a data infrastructure based on European values; apply the principles of 'digital priority' and 'single transmission of information' and facilitate digital and secure access to data for innovation and business; encourage the digitalisation of public services (debate in the WG and multilingual digital platform). Take full advantage of the potential of the trustworthy and responsible use of artificial intelligence and take advantage of the potential of blockchain and cloud services technology, by defining safeguards and standards that ensure transparency and interoperability, create trust, facilitate use and eliminate discriminatory or biased algorithms (debate in the WG and multilingual digital platform).
9. Promote free software, its use in education and training and free access to publicly funded research and software (debate in the WG and multilingual digital platform).
10. Introduce a common European digital identity to facilitate cross-border digital transactions and services, through a

framework of European standards and guiding principles that provide the necessary safeguards (debate in the WG and multilingual digital platform).

11. Assess whether it would be possible to digitise information on consumer and food products through a standardised European application that would provide more user-friendly access to information and provide additional product and production chain information (CEP Recommendation No. 16).



“European Democracy”

36. Proposal: Information to citizens, participation and youth

Objective: Increase citizens’ participation and involvement of young people in democracy at EU level, in order to create a “complete citizen experience” for Europeans; ensure that their views are taken into account, including outside election periods, and that their participation is real. It is therefore necessary to determine which form of participation is most appropriate for each theme, for example:

1. Developing new mechanisms for citizens’ participation and making existing ones more effective, in line with the European acquis, while improving communication on all these mechanisms. Ideally, all information on participatory spaces should be summarised⁹² on a full official website with various functionalities⁹³. A mechanism for monitoring political and legislative initiatives resulting from participatory democracy processes should be developed⁹⁴. Participatory mechanisms should, all of them, address the whole population in order to reach a variety of audiences. Attention should be paid to the content, topics and skills of the moderators. These mechanisms should be based on an analysis of the effects of the measures in question, in particular on women and vulnerable persons⁹⁵.
2. By increasing the frequency of online and offline interactions between the EU institutions and citizens by different means, in order to ensure that they can participate in the European policy-making process, express their opinions and obtain feedback, and draw up a charter on citizens’ participation for European officials⁹⁶.
3. Propose a user-friendly digital platform where citizens — and in particular young people — could share their ideas, ask questions to representatives of the European institutions and express their views on important European issues as well as legislative proposals. Provision should also be made for the possibility of organising online surveys on this platform⁹⁷.
4. Improving and harmonising existing mechanisms at European, national and local level in order to make them safer, more accessible, more visible and more inclusive⁹⁸.
5. Involving civil society organisations, regional and local authorities and existing bodies, such as the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the Committee of the Regions (CoR⁹⁹), in citizen participation processes¹⁰⁰.
6. By creating a system of local EU advisers, in order to bring the European institutions closer to European citizens¹⁰¹.
7. Bringing together citizens’ assemblies periodically, on a legally binding basis of EU law. Participants will be drawn by lot according to representativeness criteria, and participation will be strongly encouraged. If necessary, specialists will provide the members of the assembly with information relevant to their deliberations. If the institutions fail to take into account the conclusions of those meetings, they will have to give reasons for their decision¹⁰². It is important that elected representatives consult citizens and civil society before making political decisions and take into account their contributions. The European Union is founded on representative democracy: in the European elections, citizens send a clear message to their representatives and speak indirectly about EU policies¹⁰³.
8. Providing enhanced financial or other structural support to civil society, in

particular youth, and local authorities to set up local youth councils¹⁰⁴; the involvement of civil society and social partners could be a full pillar of the European Democracy Action Plan, and a specific strategy could be devoted to civil society¹⁰⁵.

9. Putting in place a 'youth control' of the legislation, which would include an impact assessment and a mechanism for consulting youth representatives, where legislation is likely to have an impact on young people¹⁰⁶.

10. By strengthening cooperation between EU legislators and civil society organisations, in order to take advantage of their links between decision-makers and citizens¹⁰⁷.

11. Summarising the points on citizens' participation in a European Charter for Citizens' Contribution to European Affairs.

37. Proposal: Information to citizens, participation and youth (a)

Objective: Making the European Union more comprehensible and accessible; strengthening the common European identity, in particular:

1. ¹⁰⁸Ensuring a minimum amount of education on the European Union, in particular its democratic processes, without neglecting the history of European integration and European citizenship. People of all ages should be able to benefit from these programmes, which should be designed in an attractive and age-appropriate way, such as the development of specific educational programmes and materials for children, schools¹⁰⁹ and civil society organisations active in non-formal education¹¹⁰.
2. Ensuring, inclusively, that all citizens have easy access to reliable information about the Union. The European institutions should use more accessible language and avoid the use of bureaucratic jargon in their communications, while maintaining the quality and technical level of the information given, and adapt the information to the different communication channels and recipient profiles¹¹¹. They should consider, for example, the creation of a mobile application presenting information on EU policies in clear language¹¹². Special efforts should be made to reach out to young people on social networks, but also through youth movements and various ‘ambassadors’ (organisations and individuals) explaining¹¹³ the European project¹¹⁴.
3. Making greater use of artificial intelligence and machine translation technologies to overcome¹¹⁵ the language barrier¹¹⁶, ensuring that all digital tools are accessible to people with disabilities¹¹⁷ and easy to use.
4. By defending and supporting the freedom, pluralism and independence of the media, and by encouraging the media, including public broadcasters, public news agencies and European media, to cover European affairs more regularly, while respecting their freedom and independence, so that such coverage is regular and comprehensive in all Member States of the Union¹¹⁸, increasing efforts to combat disinformation and foreign interference, and protecting journalists¹¹⁹.
5. By bringing Europe closer to citizens by strengthening contact¹²⁰ points and specialised hubs (‘Europe Houses’) at local level, which would offer resources, information and advice to citizens on European issues, listen to their concerns and discuss with associations in order to help bring citizens’ views to the European level¹²¹.
6. By taking new measures to strengthen a common identity among Europeans, for example through an EU fund that would encourage online and offline interactions (such as exchange programmes, panels or meetings) of varying duration between EU citizens, organising European sporting events, setting up joint teams, or making 9 May (Europe Day) an additional holiday¹²² for all European citizens¹²³.

38. Proposal: Democracy and elections

Objective: Strengthening European democracy by strengthening its foundations, encouraging citizens to participate in European elections, promoting transnational debates on European issues and ensuring a strong link between citizens and their elected representatives, in particular:

1. Ensuring the safeguarding of European values enshrined in the Treaties, including the rule of law and a robust social model¹²⁴, which form the heart of European democracy. In its relations with the rest of the world, the Union should give priority to common democratic values in border countries. It is only after achieving this goal that she can become the ambassador of our democratic model in countries that have the capacity and the will to do so, through diplomacy and dialogue¹²⁵.
 2. By introducing the possibility of holding a referendum throughout the Union, at the initiative of the European Parliament, on an exceptional basis, if a topic proves to be particularly important for all European citizens¹²⁶.
 3. By amending the electoral law of the Union in order to harmonise the arrangements for European elections (e.g. age of majority, date of election, requirements applicable to electoral districts, candidates, political parties and their financing), as well as by moving towards pan-European or transnational lists^X including candidates from different Member States, after having taken into account the¹²⁷ views expressed by the citizens of the Member States on this matter¹²⁸.
- Some Members of the European Parliament should be elected from pan-European lists, while the others would be chosen at Member State level¹²⁹.
 - The aim of the reform should also be to facilitate digital voting arrangements¹³⁰ and guarantee the real right of persons with disabilities to vote¹³¹.
4. Strengthening the links between citizens and their elected representatives, taking into

account national particularities: citizens want to feel that MEPs and national parliamentarians are close to them and respond to their concerns with specific measures¹³². This is a universal problem and people of all ages should get involved¹³³.

- European citizens should have more weight in the election of the President of the Commission. That objective could be achieved by the direct election of the President of the Commission¹³⁴ or by the system of top-list candidates^{XI}.
- The European Parliament should have the right of legislative initiative in order to

XI Parliament's position: the top list of the European political party with the highest number of votes in the European elections and the support of a majority of MEPs should be elected as President of the European Commission. In the event that no coalition-based majority emerges, the post should return to the next top of the list. to this end, European political parties could nominate candidates to run for the presidency of the Commission. Paulo Rangel: in order to strengthen the lead candidates process, the roles of the European Parliament and the European Council should be reversed, which implies amending the Treaties: the President of the Commission would be proposed by Parliament and approved by the European Council. PNM (Final Kantar Report: "a group of contributions shall cover the election of the President of the Commission and the appointment of Commissioners, including the system of top-list candidates.") EYE, p. 23: Candidates for the post of Commission President should not be elected in behind-the-scenes negotiations between winning parties. We should apply the lead candidate system, where each party announces before the election campaign the candidate who will be president of the Commission if that party wins a majority. By actively participating in the campaign and interacting directly with European citizens, the future president could be closer to them." discussion in GT.

X The representatives of the European Commission explained that it would be necessary to go through a transitional period in order to avoid too abrupt developments.

propose¹³⁵ topics for debate and then adopt the necessary texts to follow up on the recommendations resulting from the deliberations¹³⁶.

- The European Parliament should decide on the EU budget, as parliaments do at national level^{XII, 137}.
 - Political parties, civil society organisations and trade unions should be more dynamic and accessible, so that citizens engage and invest more in European democracy¹³⁸. This would also promote the inclusion of European issues in public debates organised by political parties, civil society organisations and social partners, whether in the run-up to the European elections or in the run-up to national, regional or local elections¹³⁹.
5. Democracy is embodied in institutions and society in general, including in the workplace thanks to the social partners¹⁴⁰.

XII The Council considers that this proposal is not based on a citizen's recommendation. It is therefore not in line with the agreed methodology. See also the position of the citizen component expressed on page 42.

39. Proposal: The Union's decision-making process

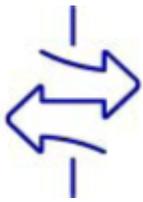
Objective: Improve the Union's decision-making process in order to ensure its capacity to act, while taking into account the interests of each Member State and ensuring a transparent and comprehensible process for citizens, in particular:

1. Reviewing the rules on decision-making and voting in the European institutions. The question of unanimous voting deserves particular attention, as it makes any agreement very difficult. Fairness in the weighting of votes should be ensured so as to protect the interests of small countries¹⁴¹.
 - All decisions currently taken unanimously should, in future, be adopted by qualified majority. The only exceptions should be the admission of new Member States into the European Union and the amendment of the fundamental principles of the Union enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union¹⁴².
2. Ensuring transparency in the decision-making process, enabling independent citizens' observers to monitor this process closely, applying a broader right of access to documents¹⁴³ and establishing closer links and enhanced dialogue between citizens and the European institutions on this basis¹⁴⁴.
 - The Union needs to improve the transparency of its decision-making process and its institutions. For example, Council and European Parliament meetings, including voting sessions, should be disseminated online in the same way. This would allow interested citizens to monitor EU policy-making and would oblige policy-makers to report on their actions¹⁴⁵. The European Parliament's right of inquiry should also be strengthened.¹⁴⁶ Amendment No. 44A of the WG.
 - The Union's decision-making process should be further developed so as to involve more national, regional and local representatives, social partners and civil society organisations¹⁴⁷. Interparliamentary cooperation and dialogue should be strengthened. The European Parliament should also involve national parliaments more closely in the European legislative procedure, for example by inviting them to hearings¹⁴⁸. In addition, it would be useful to obtain a stronger involvement of sub-national authorities and the CoR, in order to better take into account their experience in implementing European legislation¹⁴⁹.
3. By considering changing the names of the European institutions in order to clarify the role and role of each in the Union's decision-making process in the eyes of citizens¹⁵⁰.
 - The EU decision-making process should be based on a clearer and more understandable structure, which resembles national systems¹⁵¹ and explicitly indicates the division of competences between the European institutions and the Member States¹⁵².
 - For example, the Council of the European Union could be renamed 'Senate of the Union' and the European Commission 'Executive Commission of the Union'¹⁵³.
4. Strengthening the Union's capacity to deliver results in key areas¹⁵⁴.
5. Ensuring mechanisms for social dialogue and consultation with citizens at all stages of the Union's decision-making process, from the impact assessment to the design and implementation of the measures¹⁵⁵.
6. Reforming the functioning of the European Union, including by involving social partners and civil society organisations more closely. Existing structures need to be strengthened so that the decision-making process better reflects the needs and expectations of European citizens, who are central to European democracy. In this context, the EESC must obtain the means to play a more important institutional role, that of guarantor and facilitator of participatory democracy activities, such as structured dialogue with civil society organisations and citizens' panels. A dynamic civil society is essential for the democratic life of the Union¹⁵⁶.

7. By reopening the debate on the constitution, if relevant, in order to clearly define our values. A constitution could bring more precision, mobilise citizens and agree on the rules of the decision-making process¹⁵⁷.

40. Proposal: Subsidiarity

1. Active subsidiarity and multi-level governance are key principles if the European Union is to operate in a democratic and accountable manner¹⁵⁸;
2. The EU must revise the mechanism by which national parliaments examine whether or not European legislative proposals encroach on national competences; national parliaments should be able to propose legislative initiatives to the European institutions. These mechanisms should be extended to all regional parliaments with legislative powers¹⁵⁹.
3. The CoR should be reformed to open up adequate channels for dialogue with regions, cities and municipalities. It should play a more important role¹⁶⁰ in the institutional architecture when dealing with matters with territorial consequences¹⁶¹.
4. The systematic use of a common definition of subsidiarity, endorsed by all the European institutions, could define more clearly at which level (European, national or regional) decisions should be taken¹⁶².
5. Social partners and civil society organisations, which are central to European democracy, need to be better involved in the decision-making process. A dynamic society is essential to the democratic life of the Union.¹⁶³
6. We urge the EU institutions to implement the conclusions of this working group and to make them effective. This could be done through the existing provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and, if necessary, by calling for the launch of a European Convention¹⁶⁴.



“Migrations”

41. Proposal: Legal migration

Objective: Strengthening the EU’s role in legal migration

Measures¹⁶⁵:

1. Launch a communication campaign at European level to ensure that EURES (the European Employment Services Network), the EU Immigration Portal and the European Skills profiling tool for third-country nationals are better known to European citizens and used more frequently by EU businesses when recruiting (Recommendation 6).
2. Setting up a European entity for migrants’ access to the EU labour market or, failing that, expanding the competences of the European Employment Services Network (EURES), e.g. improving talent attraction partnership projects (Recommendation No 7 and discussion in the WG), with the possibility of meeting skills supply and demand online in the country of departure on the basis of evaluation criteria (Recommendation No 9 and debate in the WG). The Union should encourage Member States to simplify the process of reception and integration of legal migrants and their access to the Union labour market by improving interoperability between the different administrations concerned (debate in the WG).
3. Improve the functioning and implementation of the Blue Card Directive in order to attract the skills that the EU economy needs (Recommendation No 7 and debate in the WG), taking due account of the risk of brain drain (according to measure 1 of proposal 42).
4. Promote upward convergence in working conditions in a harmonious manner across the Union in order to tackle inequalities in working conditions, ensure an effective EU labour migration policy and defend workers’ rights. In this context, strengthen the role of trade unions at national and transnational level (Recommendation No. 28 and debate in the WG), in cooperation with employers’ organisations (debate in plenary).
5. Step up efforts to inform and educate citizens of Member States on migration and integration issues (Recommendation 30, LT Panel Recommendation 9 and WG debate).

42. Proposal: Irregular migration

Objective: Strengthening the role of the Union in combating all forms of irregular migration and strengthening the protection of the external borders of the European Union, while respecting human rights

Measures¹⁶⁶:

1. Actively participate, for example through partnership agreements, in the economic and social development of countries outside the European Union and from which there is a large influx of migrants, in order to address the root causes of migration, including climate change. These actions should be transparent and produce tangible results with measurable effects, which should be clearly communicated to EU citizens (Recommendation 27, NL Recommendation 3 and debate in the WG).
2. Ensure the protection of all external borders by improving the transparency and accountability of Frontex and strengthening its role (Recommendation No 8 and debate in the WG) and adapting EU legislation to better address the current challenges of irregular migration such as trafficking in human beings, sexual exploitation, hybrid attacks perpetrated by states exploiting migrants and violation of human rights (Recommendation LT 10 and debate in the WG).

43. Proposal: Irregular migration (bis)

Objective: Apply common rules uniformly in all Member States with regard to first reception of migrants

Measures¹⁶⁷:

1. Develop EU-wide measures to ensure the safety and health of all migrants, in particular pregnant women, children, unaccompanied minors and all vulnerable persons (Recommendations 10 and 38 and debate in the WG).
2. Increase EU financial, logistical and operational support, including to local authorities, regional decision-makers and civil society organisations, for the management of the first reception, possibly leading to the integration of refugees or regular migrants into the EU and the repatriation of irregular migrants (Recommendation 35 and debate in the WG).

44. Proposal: Asylum, integration

Objective: Strengthening the role of the Union and reforming the European asylum system on the basis of the principles of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility

Measures¹⁶⁸:

1. Adopt common Union rules on procedures for examining applications for international protection in the Member States, uniformly applied to all asylum seekers. These procedures must respect human dignity and international law (Recommendation 29, IT Recommendations 3.8 and 4.4, p. 15 and debate in the WG). As the reception of asylum seekers involves different actors at national level, the Union should encourage Member States to simplify and speed up this process by improving interoperability between the different administrations concerned and to set up a single office (window or single entry point) for asylum seekers in order to streamline national administrative procedures (Recommendation 37 and debate in the WG).

relocation of asylum seekers within the EU Member States with a view to achieving a fair distribution (Recommendations 36 and 37, LT Recommendation 3 and debate in the WG).
2. Review the Dublin system in order to ensure solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, including the distribution of migrants between Member States; other forms of support could also be envisaged (recommendations 33, 36, 37, 40; It Recommendation No 2; recommendations IT 3.8 (p. 15) and NL 2, debate in the working group and debate in plenary).
3. Strengthen the minimum reception standards for asylum seekers set out in Directive 2013/33/EU through more stringent legislative measures to improve reception facilities and accommodation (CEP Recommendation 31, IT Recommendation 5.6, p. 11 and debate in the WG).
4. Special attention should be paid to pregnant women, children, and in particular unaccompanied minors (Recommendation No. 38 and discussion in the WG).
5. Strengthen and increase the financial and human resources and management capacities of the European Union Agency for Asylum to coordinate and manage the

45. Proposal: Asylum, integration(bis)

Objective: Improving integration policies in all Member States

Measures¹⁶⁹:

1. The Union shall also ensure, with the participation of local and regional authorities and the contribution of civil society organisations, that all asylum seekers and refugees participate in language and integration courses and activities as well as vocational training while their application for residence is examined (Recommendation No 32, Recommendation FR No 13, debate in the WG and debate in plenary).
2. Asylum seekers with the right qualifications should have access to the labour market, if possible with a view to strengthening their autonomy, across the Union (Recommendation No 7 and debate in the WG).



Education, culture, youth and sport

46. Proposal: Education

Objective: The EU and its Member States should strive to establish, by 2025, an inclusive European education area in which all citizens have equal access to quality lifelong learning and education, including people living in rural and remote areas. To this end, the European Union and its Member States should in particular:

Measures:

1. Coordinate the level of all different educational programmes in the European Union by accepting national, regional and local content and create closer links between education systems, in particular through the equivalence of diplomas¹⁷⁰. A certified minimum standard for teaching in essential subjects should be adopted as early as primary school¹⁷¹¹⁷¹. Shared competences should be established in the field of education, at least with regard to civic education, and the exercise of that competence by the Union cannot prevent Member States from exercising their own competences. Diplomas and vocational training should be validated and mutually recognised in all Member States of the Union¹⁷². The European Union should also exploit the recognition of non-formal¹⁷³ and informal learning and youth organisations offering it, as well as learning periods abroad.

literacy should be improved in order to ensure online security and to enable citizens in all Member States to independently assess whether or not information is credible and to identify false information while taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the internet. This education should involve the organisation of specific courses at basic education level and should be offered, in other public spaces, to citizens of all ages, under the aegis of a specialised body at Union level, taking advantage of good practices that exist in all Member States. The EU should ensure that funds specifically allocated to these activities are used for the intended purpose¹⁷⁸.

integration of non-technical skills into all courses in school curricula. Non-technical competence means: mutual listening, dialogue, resilience, understanding, respect and appreciation of others, critical thinking, self-learning, and staying curious and results-oriented¹⁷⁹; — Giving everyone the opportunity to learn more about environmental sustainability and its links to health. Biodiversity should be a compulsory subject in school. It should start at school with specific topics addressing all ecological issues and include excursions to present relevant real examples, all with the help of a funding programme¹⁸⁰.

Fight against bullying in schools and racism.
2. Developing a future-proof lifelong learning and education in Europe — in line with the right to training in the workplace for all — with a focus on the following aspects:
 - Civic education on democratic processes and EU values and the history of Europe¹⁷⁴. It should be made a common module to be taught in all Member States. Knowledge of economics should also be improved in order to allow a better understanding of the process of European integration¹⁷⁵.
 - Digital skills¹⁷⁶.
 - STIAM¹⁷⁷
 - Entrepreneurship and research.
 - Development of critical thinking. Media
3. Support teacher training¹⁸¹, in order to learn from best practices and to use up-to-date innovative and creative teaching techniques that reflect the evolution of pedagogical methods, including practical activities, also building on lessons to be learned from the

COVID-19 pandemic and other types of crises, as well as promoting mobility opportunities¹⁸².

4. In order to meet the educational needs of all children and families, prioritise access to equipment and efficient broadband connectivity¹⁸³.
5. Set up an information platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience at Union level, by sharing information on transnational education and training courses in the Union, presenting examples of best practices and providing citizens with the opportunity to present new ideas for cross-border exchanges. It should provide educational material on climate change, environmental issues and digitalisation and provide information on existing specialised forums on the main themes¹⁸⁴. — This could be accompanied by a funding programme to support the use and exploitation of the platform's information.

47. Proposal: Questions concerning European youth

Objective: The EU and its Member States should focus on the specific needs of young people in all relevant policies, including EU regional policy, in order to provide them with the best possible conditions for studying and working and starting an independent life, while engaging them in democratic life and decision-making processes, including at European level. Youth organisations have a key role to play. To achieve this goal, we propose the following:

Measures:

1. Provide young people with more opportunities for participation and representation in democratic and decision-making processes at all levels and support existing programmes in this area, including by organising citizen panels with children (e.g. aged 10-16) in schools. European representatives could meet schoolchildren in their schools in order to strengthen citizens' proximity and understanding of Europe from an early age¹⁸⁵. For all EU policy decisions to be analysed by the youth lens, a "youth test" at European level should be developed to ensure that any new policy and legislative proposal is subject to a youth-focused impact assessment including a youth consultation.
2. The granting of the right to vote from the age of 16 in elections to the European Parliament, together with a strengthening of citizenship education and on the EU, should be discussed and considered. National political parties should also ensure that younger candidates are placed on their lists for elections to the European Parliament¹⁸⁶.
3. Better prepare young people to enter the workforce, give high school students (from 12 years of age) the opportunity to participate in quality observation visits to for-profit and non-profit organisations, in close cooperation between schools, local authorities and relevant organisations and businesses¹⁸⁷. These visits should be considered as part of a broader process of career guidance in formal education in order to allow young people to have a first contact with the world of work so as to be able to guide their professional choices and/or to consider becoming an entrepreneur.
4. Greater EU funding under NextGenerationEU should also be dedicated to the implementation of the enhanced European Youth Guarantee, including greater engagement, increased awareness, improved quality of supply, funding and action by all Member States and relevant levels of authorities. As youth organisations are better able to identify the needs of young people, national governments should work with youth organisations through close dialogue to ensure the most effective implementation of the Youth Guarantee.
5. Ensure that traineeships and jobs of young people comply with quality standards, in particular as regards remuneration, by ending minimum wages for young people and any other discriminatory provisions of youth-specific labour law, and by prohibiting, by means of a legal instrument, unpaid traineeships on the labour market and outside formal education¹⁸⁸.
6. Ensure a reasonable standard of living for young people, including access to social protection and housing. Young people should have access to a level of social protection equivalent to that of other age groups. Access to affordable housing for young people should also be facilitated, including through EU funding¹⁸⁹.
7. Specific measures are needed to prevent brain drain from certain regions and countries within the Union due to insufficient opportunities for young people, while making Europe more attractive to prevent the flight of European talent and labour to third countries in order to avoid undermining territorial cohesion, in particular as regards regions suffering a considerable loss of young talent, including through EU funding¹⁹⁰.

8. In the event of a serious crisis (e.g. health crisis, war), well-designed plans with detailed scenarios should be ready to be deployed flexibly in order to minimise the impact on education, vocational training, the transition to the labour market and the mental well-being of young people¹⁹¹.

48. Proposal: Culture and exchanges

Objective: In order to foster a culture of exchange and to promote European identity and diversity in different fields, Member States should, with the assistance of the European Union:

Measures¹⁹²:

1. Promote European exchanges in different fields, both physically and digitally, including educational exchanges, twinning, travel and professional mobility (especially for teachers and local elected officials). Such exchanges should be made accessible to all in all Member States, regardless of age, level of education, origin and financial means¹⁹³. To this end, the Union should in particular strengthen existing exchange and mobility programmes at Union level, such as the European Solidarity Corps, Erasmus+ and DiscoverEU, ensure a wider and diversified participation in those programmes, and consider adding new elements, such as an additional objective of civic service encouraged by volunteering (for the European Solidarity Corps) and ‘cultural access titles’ (for DiscoverEU). Local and regional authorities, under the auspices of the Committee of the Regions, must play a leading role in this area.
2. Promote multilingualism as a gateway to other cultures from an early age. Regional and minority languages need additional protection, taking into account the Council of Europe Convention on Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The EU should consider setting up an institution to promote linguistic diversity at European level. Children should be required from primary school to acquire skills in an active EU language other than their own at the highest possible level. In order to facilitate the ability of European citizens to communicate with wider groups of other Europeans and as a factor of European cohesion, learning the language of EU Member States directly bordering in border regions and acquiring a certified level of English should be encouraged by the Member States¹⁹⁴.
3. Create opportunities to share European cultures, bring peoples closer together and promote a common European identity, for example through events and gatherings involving all target groups and taking place in different locations. Examples include the organisation of World Art Days¹⁹⁵, a European exhibition with pedagogical events or the transformation of Europe Day (9 May) into an official European holiday day for all EU citizens¹⁹⁶.
4. To protect European cultural heritage and European culture¹⁹⁷, in particular by recognising local and regional specificities in cultural and production matters¹⁹⁸, by new initiatives to preserve and celebrate it, through mobility to encourage the exchange of cultural heritage, and by promoting existing measures such as Creative Europe, the New European Bauhaus, the Twinning programmes of cities and European Capitals of Culture, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.
5. Take measures to ensure that cultural professionals are sufficiently protected at EU level, especially in any future crisis, through the adoption of a legal statute at European level.

49. Proposal: Sport

Objective: Sport is essential for our societies — in order to defend our values, lead a healthy lifestyle and age in good health, promote a culture of exchange and celebrate the diversity of European heritage. For this reason, Member States should aim, with the assistance of the European Union, to:

Measures:

1. Emphasise values, in particular gender equality, equity and inclusion, which can be concretely reflected in the practice of sport throughout the educational journey.
2. Raise awareness of the health benefits of sport and physical activity¹⁹⁹.
3. Integrate sports activities into exchange and mobility programmes at EU level²⁰⁰200.
4. Improve the attention paid not only to professional and commercial sports, but also to local and traditional sports, which are witnesses of European cultural diversity, in order to promote cultural heritage, and to support sports champions in a non-professional setting.
5. At the same time, encourage the promotion of European identity by organising more inter-European sports events, setting up EU sports teams or displaying European flags or symbols at European sporting events.
6. Invest more in communication, such as the European Week of Sport, so that citizens across the EU can benefit from top-notch opportunities together.

Final Considerations of the Executive Board

The primary objective of the Conference on the Future of Europe was to ensure that the European Union is ready to face current and future challenges by giving citizens the opportunity to express their concerns and aspirations and, in collaboration with representatives of the three institutions, national parliaments and other stakeholders, to provide guidance for the future. To achieve this goal, the conference had to be a citizen-centred exercise based on a bottom-up approach, capable of creating a new space to discuss Europe's priorities and to draw up an overview of what citizens expect from the European Union.

The conference was indeed able to play that role. European citizens from all walks of life and from all corners of the Union participated in the conference and made recommendations from the Citizens' Panels and proposals for the future of Europe, in collaboration with the subsequent plenary including members from the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission, as well as representatives of all national parliaments, the Committee of the Regions, regional and local elected representatives, the European Economic and Social Committee, social partners and civil society, and other key actors. The tools and methodology developed for this process constitute a unique set of resources that could serve as a basis for future exercises on citizen participation and deliberative democracy at EU level.

Thanks to a multitude of events and debates across the EU, the interactive multilingual digital platform, European and national citizens' panels, and the Conference Plenary, the Conference has now presented a final report, including an overview of the work carried out in a sustained way this year, as well as the proposals made by the Plenary Assembly for the future of Europe. It is very clear from these proposals that the EU must act to succeed in the green and digital transitions, strengthen Europe's resilience and its social contract, while addressing inequalities and ensuring that the European Union is a just, sustainable, innovative and competitive economy that leaves no one behind.

The evolution of the geopolitical situation during the conference, and in particular the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, also showed that the EU must become more assertive, playing a leading role on the world stage in promoting its values and norms in an increasingly shaken world. The conference provided clear guidance in these areas and the three EU institutions must now consider how to address the concerns, aspirations and ideas expressed. The next step in this process is to develop concrete EU actions based on the outcome of the conference, as set out in this final report. The EU institutions will therefore now examine this report and its follow-up, each within its competences and in accordance with the Treaties. A follow-up event will take place in autumn 2022 to inform citizens about how the institutions will live up to their commitment to ensure that they are listened to and hold in their hands the future of Europe.



Stream 3: Redirecting our economy and consumption

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Substream 3.1: Regulating overproduction and overconsumption

The government that the EU takes over actions that create and discipline consumers to use products longer. The EU should consider planned obsolescence by lengthening products' warranty and setting a minimum price for spare parts after the warranty period. All member states should introduce a tax based on repair services as is the case in Sweden. Manufacturers should be required to disclose the expected lifespan of their products. The EU should provide information on how to reuse and repair products on an ongoing basis and through education.

Our framework and engine use based on the EU's sustainable because it provides too much waste. By creating the planned obsolescence will move towards a society that reuse, repair and reduce the EU's resources, thereby reducing consumption.

Annex I — Recommendations of the four European Citizens' Panels



European Citizens' Panel 1: A Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment/Education, Culture, Youth and Sport/Digital Transformation

RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE PANEL (TO BE PRESENTED TO PLENARY)

Axis 1: Working in Europe

Sub-axis 1.1 Labour market

1. We recommend the introduction of a minimum wage to ensure a similar quality of life in all Member States. We are aware of the ongoing efforts under the EU Directive COM(2020)

682 to harmonise the way of life. The minimum wage must guarantee a minimum net income in order to achieve an essential objective: all those in need should have a higher income. The minimum wage should take into account the following aspects:

- the EU should ensure its effective implementation as, at present, not all Member States correctly apply worker protection;**
- particular attention should be paid to monitoring the improvement of living standards;**
- the minimum wage must take into account purchasing power in different countries. A periodic review procedure is necessary to adapt it to changes in the cost of living (e.g. to take account of inflation).**

We make this recommendation because a minimum wage strengthens social justice in the labour market and improves the concrete living conditions of workers in all Member States, which is particularly important in the context of a rapidly changing working environment, for example due to the digitalisation.

2. There is already an EU legislative act (EU Directive 2003/88/EC on working time), but it is not enough to ensure a healthy work-life balance. As a first step, we recommend reviewing the existing framework to ensure that it is adapted to current circumstances. Secondly, the EU should put in place a more rigorous monitoring mechanism to ensure its implementation in all Member States. Particular attention should be paid to the various sectors with different levels of stress and burden, both psychologically and physically. However, at the same time, other sectors depend on greater flexibility on the part of their employees to adapt to the specific needs of companies.

We make this recommendation because of the importance of a better work-life balance. A better work-life balance strengthens social cohesion and contributes to creating a level playing field between workers. In addition, it has a positive impact on the individual well-being of workers.

Sub-axis 1.2 Youth and employment

3. We recommend harmonising the level of all different educational programmes in the EU, accepting national content. Therefore, we recommend that all professional diplomas be validated and mutually recognised in all EU Member States.

We make this recommendation because we want to facilitate the mobility of the European workforce and reduce administrative burdens.

4. We recommend giving secondary school students (from the age of 12) an overview of their future labour market by giving them the opportunity to participate in various quality observation visits to for-profit and non-profit organisations. We propose to encourage companies to welcome students for observation internships by granting them grants. In remote areas with fewer opportunities, local schools, public authorities, organisations and businesses need to work closely together to ensure that these observation visits are also available.

We make this recommendation because we want young people to get an idea of the different opportunities offered by the labour market so that they can better choose their studies and their future work and understand the importance of choosing the right education. It would also teach them a sense of responsibility and respect for the labour market and help them integrate into the labour market, providing benefits for all.

5. We recommend integrating the practice of non-technical skills into all school curriculum courses. By non-technical skills, we mean: mutual listening, dialogue, resilience, understanding, respect and appreciation of others, critical thinking, self-learning, and staying curious and results-oriented. Teachers should be trained in the transmission of these skills by working closely with social workers and/or psychologists. Other suggestions for implementation: the organisation of student exchange programmes between schools, participation in inter-school sports and cultural events, etc.

We make this recommendation because non-technical skills are necessary basic skills that are lost in the digital age and that our young people will absolutely need in their future lives. That is why we insist on integrating these skills into school curricula to help young people be resilient and avoid or overcome mental problems they may experience in their future lives. Social skills strengthen human-to-people relationships and therefore help people find their place in society.

6. We recommend that in the event of a serious crisis (health crisis, war, etc.), well-designed plans with detailed scenarios be ready to be deployed flexibly in order to minimise the impact on education, vocational training and mental well-being of our young people, etc. By impact, we mean: an increase in the cost of education or training, a compulsory extension of studies, the impossibility of completing internships, an increase in mental health problems. These plans must be implemented in such a way as to minimise the impact on young people and their transition to the labour market.

We make this recommendation because young people are very vulnerable in times of crisis.

Sub-axis 1.3 Digital transformation at work

7. We recommend that the EU introduce or strengthen existing legislation on smart working, i.e. online and remote work, e.g. at home or from another connected online place. We also recommend that the EU legislate to encourage companies to be socially responsible and maintain quality mobile jobs in the EU. Incentives can be of a financial nature and/or play on the corporate image and should take into account internationally recognised environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria. To this end, the EU should set up a working group composed of experts from all interested parties to review and strengthen this legislation.

We make this recommendation because we need to promote quality mobile jobs and avoid their relocation to third countries with lower costs. The COVID-19 pandemic and global economic trends accentuate the urgency of protecting jobs in the EU and regulating mobile work.

8. We recommend that the EU guarantee the right to digital training for all EU citizens. In particular, the digital skills of young people could be enhanced by the introduction of an EU certificate in schools, which would prepare them for the future labour market. We also recommend specific training at EU level for the reskilling and upskilling of workers so that they remain competitive in the labour market. Finally, we recommend that the EU raise awareness of existing digital platforms that connect citizens with employers and help them find jobs in the EU, e.g. EURES.

We make this recommendation because certified digital skills are essential for access to the job market and for workers to retrain and remain competitive.

Axis 2 A future-oriented economy

Sub-axis 2.1 Innovation and European competitiveness

9. We recommend that the EU create opportunities for investment in research and innovation for various entities (universities, businesses, research institutes, etc.) with a view to developing:

- **new, more sustainable and biodiversified materials to replace those currently in use,**

- **innovative uses of existing materials (based, inter alia, on recycling and cutting-edge techniques with the lowest environmental footprint).**

We recommend that this be a permanent and long-term commitment of the EU (at least until 2050).

We make this recommendation because we live on a planet with limited resources. If we are to have a future, we must protect the climate and look for alternatives that respect the planet. We also want the EU to become a leading player in this field, with a strong competitive advantage on the international stage. The recommendation aims to produce innovative results that can be applied on a large scale and can be implemented in various areas and countries. It would also have a positive impact on the economy and the labour market through the creation of new employment opportunities in the field of sustainable innovation. It could contribute to the fight against social injustices to the extent that the current means of production, based on exploitation, would be replaced by others, more ethical.

10. We recommend that the EU commit continuously over the long term to significantly increase its share of sustainably produced energy, using a wide range of renewable sources with the lowest environmental footprint (based on a comprehensive life-cycle analysis). In addition, the EU should invest in improving and maintaining the quality of the electricity infrastructure and grid. We also recommend that energy access and affordability be recognised as a fundamental right of citizens.

We make this recommendation for the following reasons:

- diversification of energy sources (including solar, wind, hydrogen, seawater or any other future sustainable method) would make the EU more energy independent;
- it would reduce electricity costs for EU citizens;
- it would create jobs and restructure the energy market (especially in regions that have so far relied on fossil fuels);
- it could encourage the scientific development of innovative energy supply techniques;
- the quality of the electrical infrastructure and grid is as important as energy sources, as it allows for smooth, efficient and affordable energy distribution and transmission.

11. We recommend that the EU actively promote greener production processes by subsidising or otherwise rewarding companies that invest in reducing the environmental costs of their production. We also call for an effort to grow post-industrial sites and create protected green areas around existing sites. Companies should be required to finance these efforts, at least in part, on their own money.

We make this recommendation because production processes are an important part of the supply chain. Making them more environmentally friendly could significantly reduce our impact on the climate. We believe that companies and industries should be held accountable for the way in which they manufacture their products (including measures for re-cultivating and protecting the environment). Greening production processes also prepares businesses for the future and strengthens their resilience (which protects jobs).

Sub-axis 2.2 Sustainable economy/Sub-axis 2.3 Taxation

12. We recommend abandoning plastic packaging and generalising reusable packaging. Incentives should be given to consumers and businesses, so that it is not more expensive for a consumer to buy bulk products (“in bulk” in English or “sfuso” in Italian) than packaged products. Companies that contribute to this transition should benefit from tax benefits and others should pay more taxes. Products that cannot be reused should be recyclable and/or biodegradable. It is necessary to set up a public or supervisory institution responsible for monitoring, setting the rules and disseminating them to everyone. It is recommended to educate and communicate — including through social media — about these actions, reaching out to both businesses and consumers to change their long-term behaviour. Companies (e.g. construction companies) should be encouraged and helped to find the best solutions for their waste.

We make this recommendation, because we all have to be responsible for our actions. So we need to rethink all production processes. Recycling requires a lot of resources (water, energy) and therefore cannot be the only solution, which is why we offer to sell the products in bulk. Recycling should only be used for easily recyclable materials, and we have learned from the Finnish example that it is possible to recycle on a large scale.

13. We recommend having the same tax rules across Europe and harmonising tax policy across the EU. Harmonisation in this area should leave room for individual Member States to set their own rules, while avoiding tax evasion. It will put an end to harmful tax practices and tax competition. Taxes should be imposed on commercial transactions where they take place: when a company sells in a country, it should pay taxes in that country. These new rules would aim to prevent relocation and ensure that production and transactions take place between European countries.

We make this recommendation to protect and develop employment and economic activity in Europe in a way that is fair to all Member States. In this way, Europe will have a common understanding of the tax system and the absurd monopoly situation of very large companies that do not pay enough taxes compared to smaller companies will be put to an end. In addition, financial resources will be redirected to where commercial activities take place.

14. We recommend removing the programmed obsolescence system from all electronic devices. The change should take place both individually and commercially, to ensure that devices can be repaired and upgraded over the long term and can be kept for a long time. We recommend promoting refurbished devices. Regulations should require companies to guarantee the right to repair, including software upgrades and updates, as well as to recycle all devices in the long term. It is also recommended that each company use standard connectors.

We make this recommendation because, in the modern world, products tend to last two years and our wish is that they have a much longer lifespan, about 10 years. This proposal will have a positive impact on climate change and ecology. It will also reduce costs for consumers as well as consumerism.

15. We recommend helping everyone learn more about our environment and its links to individual health through education. Educational pathways will help everyone define their own personal strategies to integrate these themes into their daily lives. This education should begin at school with specific subjects addressing all ecological issues, and we should continue to educate ourselves throughout our lives (at work, for example). It will

help reduce waste and protect the environment and human health, and promote local consumption of healthy and unprocessed products from local producers. Those who do nothing to reduce their waste will need to receive free training in this area. In order to adapt the way of life, prices must be fair for both the producer and the consumer. Therefore, we propose that small, environmentally friendly local producers benefit from tax exemptions.

We make this recommendation because we believe that many people do not yet feel concerned about these issues. This is why education for all needs to be put in place. In addition, local and healthy products tend to be unaffordable for many people. We need to ensure that local products are more widely accessible to all.

Sub-axis 2.4 Agriculture/Sub-axis 2.5 Digital infrastructure

16. We recommend the implementation of a common European consumer and nutrition labelling system that is easy to understand (e.g. allergens, country of origin, etc.); we recommend transparency of ongoing authorisation processes and digitisation of product information through a standardised European application that would provide more user-friendly access to information and provide additional product and production chain information. We also see the need for a truly independent body that regulates food standards across the EU and has legislative powers to enforce sanctions.

We make these recommendations because all EU citizens should be able to rely on the same quality of food. The integrity of food products is necessary to ensure the safety of citizens. These recommendations were formulated to improve, in a harmonised manner, the monitoring of authorisation processes and the transparency of food production.

17. We recommend that infrastructure be owned by the state to prevent the emergence of monopolies in the telecommunications and internet services sector. Internet access should be a right; bringing the internet connection into “white areas/dead zones” (areas without internet access) should be a priority. When it comes to access to the internet and computer equipment, children and families are a priority especially in terms of education and especially in times of pandemic. An initiative is needed to help support remote work, for example by creating office spaces with access to a fast and reliable internet connection or by organising digital training.

We make this recommendation because we need to ensure that digital transformation is done fairly. Internet access is fundamental to democracy and is a right of all European citizens.

18. We recommend respecting local insects and protecting them from invasive species. We also propose to promote and defend the obligation to provide green spaces in new urbanisation projects. We call for biodiversity to become a compulsory subject in schools and to be the subject of school activities, for example practical activities. It is important to increase public awareness of biodiversity through media campaigns and “competitions” promoted across the EU (contests at local community level). We recommend setting binding national targets in all EU Member States for reforestation by native trees and the reintroduction of local flora.

We make this recommendation because biodiversity is essential for the environment, the quality of life and the fight against climate change.

Axis 3 A just society

Sub-axis 3.1 Social security

19. We recommend promoting equal rights and social policies, including health policies, harmonised across the EU, taking into account adopted regulations and minimum requirements across the country.

We make this recommendation because there are large disparities between Member States in terms of social policies, which must be reduced in order to ensure a decent life for all citizens and to provide the necessary care and support for vulnerable people for various reasons (health, age, sexual orientation, etc.).

20. We recommend promoting social and health research in the EU, following priority lines considered to be of public interest and approved by Member States and providing for appropriate funding. We need to strengthen cooperation between areas of expertise, countries, study centres (universities, etc.).

We make this recommendation because there are many areas where we need to advance and deepen our knowledge. The experience with the pandemic provides an example of how research is essential for improving life, that collaboration between the public and the private and between governments is essential, and that financial support is needed.

21. We recommend that the EU have increased competence in social policies to harmonise minimum rules and pension benefits across the EU and establish new ones, based on a thorough diagnosis. The minimum pension must be above the country's poverty line. Retirement age should vary according to occupational categories and should be lower for mentally and physically demanding occupations. At the same time, the right to work should be guaranteed for older people who wish to continue to work on a voluntary basis.

We make this recommendation because life expectancy increases and the birth rate decreases. The European population is ageing, which is why we need to take further steps to avoid the risk of marginalisation of the elderly and guarantee them a decent life.

22. We recommend the adoption of a set of measures to encourage an increase in the birth rate and to ensure appropriate child care solutions. These measures should cover, inter alia, affordable and accessible childcare services (at work, nighttime, reduced VAT on children's facilities), housing, job stability, maternity support, specific support and work protection for young people and parents, as well as support for mothers and fathers in the form of access to knowledge upon return to work.

We make this recommendation because the EU is distinguished by low birth rates which also contribute to the ageing of Europe's population and which call for immediate action. The proposed package aims to ensure that young families have the necessary stability to care for children.

23. We recommend ensuring social assistance and health care for the elderly at home and in care homes. There is also a need to improve support for those caring for the elderly (near).

We make this recommendation because life expectancy increases and the birth rate decreases; the European population is ageing, which is why we need to take further steps to avoid the risk of marginalisation of the elderly and guarantee them a decent life.

24. We recommend that the EU support palliative care and assisted death [euthanasia] according to a concrete set of rules and regulations.

We make this recommendation because it would reduce the pain of patients and families and ensure a decent end of life.

Sub-axis 3.2 Equality of rights

25. We recommend that the EU support targeted access of citizens to decent social housing, according to their specific needs. The financial effort should be shared between private donors, homeowners, beneficiaries of housing, Member State governments at central and local level and the European Union. The objective should be to facilitate the construction/repair of existing social housing stock, including through cooperative associations, rental and purchase. The aid should be granted on the basis of clear criteria (e.g. maximum area/person to be subsidised, beneficiaries' income, etc.).

We make this recommendation because improving access to housing would ensure that EU citizens enjoy tangible equal rights and help ease social tensions. The EU is mainly called upon to oversee the support mechanism; greater efforts should be made by national and local authorities to address housing problems.

26. We recommend that the EU improve the regulation and uniform implementation of support measures for families with children in all Member States. These measures shall include in particular: an increase in the duration of parental leave, the amount of the childbirth allowance and the child care allowance.

We make this recommendation because we believe that these measures would mitigate the demographic problem facing the EU. They would also improve gender equality between parents.

27. We recommend that the EU take steps to ensure that all families enjoy the same family rights in all Member States. These rights include the right to marriage and adoption.

We make this recommendation because we believe that all EU citizens should enjoy equal rights, including family rights. The family is the basic form of social organisation. A happy family

contributes to a healthy society. The recommendation aims to ensure that all citizens enjoy family rights, regardless of gender, adulthood, ethnic origin or physical health.

Sub-axis 3.3 Equity/Sub-axis 3.4 Access to sports

28. We recommend that the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 be strongly promoted and given high priority as an urgent issue effectively addressed by Member States. The EU should (a) define indicators (attitudes, wage gap, employment, leadership, etc.), monitor the strategy on an annual basis and be transparent about the results achieved; and b) establish an ombudsman to obtain direct feedback from citizens.

We make this recommendation because we believe that the gender situation in the EU is far from satisfactory. There should be harmony on gender equality and civil rights at European level, so as to achieve the objectives of gender equality and civil rights in all countries, not just those where the compromise is stronger. We are committed to the presence and contribution of women in positions of power and in all types of professions, in order to have a diverse and fulfilling European Union. Women are disadvantaged in many situations (even when they have a good level of education/certified higher education or other privileges), so such a strategy is absolutely necessary.

29. We recommend that the EU promote and raise public awareness of sport and physical activity in all Member States, due to their health benefits. Sport and physical activity should be included in social policies, mental and physical health policies, education and labour policies (i.e. promoting the prescription of sports and/or physical activity by doctors and, where done, ensuring access to sports facilities; 1 hour of work/week for physical activity, etc.).

We make this recommendation because it is a long-term investment. Investing in sport and physical activity reduces the costs and burdens on health services. For example, sports and physical activity as a health intervention would reduce the duration of treatments and make them more effective. This strategy is already being successfully implemented in some countries such as Germany. Sport is a way to build values such as commitment, effort, self-esteem, respect or camaraderie. Sedentary lifestyles are more common than for previous generations due to, among other things, more office jobs and/or changes in leisure habits.

30. We recommend that the EU oblige each Member State to have a minimum wage that is defined according to the cost of living in its territory and is considered a fair wage that allows for minimum living conditions, above the poverty line. Each Member State must monitor it.

We make this recommendation because it is unfair not to be able to reach the end of the month when we work. Fair wages should contribute to the quality of life at social level. Unfair wages have a high cost to states (security, tax evasion, higher social costs, etc.).

31. We recommend tax harmonisation in the Member States at EU level (to avoid tax havens in the EU and to combat relocation within Europe), as well as a tax incentive to discourage the relocation of jobs outside Europe.

We make this recommendation because we are concerned about the impact of the relocation of jobs outside Europe and believe that it would prevent tax competition between EU Member States.

Axis 4 Learning in Europe

Sub-axis 4.1 European identity/Sub-axis 4.2 Digital education

32. We recommend promoting multilingualism from an early age, for example from kindergarten. Starting from primary school, it should be mandatory for children to reach C1 level in an active EU language other than their own.

We make this recommendation because multilingualism is a tool that connects citizens and a bridge to other cultures, making other countries and their cultures more accessible. It strengthens European identity and intercultural exchanges. It is important to get to know other cultures in the context of the European Union. Therefore, being able to converse at a good level in two languages would contribute to creating a common European identity and understanding other European cultures. The EU needs to work closely with educational institutions to achieve good results in education. It is also necessary to set up a specific programme (e.g. digital platforms, expanded Erasmus+ programmes, etc.) to exclusively promote multilingualism. The current European Schools can serve as a model in this regard. The EU should create and actively promote more such schools.

33. We recommend that the EU raise awareness among young people about the dangers of the internet and digitalisation by creating a compulsory subject in primary education. The EU should develop tools and create common training spaces for young people to learn together.

We make this recommendation because the current initiatives or programs in this area are not sufficient. Moreover, many EU citizens are not aware of existing EU initiatives in these areas. Children are not sufficiently aware of the dangers of the internet, which is why we should do much more to raise awareness among the younger generation.

34. We recommend that the EU work to make technology more accessible to older people by encouraging programmes and initiatives, for example in the form of courses tailored to their needs. The EU should guarantee the right to use digital technology for those who want it and propose alternatives for those who do not want it.

We make this recommendation because the EU should ensure that older people can participate in the digital world and that no one is discriminated against. Simplified tools should be put in place for generations less experienced in the use of certain technologies, in order to integrate them into today's world. We recommend better promoting existing initiatives so that citizens are aware of them. Older people should not be discriminated against in the EU when it comes to the use of IT tools. (As an incident, this means that citizens should be able to live their lives without having to go through an internet network). The EU should organise and make available to older people permanent free assistance to facilitate access to digital tools.

Sub-axis 4.3 Cultural exchange/Sub-axis 4.4 Environmental education

35. We recommend that the EU create a platform where educational materials on climate change, sustainability and environmental issues will be made available for educational purposes. Such information should be based on facts, verified by experts and adapted to each Member State. The platform:

- **should include lessons for various target groups, e.g. for people living in urban or rural areas, all age groups and prior knowledge levels;**
- **must be made available to all Member States and be easily accessible;**
- **should include, in its implementation, a promotion plan which should involve the undertakings concerned;**
- **could be made available at the same time as a funding programme to support the use and implementation of the information available on the platform. This funding should also support field visits to present concrete examples.**

We make this recommendation because people of all ages need access to factual information on how to address climate change, sustainability and environmental issues. Important concepts, such as the ecological footprint, must be understood by all, especially young people, because what we learn children accompanies us throughout our lives. These topics are complex and disinformation is widespread. We need a reliable source and the EU has the credibility and resources to take on this role. This is also important because levels of knowledge and access to credible information vary from one Member State to another.

36. We recommend that the EU give priority to ensuring that exchange programmes are accessible to all (age groups, Member States, levels of education and financial capacity) and to enable traineeships or exchanges between sectors, countries, educational institutions, cities and businesses. The EU should be responsible for launching, mediating and funding cultural and social exchanges across the EU, both physical and digital. The EU must actively promote these initiatives and target people who are not yet aware of cultural and social exchange programmes. The Conference on the Future of Europe, for which citizens were randomly selected, is the perfect example of a European exchange. We want more initiatives of this kind, but we also want smaller-scale initiatives, as well as exchanges in the fields of sport, music, (social) internships, etc.

We make this recommendation because it is important to create a sense of belonging and cohesion and to promote tolerance for our magnificent diversity and perspectives, as well as the development of individual skills. This process will develop friendships, mutual understanding and critical thinking. We would like to promote the engagement of all members of our communities, even those who have not participated in such initiatives to date.

Sub-axis 4.5 Quality, financing and access to education/Sub-axis 4.6 Harmonisation of education

37. We recommend that all Member States define and adopt a minimum standard of certified education in essential subjects from primary school onwards. The aim is to ensure that all citizens have equal access to quality education that guarantees equity and equality.

We make this recommendation for the following reasons:

- the existence of a minimum standard would enhance the confidence of parents, teachers and students in their education systems while leaving room for initiative and diversity.

If implemented, our recommendation will strengthen and strengthen the common European identity, fostering cohesion, unity and a sense of belonging.

- The implementation of this recommendation would strengthen cooperation and exchanges between schools across the EU, which would improve relations between teaching staff and pupils and greatly facilitate exchange programmes.

38. We recommend that English be taught, according to a certifiable standard, as a main subject in primary schools in all EU Member States in order to facilitate and strengthen the ability of European citizens to communicate effectively.

We make this recommendation for the following reasons:

- this would allow for greater unity and equality by strengthening the ability of citizens to communicate with each other and support a stronger common European identity;
- this would expand the labour market and make it more flexible and accessible, giving citizens the confidence to work and communicate in all other Member States that offer more personal and professional perspectives.
- such an approach would allow the dissemination of a common European language within a very short period of time;
- the use of a common language accelerates the sharing of information, which would benefit cooperation, common crisis response, humanitarian aid and rapprochement between Europe and Europeans.

Axis 5 An ethical and secure digital transformation

Sub-axis 5.1 Democratisation of digital transformation/Sub-axis 5.2 Cybersecurity

39. We recommend that the EU have more powers to combat illegal content and cybercrime. We recommend strengthening the capacity of Europol/European Cybercrime Centre, including:

- increasing financial resources and staffing
- guaranteeing similar sanctions in each country
- ensuring prompt and effective control of legality

We make this recommendation to ensure freedom on the internet, while ensuring that discrimination, abuse and harassment are punished. We support the idea of a European public body because we do not want to leave the regulation of online platforms to private companies alone. Online platforms must take responsibility for distributed content, but we want to make sure that it is not their interests that prevail. Content regulation and prosecution of perpetrators must be timely and effective, so that they also have a deterrent effect on malicious individuals.

40. We recommend that the EU invest in innovative and high-quality digital infrastructure (such as 5G being developed in Europe) to ensure Europe's autonomy and prevent

dependence on third countries or private companies. The EU should also pay particular attention to investment in its lagging regions.

We make this recommendation because digital infrastructure plays a key role in the European economy, as well as in the daily lives of Europeans, which they facilitate. Europe therefore needs high-quality digital infrastructure. If it depends on third parties, Europe may be vulnerable to negative influences from private companies or foreign countries. Europe should therefore invest in digital infrastructure in order to improve its autonomy. It is also important to ensure digital inclusion by ensuring that less digitally developed regions benefit from investments.

41. We recommend that the EU promote education on fake news, disinformation and online security in European schools. It should draw on examples of good practice from across the EU. The EU should set up an organisation specifically responsible for promoting this work and providing recommendations to education systems. It should also promote non-formal education as well as innovative and creative teaching techniques (e.g. participatory games).

We make this recommendation because introducing courses on online security and digital security culture (fighting online scams, fake news, etc.) at school is important in order to give everyone the tools to protect themselves from online threats. It is important to target young people, who are highly exposed to such threats. Schools can also communicate with parents to promote good practices. These courses can be based on examples of good practice in Europe (e.g. Finland), while adapting to the needs of each country.

Sub-axis 5.3 Data protection

42. We recommend further limiting the misuse of data by “data giants” by increasing compliance with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), creating more standardised mechanisms across the EU, and ensuring that even non-European companies operating in the EU comply with this regulation. This improvement should provide for a clear and concise explanation of the conditions of use of the data in order to avoid ambiguity and the provision of additional information on how the data will be used and by whom, and to avoid consent to the re-use and resale of the data being the default option. It should ensure that data are permanently erased when requested by a citizen. It should also enhance the consistency of the monitoring of compliance with the rules as regards profiling of individuals on the basis of their online activities. We propose two types of sanctions: a fine proportional to the company’s turnover and limitations on the company’s activities.

We make this recommendation because transparency is currently very limited as to the type of data collected, how it is processed and the identity of those to whom it is sold. We need to further limit abuses of power by data giants and ensure that citizens consent to the processing of their data knowingly.

43. We recommend the creation of an independent pan-European agency that should clearly define intrusive behaviour (e.g. spam) and develop guidelines on how citizens can oppose the processing of their data and obtain their erasure, in particular from third parties. This agency must have the mandate to identify and sanction fraudsters and organisations that do not comply with the rules. It should focus on ensuring compliance with EU rules by entities established outside the EU but operating there. It would be funded by the EU institutions and would consist of a joint board of independent bodies (i.e. experts from

academia and entities representing professionals). It should have a rotating praesidium. We propose two types of sanctions: a fine proportional to the turnover of the undertakings and the limitations on the activity of the undertakings.

We make this recommendation because there is no central agency with a strong mandate that can help citizens, especially when they have a problem and need help, advice or support. There are no clear and binding rules that companies must follow. As for sanctions, they are not applied or have a negligible impact on companies.

44. We recommend creating an EU certification system that would demonstrate compliance with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in a transparent manner and that would ensure that data protection information is presented in an accessible, clear and simple way. This certificate would be mandatory and visible on websites and platforms. It should be issued by an independent certifier at European level, existing or created for this purpose, who would not be linked to national governments or the private sector.

We make this recommendation because there is currently little or no transparency about how data is protected by each company, and users/customers cannot make informed choices.

45. We recommend better explaining the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and improving communication about it by creating a standard text on compliance that uses simple and clear language, understandable by all. This text should present a key message and/or fundamental principles. The consent procedure should be more visual (e.g. a request for explicit authorisation of telephone access by an application). It should be accompanied by an information campaign (including television) and, systematically, compulsory courses (at least for those working with data) and advice on the intention of those in need of assistance.

We make this recommendation because, at present, the wording of the GDPR is too vague and too technical and the amount of information is overwhelming and not accessible to all. Communication is also not similar across countries and often excludes different groups, mainly older people and people born before digital.

Sub-axis 5.4 Digital Transformation and Health

46. We recommend that the EU tackle the problem of “false information” by two means:

- **legislation enabling social media companies to implement machine learning algorithms that can highlight the reliability of information on social media and new media, providing the user with verified sources of information. We recommend that algorithms be controlled by experts in order to ensure their proper functioning;**
- **the establishment of a digital platform to assign a score to information from traditional media (e.g. television, print, radio) regardless of political and economic interests, and which informs citizens about the quality of information without applying any form of censorship. This platform should be subject to public scrutiny and respect the highest standards of transparency, and the EU should ensure that the funds allocated to it are used for the intended purpose.**

We make this recommendation because different types of media are concerned and we believe that sanctions or removal of content could lead to censorship and undermine freedom of expression and press freedom. We recommend that experts check and control the proper functioning of the algorithm to ensure that it is working properly. Finally, we recommend that the platform be apolitical and independent to ensure transparency and freedom of expression. Moreover, since it is impossible to completely get rid of false information, making these tools available to citizens will help to reduce their effects in Europe.

47. We recommend that the EU implement different actions to ensure a healthy use of the internet:

- **First of all, the EU needs to address the lack of infrastructure and equipment that prevents citizens from accessing the internet;**
 - **Next, we recommend that the EU encourage Member States to deploy training on the Internet and its risks for all age groups. This could be done by introducing courses in schools for children and youth and creating different curricula and curricula to reach adult and elderly citizens. The content of these courses should be determined at European level by a group of independent experts.**
 - **Finally, we call on the EU to take all necessary measures to ensure that the digitalisation of society does not exclude older people and to ensure that essential services are also accessible in person.**
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- **The EU should ensure that funds specifically allocated to these activities are used for the intended purpose.**

We make this recommendation, due to the lack of infrastructure and equipment (e.g. devices) in some places in Europe and the need to ensure the connection before educating citizens, as we know that internet access is limited in some regions and for certain profiles. We recommend that courses be organised to help children acquire digital skills, provide additional programs to help older people digitalise, and take the necessary steps to reassure that digital transformation does not undermine the rights of older people.

48. We recommend that the EU promote citizens' education in each Member State in order to strengthen critical thinking, skepticism and fact-checking and to teach them to independently assess whether information is reliable or not. This education should involve the organisation of specific courses at basic education level and should be offered, in other public spaces, to citizens of all ages wishing to benefit from it. The EU should ensure that funds specifically allocated to these activities are used for the intended purpose.

We make this recommendation because we think it is impossible to completely get rid of false information. This training will help citizens recognise them for themselves. As a result, the effects of false information on society and on citizens themselves will be reduced. It would also offer citizens greater opportunities for action, rather than relying on institutions to obtain reliable information.

Annex: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED BY THE PANEL THAT WERE NOT ADOPTED

Axis 3 A just society

Sub-axis 3.2 Equality of rights

We recommend that the EU set up a mechanism to monitor and respect minority rights (e.g. a portal or office where people could file complaints).

We make this recommendation because we believe that every individual can express his or her opinion and has the right to seek and receive help. Such an office is necessary to reduce tensions between minorities and the majority.

Sub-axis 3.3 Equity/Sub-axis 3.4 Access to sports

We recommend that the EU raise awareness of physical activity through ‘role modeling’, involving public figures (so events organised by Parliament should include some form of physical activity or movement, for a few seconds, such as stretching, walking or jumping).

We make this recommendation because the mobilisation of public figures for physical activity will raise public awareness.

Axis 5 An ethical and secure digital transformation

Sub-axis 5.3 Data protection

We recommend the creation of a web ID that will store personal and sensitive data, but will only make it available to the authorities and the police. Online platforms and sellers will use the online code associated with that web identifier and the data necessary for a given activity. The default setting for data sharing using this identifier should be non-consent. The data should only be communicated to the parties directly concerned and not to a third party. If the data is communicated to a third party, a citizen should be able to easily object to it. The data should only be available for a limited period of time or for a specific transaction. The authorisation to use the data should be limited in time or clearly define what companies can do with this data.

We make this recommendation because, at present, companies can collect all data, including personal data and sensitive data, and use it for many purposes without disclosing exactly how and why. So operators get more information than they actually need to provide us with services and can then resell or reuse other data without our consent. At the same time, this will ensure the accountability of internet users while preserving their relative anonymity.

European Citizens' Panel 2: "European democracy; values and rights, rule of law, security"

RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE PANEL (TO BE SUBMITTED TO PLENARY)

Axis 1: Guaranteeing rights and non-discrimination

Sub-axis 1.1 Non-discrimination/Sub-axis 1.2 Gender equality

1. "We recommend that the EU include criteria to combat discrimination in the labour market (quotas for young people, elderly people, women, minorities). If companies meet these criteria, they will receive subsidies or tax breaks.'

We recommend raising awareness among employees of the following issues:

- **supranational and national institutions (e.g. trade unions);**
- **mechanisms to ensure that companies comply with existing rules on non-discrimination in the workplace;**
- **qualification programmes for social groups facing discrimination in the labour market (young people, the elderly, women, minorities).**

We recommend the adoption of EU legislation in two stages. First, subsidies should be provided for the hiring of employees from certain categories likely to be discriminated against. Second, the legislative act should require employers to employ these groups for a minimum period of time.

Indeed, the EU is responsible for maintaining a balance between the interests of the free market and the protection of vulnerable groups that need to be legally protected. Heterogeneous groups are desirable for companies as they offer diverse qualifications. Subsidies are an additional incentive to be provided to companies.

2. "We recommend that the EU create an incentive programme that facilitates the creation of affordable kindergartens and playgrounds in large and small businesses. Shared facilities are also a viable solution for small businesses to benefit from the subsidy.

We recommend that the EU oblige companies to set up kindergartens in proportion to the number of employees.

We recommend this because reconciling family and working life improves work performance, reduces unemployment and places parents, especially women, in a position that allows them to pursue their careers. Focusing on the social dimension, the proposed solution ensures the safety of children and reduces the anxieties of parents.

Sub-axis 1.3: Protecting human rights and the rights of nature and animals

3. “We recommend preserving animal welfare and sustainability by amending Directive 98/58/EC on the protection of animals on farms. More detailed minimum criteria need to be defined. They must be accurate, measurable and time-limited. The minimum criteria must be set in such a way as to lead to higher standards of animal welfare and at the same time allow for a transition to a sustainable climate and environment and ecological agriculture.

As citizens, we believe it is important to have stricter minimum standards to be harmonised in the EU for livestock farming. We are aware that the transition could pose problems in some agricultural sectors that receive subsidies, and for those in transition to ecological and sustainable agriculture. Nevertheless, we believe it is very important to ensure that this transition takes place.

4. We recommend promoting more environmentally and climate-friendly agriculture in Europe and around the world by, for example, taxing all negative emissions, pesticides and extreme water use, depending on their impact on the environment. Customs duties on all agricultural products imported into the Union must eliminate the competitive advantages of third countries which do not meet the same standards as the Union. To promote animal-friendly agriculture, we recommend taxing emissions caused by transporting animals over long distances.

By setting up such a system, we believe that it is possible to support the transition to climate-friendly and environmentally friendly agriculture.

5. While a lot of fake news has been circulating lately, we recommend promoting more independent, objective and balanced media coverage by taking the following steps: 1. develop an EU Directive laying down minimum standards for media independence; 2. to promote at Union level the development of media skills for every citizen.’

The EU needs to develop a directive to guarantee media independence and freedom of expression.

6. We recommend that we stop subsidising mass agricultural production if it does not lead to a transition to climate, ecological and sustainable agriculture. Instead, we recommend redirecting grants to support a sustainable transition.

Instead of subsidising the agricultural sector of mass husbandry, subsidies should be redirected to farms that are in transition to meet the new minimum animal welfare standards.

Sub-axis 1.4 Right to privacy

7. “We recommend that entities that process personal data be authorised at EU level. These entities will also have to be subject to an independent, external annual audit on data protection. These entities will be penalised for data protection breaches in proportion to their annual turnover, in a stricter manner than under the current Regulation. Approval should be withdrawn after two consecutive violations, and immediately after a serious breach.

We recommend such measures, as current regulation (GDPR) is not sufficient and entities need to be better controlled and sanctioned to ensure that they do not infringe data protection and the right to privacy.

8. “We recommend strengthening the Union’s competences in the following areas: 1) data protection education, 2) data protection awareness and 3) protection of minors’ personal data. We recommend clarifying and strengthening the rules regarding the processing of minors’ data in the GDPR, including the rules on consent, age verification and control by legal guardians. We also recommend introducing into the GDPR a special category for sensitive data of minors (e.g. criminal record, health information, nudity) so that minors are protected from any form of abuse and discrimination.

This recommendation is necessary because minors are particularly vulnerable to data protection and privacy violations and because, at present, the general population (especially minors, teachers and legal guardians) is not sufficiently aware of data protection. They all need to learn how to use online and offline data services and protect children’s privacy rights. Furthermore, legal guardians can often consent to the processing of children’s data without being fully aware or informed and children may falsify parental consent. Finally, this recommendation is necessary because there is no real EU-wide data protection awareness campaign targeting, in particular, minors, legal guardians and teachers, while such a campaign is indispensable.

9. We recommend that standardised privacy policies and easy-to-understand, concise and intuitive consent forms be put in place, which clearly indicate what data processing is strictly necessary and what is optional. We recommend that the withdrawal of consent be easy, fast and permanent. We recommend prohibiting entities from restricting their services more than necessary if consent has not been given to optional data processing.

We recommend this because the current EU rules are not sufficiently precise, the withdrawal of consent is long, temporary and complex, and entities have no interest in offering their services to citizens who invoke their right to data protection.

Axis 2: Protecting democracy and the rule of law

Sub-axis 2.1 Protecting the Rule of Law

10. “We recommend that the Cross-compliance Regulation (2020/2092, adopted on 16 December 2020) be amended to apply to all violations of the rule of law rather than to violations that have an impact on the EU budget.”

The Cross-compliance Regulation allows for the suspension of the disbursement of EU funds to Member States that violate the rule of law. However, in its current wording, it applies only to violations that have or are likely to have an impact on the EU budget. In addition, the current wording of the Cross-compliance Regulation protects the EU budget and the EU institutions rather than the citizens of the Member States concerned. Therefore, we recommend amending the current text of the Regulation to cover all violations of the rule of law.

11. “We recommend that the EU organise annual rule of law conferences after the publication of the annual Rule of Law Report (the Commission’s mechanism for monitoring compliance with the rule of law by Member States). Member States should be obliged to send various social national delegations to the Conference, including both citizens and civil servants.”

This conference would promote dialogue between EU citizens on rule of law issues as well as dialogue between citizens and experts who draw up the annual rule of law reports. We believe that, in a climate of mutual appreciation and sharing, participants will be able to bring the best practices and ideas back to their home countries. In addition, the conference would raise awareness and understanding of the rule of law principle and the conclusions and process underlying the annual rule of law report. It would also attract media attention and allow citizens to share their experiences and compare them with the findings of the report.

Sub-axis 2.2 Protecting and strengthening democracy/Sub-axis 2.4 Media and disinformation

12. “We recommend that the EU apply its competition rules more rigorously in the media sector in order to ensure the protection of media pluralism in all Member States. The EU should prevent large media monopolies and political appointments on media boards. We also recommend that the future EU legislation on media freedom include rules to prevent politicians from owning or having a strong influence on their content.

We recommend this because the application of EU competition rules fosters a pluralistic media landscape in which citizens have a choice. As the Commission is currently preparing a legislative act (on media freedom) for the integrity of the EU media market, it should also be provided that the media should not be held or influenced by politicians.

Sub-axis 2.3 Security

13. “We recommend that the EU institutions play a more important role with all the tools at their disposal, including the National Cybersecurity Centres and the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), in order to protect citizens, organisations and institutions from new threats arising from breaches of cybersecurity and the use of artificial intelligence for criminal purposes. We also recommend that directives from Europe and its agencies be properly implemented and disseminated in all Member States.”

We recommend this because citizens feel powerless and are not aware of what the European Union is doing to combat these threats. We recommend this because these threats constitute a serious national and European security problem. We recommend this because Europe should be a true driver of innovation in this area.

14. “We recommend that, in its relations with external countries, the Union first strengthens the common democratic values at its borders. It is only after achieving this goal that we recommend that the Union become the ambassador of our democratic model in countries that are willing to apply this model and are willing to do so through diplomacy and dialogue.

We recommend this measure because we have to look inwards before looking outwards. Because Europe can and must help Member States strengthen their democracies. Because it is also by setting an example and supporting the efforts of external countries for democracy that we protect ourselves.

Axis 3: Reforming the European Union

Sub-axis 3.1 Institutional reform

15. “We recommend changing the names of the EU institutions to clarify their functions. For example, the Council of the European Union could be called the Senate of the European Union. The European Commission could be called the Executive Commission of the European Union.

We recommend this as it is currently difficult for citizens to understand the roles and functions of each EU institution. Their names do not reflect their functions. Citizens cannot be expected to distinguish between the Council of the European Union, the European Council and the Council of Europe. It is important to avoid overlaps.

16. We recommend the adoption of an electoral law for the European Parliament, which harmonises electoral conditions (age of the right to vote, date of elections, requirements relating to electoral districts, candidates, political parties and their funding). European citizens should have the right to vote for different parties at EU level, each composed of candidates from several Member States. During a sufficient transitional period, citizens could still vote for national and transnational parties.

We recommend this because the Union needs to develop a sense of unity, which could emerge through a truly unified election of the European Parliament. This joint election will make it possible to empower the Members of the European Parliament and to focus the electoral campaign on common European themes.

Sub-axis 3.2 Decision-making

17. We recommend creating an online platform where citizens can find and request factually verified information. The platform should be clearly associated with the EU institutions, be thematically structured and easily accessible (e.g. by providing a hotline). Citizens should have the opportunity to ask critical questions to experts (e.g. academics, journalists) and get factual answers from sources.

Free access to factual information is of the utmost importance to our society, so that citizens are well informed and protected from fake news and disinformation. We need a credible and independent source of information that is not influenced by political, economic and national interests. In addition, the platform can establish a bridge (i.e. a direct relationship) between citizens and the EU.

18. We recommend that an EU-wide referendum be held in exceptional cases on issues of great importance to all European citizens. The referendum should be launched by the European Parliament and should be legally binding.

EU citizens should have a more direct influence on important decisions on European issues. Nevertheless, referendums should only be held in exceptional circumstances, since, given their high cost, it would not be possible to hold them regularly. We are aware that this recommendation may require an amendment of the Treaty and the adaptation of national constitutions.

19. We recommend creating a multifunctional digital platform through which citizens can vote in online elections and polls. Citizens should be given the opportunity to motivate their vote on important issues and legislative proposals from the European institutions. This platform should be secure, widely accessible and highly visible to every citizen.

The aim of this platform is to increase participation in European policy and to facilitate citizens' access to consultation and voting. Existing tools and processes are not visible enough, and that's why we need a new integrated tool for these different functions. Greater participation leads to better decisions, greater trust among European citizens and a better functioning of the Union in general.

20. “We recommend that voting systems in the EU institutions be reassessed by focusing on the issue of unanimity voting. The “weighting” of votes should be calculated fairly, in order to protect the interests of small countries.

Unanimity is an important challenge for decision-making in the EU. Given the large number of Member States, it is very difficult to reach an agreement. If necessary, the European Treaties should be amended to resolve the issue of unanimity.

Sub-axis 3.3 Closer integration

21. “We recommend that the Union make public investments that lead to the creation of appropriate jobs and the improvement and harmonisation of quality of life across the Union, between Member States and within Member States (i.e. at regional level). There is a need to ensure effective oversight, transparency and communication to citizens in the implementation of public investments and to allow citizens to monitor the entire investment process. For a better quality of life, investments should be made in areas such as education, health, housing, physical infrastructure, care for the elderly and persons with disabilities, taking into account the needs of each Member State. The additional investments should aim at establishing a good balance between an appropriate working and personal life in order to enable a healthy lifestyle.

We recommend this measure because harmonising the standard of living in the Union will improve economic progress across the Union, leading to a unified European Union. This is a key indicator for further integration of the Union. Although some of these mechanisms are already in place, we believe that they can still be improved.

22. “We recommend establishing a common basis, based on a set of economic and quality of life indicators, for all Member States, so as to offer equal opportunities and place

everyone on an equal footing to achieve a common economic structure. It is important that this common basis be established according to a clear and realistic timetable set by the institutions on the recommendation of the experts. Experts should also be consulted on the form of such a common economic structure. It is also important that the indicators on which this common basis is based be more precisely defined with the help of experts.

We recommend this because if we have a fair Union, we will have a more united Europe. To be fair, we must offer equal opportunities and a common basis for the whole Union. It will only be possible to achieve a common economic structure once a common base is established.

23. We recommend taxing large companies and corporate income to contribute to public investment, and use taxation to invest in education and development in each country (R & D, scholarships — Erasmus, etc.). It is also important to ensure that tax havens are abolished in the EU.”

We recommend this measure as it will help prevent tax evasion and the creation of tax havens and promote compliance.

Axis 4: Building a European identity

Sub-axis 4.1 Education for democracy

24. We recommend that democracy education in the EU improves and achieves a minimum level of knowledge in all Member States. This education should cover, but not limited to, democratic processes and general information on the Union, which should be taught in all EU Member States. It should be enriched by a set of different concepts aimed at teaching the democratic process, which should be attractive and age-appropriate.

This recommendation and the reasons for it are important because, if implemented, it will lead to a more harmonious and democratic life in the Union. The justifications are as follows: young people would be educated in democratic processes; this education could limit populism and disinformation in public debate; it could reduce discrimination; and, finally, it would make it possible to educate and mobilise citizens for democracy beyond their simple duty to vote.

25. “We recommend that existing and emerging translation technologies, such as artificial intelligence, be further developed, improved and made more accessible in order to reduce language barriers and strengthen common identity and democracy in the EU.”

This recommendation and the reasons for it are important because, if implemented, it will contribute to building a common European identity by improving communication between citizens of all Member States.

26. We recommend that verifiable information be made easily accessible, in understandable terms, to citizens via a mobile app, in order to improve transparency, public debate and democracy. This application could be used to disseminate information on, for example, legislation, discussions within the EU, amendments to the Treaties, etc.

This recommendation and the reasons for it are important because, if implemented, it will facilitate communication to the extent that it will allow for a more informed debate among the citizens of the different Member States, through an application that could have many different functions. This application should be designed in such a way that it is likely to be of interest to everyone and capable of further attracting curiosity and making technical information more accessible and attractive. The application should be seen as a complementary source, which disseminates information officially verified directly by the Union in order to improve trust and transparency in the public debate and contribute to the building of a common European identity.

Sub-axis 4.2 European values and identity

27. “We recommend that the EU set up a special fund for online and offline interactions (i.e. exchange programmes, panels, meetings) of short and long duration between EU citizens, in order to strengthen European identity. Participants should be representative of society within the Union, including groups selected in a targeted manner on the basis of various criteria, i.e. demographic, socio-economic and occupational criteria. The objectives of this fund must be clearly stated in order to promote European identity, and this fund should be evaluated at regular intervals.

We recommend this as this type of interaction allows citizens to share ideas, and longer exchanges allow them to understand different cultures and share experiences, including professional practices. An EU fund is needed, as it is important that everyone can participate, including those who do not usually participate.

28. “We recommend that the EU invest swiftly in the fight against disinformation, supporting existing organisations and initiatives, such as the Code of Practice on Disinformation and the European Digital Media Observatory, as well as comparable initiatives in the Member States. Different countermeasures could be put in place: the verification of facts, awareness of disinformation, the production of easily accessible statistics, the imposition of appropriate sanctions under a legal framework on those who disseminate disinformation, and the fight against sources of disinformation.

This recommendation is important because misinformation and disinformation, from within and outside the EU, have the effect of creating conflicts between EU citizens, polarising society, jeopardising democracy and harming the economy. Given the complexity of the subject, significant human and financial resources are needed.

29. “We recommend 1) increasing the frequency of online and offline interactions between the Union and its citizens (i.e. by directly interviewing citizens on European issues and creating an easy-to-use platform to ensure that every citizen can interact with EU institutions and officials); and 2) ensuring that citizens can participate in the EU policy-making process, express their opinions and get feedback, and we recommend creating a Charter or Code of Conduct or guidelines for EU officials. Different means of interaction should exist so that every citizen can participate.

We recommend this measure because there are several ways to get in touch with the European institutions (online platforms, representative bodies), but they are not known, not effective and not

transparent. Accessibility varies considerably from country to country. More frequent and better interactions will give rise to a sense of ownership of European citizenship.

30. We recommend that European identity and values (i.e. the rule of law, democracy and solidarity) play a special role in the integration process of migrants. Different measures may be envisaged, such as the creation of programmes or the support of already existing (local) programmes, in order to encourage social interactions between migrants and EU citizens, or the participation of businesses in programmes supporting the integration of migrants. At the same time, similar programmes should be launched to raise EU citizens' awareness of migration-related issues.

This recommendation is important, as social interaction programs can help migrants in their new lives and enable non-migrants to better understand the daily lives of migrants. If migrants live in ghettos, there is no possibility of integrating them into society at national or EU level. A common policy is necessary, because once migrants enter the territory of the Union, they can go to all EU countries. Local initiatives should be supported, as local governments will use the funds more effectively than at the national level.

Sub-axis 4.3 EU information

31. "We recommend that the EU better inform European citizens. To do so, the Union should use all necessary means while respecting the freedom and independence of the media. It should provide the media with general and reliable resources and information on the activities and policies of the Union. The Union should ensure that information is disseminated equally in all Member States through national and European media and ensure that Member States encourage public broadcasters and public news agencies to deal with European issues."

We recommend this because, in our personal experience and according to Eurobarometer data, the majority of European citizens are informed by the mainstream media (press, radio and television) and these channels currently offer very little information about the EU. The media, including the public media, have a public service function. It is therefore essential to deal with European issues affecting the European population in order to fulfil this function. We recommend that the EU information disseminated in the different Member States be the same in order to promote integration and we recommend avoiding diverging information on different issues in each country. It is more convenient and cheaper to use existing media channels than to create a new channel, for the same result. Existing channels also have the advantage of being already known to citizens. No citizen should have to choose between different channels to access different content (national or European).

32. "We recommend that the EU create and promote multilingual online forums and offline meetings that allow citizens to engage in a debate with EU representatives, regardless of the topic and geographical scope of the issue raised. The answers to the questions raised at these online forums and offline meetings should be provided within a well-defined short time frame. All information relating to these spaces should be centralised on an integrated official website with different features, such as a space for frequently asked questions, the possibility to share ideas, proposals or concerns with other citizens, and a mechanism to indicate which ones garner the most support. In any case, access to this site should be easy and non-bureaucratic language should be used.

We recommend this because it is a way to create a direct bridge between European citizens and European representatives to speak and engage together, to give citizens easy access to information about the Union and to better inform them of the information already available. This will create a more transparent and open Union and help citizens share their problems and reflections and receive policy responses and solutions, and enable citizens to engage and share perspectives and experiences with other citizens.

33. “We recommend that EU institutions and representatives use more accessible language and avoid using bureaucratic terms in their communications, while maintaining the quality and technical level of the information given. The Union should also adapt the information it provides to citizens using different communication channels and different audiences (e.g. newspapers, television, social media). The EU should make a special effort to adapt communication to digital media in order to increase its capacity to reach out to young people.”

We recommend this measure, as having comprehensible information will allow the Union to reach more European citizens and not just those who are engaged. With new modern tools to target specific audiences, citizens will gain a better understanding of EU activities and policies, especially young people who do not feel close to or attached to the EU.

Axis 5: Strengthening citizens’ participation

Sub-axis 5.1 Citizen participation

34. “We recommend that independent citizens’ observers be present in all EU decision-making processes. There should be a permanent forum or body of citizens’ representatives, which would be responsible for disseminating relevant and important information to all Union citizens defined as such. These citizens would engage with all other European citizens in a top-down/bottom-up approach, which would further develop dialogue between citizens and EU institutions.”

Citizens, of course, deserve to be kept informed of all issues, and it is important to ensure that politicians cannot overlook some of the issues they would prefer to ignore. Such a measure would bridge the gap between citizens and elected representatives by establishing new avenues of trust.

35. “We recommend that the Union reopen the discussion on the constitution of Europe with a view to drawing up a constitution inspired by the citizens of the Union. Citizens should be able to vote for such a constitution. In order to avoid any conflict with the Member States, the values of human rights and democracy should be included as a matter of priority in this constitution. In drawing up such a constitution, account must be taken of previous efforts that have never resulted in a constitution.”

Because this constitution would engage young people in politics at EU level and thwart the forces of nationalism that are gaining ground. It would provide a common definition of what democracy in Europe is and would be implemented equally in all Member States. Because the EU shares common values on democracy and human rights. Because citizens would have the opportunity to

be involved in the decision-making process and to identify themselves more with the Union by participating in that process.

36. We recommend that politicians be more accountable in how they represent the citizens who elected them. Young people, in particular, are particularly detached from politics and are not taken seriously when they participate. But disinterest is a universal problem and people of all ages should be more engaged than they are now.

Because the definition of democracy should be updated. We must remember what democracy really is. Because young people have had enough and are disillusioned by the politicians they see as elites who do not share their opinions. This is why citizens need to be more engaged in an original and attractive way. The education system, social media and all other forms of media could fulfil this role throughout the life cycle and in all languages.

Sub-axis 5.2 Citizen participation

37. “We recommend that the EU get closer to citizens in a more assertive way. To achieve this, Member States should be involved in promoting citizens’ participation in the Union. The Union should promote the use of citizen participation mechanisms by setting up commercial and advertising campaigns. National and local governments should be obliged to participate in this process. The Union should ensure the effectiveness of participatory democracy platforms.”

We recommend this because the platform that already exists needs to be strengthened and made more effective: there needs to be more feedback from citizens to the EU and vice versa. There is not enough debate within the EU, both between citizens and between governments. Because citizens do not submit petitions, either because they do not know that the mechanism exists, or because they do not believe that such petitions can succeed.

38. “We recommend that the Union create and implement curricula for schools on what is being done in the EU with regard to participation mechanisms. Such programmes should be integrated into the school curricula on European citizenship and ethics, with content adapted to the age of the pupils. There should also be programmes for adults. Lifelong learning programmes should be made available to citizens in order to deepen their knowledge of opportunities for citizen participation in the Union.”

We recommend this measure because it is important for our children’s future. Citizens want to know how to express their voice. It is important that they know the exact mechanisms and how they can be used, so that their voice is heard by the Union. This is important for all European citizens to be placed on an equal footing. As European citizens, we need to know how to use our rights. As European citizens, we have the right to know this information.

Sub-axis 5.3 Citizen participation

39. We recommend that the Union organise citizens’ assemblies. We strongly recommend that they be put in place under a legally binding and mandatory law or regulation. These citizens’ assemblies should be held every 12 to 18 months. Citizens’ participation should

not be mandatory, but should be encouraged, while being organised on the basis of limited mandates. Participants must be randomly selected according to representativeness criteria. They must not represent organisations of any kind and should not be called upon to participate because of their professional function when they are members of the assembly. If necessary, support will be provided by experts to ensure that the members of the assembly have sufficient information to deliberate. Decision-making will be in the hands of the citizens. The Union must guarantee the commitment of politicians to the decisions taken by citizens in citizens' assemblies. If citizens' proposals are ignored or explicitly rejected, the European institutions must report on them, stating the reasons why this decision was taken.

We recommend the setting up of citizens' assemblies, because we want citizens to feel closer to the European institutions and to contribute directly to decision-making, hand in hand with politicians, in order to strengthen the sense of belonging and direct effectiveness. In addition, we want political parties to be held accountable to citizens, including their electoral programmes.

Annex: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED BY THE PANEL BUT NOT ADOPTED

Axis 1: Guaranteeing rights and non-discrimination

Sub-axis 1.1 Non-discrimination/Sub-axis 1.2 Gender equality

“We recommend that the EU actively involve minorities in policy-making on key aspects of state institutions (e.g. police and NGOs). We recommend that the Union set up an advisory council, directly elected by minorities. It should be composed mainly of representatives of minorities, while also including representatives of NGOs. It should have a training role in raising public officials' awareness of the needs of minorities. This body should have a veto on minority issues.

We recommend this because the voices of minorities are not sufficiently heard. They should express themselves on their own behalf, in a self-determined manner and at a professional level; that is why we combined representation through voting and expertise.

Axis 2: Protecting democracy and the rule of law

Sub-axis 2.2 Protecting and strengthening democracy/Sub-axis 2.4 Media and disinformation

“We recommend the creation of a monitoring agency for audiovisual, print and digital media at European level. This agency should verify that the national media are following an impartial and objective process in the production of their content. In order to prevent disinformation, the Agency should provide for a system for rating the reliability of national media. This rating system should be easy for citizens to understand.

We recommend this because we need an assessment of the media and their reliability, but also the diversity of the media in the EU countries. A European agency would be the most objective body to ensure such a mission. In addition, such a rating system allows citizens to make informed choices

and encourages the media to provide reliable information. If the rating system proves insufficient to ensure the reliability of the media, the agency should also be empowered to impose sanctions.

Axis 5: Strengthening citizens' participation

Sub-axis 5.1 Citizen participation

“We recommend the creation of a citizens’ representative body to discuss and contribute significantly to the decision-making process — whenever a key issue for European citizens is decided at EU level (according to citizens’ decision — possibly through an investigation). This should be a heterogeneous group of around 100 citizens from all EU countries, in which each country is represented equally. It should be a rotating group, whose members are replaced regularly.

Because it is important to avoid problems such as corruption, which could arise from a permanent representative body, and it is vital that such a body has equal representation of all countries to avoid unfair decision-making power. Because this mode of operation would avoid problems related to the installation or constant use of remote technologies.

European Citizens' Panel 3: Climate Change and Environment/Health

RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE PANEL (TO BE PRESENTED TO PLENARY)

Axis 1: Better ways of life

Sub-axis 1.1 Healthy lifestyles

1. We recommend that the EU provide subsidies to organic farming, including incentives for organic pesticides, in order to make organic products more affordable. In addition, the EU needs to support farmers' education on organic and sustainable farming and monocultures should be avoided. Small organic farms, non-intensive farms and farms with short supply chains should benefit from support allowing them to be more competitive.

Subsidising organic products would make them more affordable. We should help supermarkets using shorter supply chains and small farmers by offering them opportunities to sell their products. This makes it possible to expand access to fresher products. Moreover, the low prices of non-organic products do not reflect the harm they cause.

2. We recommend that innovation in vertical agriculture be financed by EU investments.

Vertical agriculture allows us to save land space that could instead be used for forestry. It also does not require pesticides, allowing us to produce more organic food. In addition, it is not affected by bad weather conditions, which are increasingly common due to climate change, and can shorten supply chains.

3. The EU should set minimum standards on food quality, food traceability and consumption of seasonal products in school canteens. Healthy ingredients for school canteens should therefore be subsidised in order to provide students with quality affordable food.

We acquire from an early age habits that shape our attitude towards health; good habits should be encouraged at school and students could replicate them at home. It is also a question of social justice: every EU student should be entitled to quality food at school.

4. We recommend investing in new bike paths and in improving existing trails, in order to make cycling safe and attractive, and to ensure that all age groups can benefit from training in road traffic rules in Europe, especially for e-bike users and people without a driver's license. Manufacturers of electric bicycles should be required to provide information on the use of the electric bike and the associated risks. Legal protection should be provided to cyclists in the event of an accident involving a vehicle (see Dutch rules). We are in favour of car-free areas in cities (without harming commercial areas). More broadly, we recommend giving priority and additional rights to cyclists and pedestrians over motorised vehicles, while ensuring road safety and compliance with traffic rules.

These recommendations are important because cycling brings benefits in terms of individual and public health, air quality, noise levels, climate and traffic in city centres. Cyclists and pedestrians must feel safe, given the risks associated with increased use of the electric bike. Sometimes cycling lanes are missing or are in poor condition.

5. We recommend integrating food production into public education. We recommend subsidising and supporting the creation of gardens in schools, if possible, and urban gardening projects in public and private spaces. Urban planning frameworks must integrate the need for space, water and supporting infrastructure. For example, former parking lots could be used for greening projects, vertical gardening projects could be carried out on buildings or obtaining building permits could be conditioned by the integration of green spaces. We recommend sharing innovative and good practices across all Member States.

Gardening projects promote the resilience of cities and their inhabitants, bringing together people of different ages and social groups. The multiplication of green spaces improves quality of life, air quality, mental and physical health and the environment.

Sub-axis 1.2 Environmental education

6. We recommend that the EU adopt a directive requiring that urban planning programmes comply with specific environmental requirements in order to make cities greener. This directive should apply to private and public goods and spaces, in particular to new buildings under development. It must impose minimum standards to ensure that buildings and spaces are as green as possible. The adjective “green” refers here to the use of renewable energy sources, reduced energy consumption, low CO2 emissions^{and} the inclusion of plants in architectural projects.

Greener cities are actively contributing to reducing the effects of climate change and CO2 and^{ozone} emissions, in particular, which have a negative impact on citizens' health. Investing in greener cities contributes to sustainable community development that delivers long-term economic and social benefits.

7. We recommend that the EU, with the assistance of Member States, develop, adopt and implement a common European Charter targeting environmental issues in their complexity. The Charter will provide Member States with a framework to organise regular information and training campaigns, disseminated through all available media channels and on a new information portal created for this purpose. These campaigns should be organised throughout the EU and at all levels in order to raise awareness of the environment among all citizens.

The lack of coordination between Member States hampers the effectiveness of existing campaigns and slows down efforts to tackle the global challenge of climate change. A common charter will foster synergies between Member States' action plans, ensuring greater effectiveness of efforts. In addition, it will ensure that consistent and consistent information is provided to citizens about the impact of their daily actions, such as the choice of mode of transport and the treatment of their waste.

Axis 2: Protecting our environment and health

Sub-axis 2.1 A healthy natural environment

8. We recommend a uniform eco-score system that displays the overall environmental footprint of each available product purchased in the EU. Products from third countries must respect this eco-score system in a transparent manner. This system should be based on clear classification criteria applicable to the products themselves and use, for example, a QR code that provides more detailed product information.

This product life cycle information is fundamental for all EU citizens in order to empower consumers when shopping. This will enable EU citizens to make responsible decisions that will contribute to the protection of their environment.

9. We recommend that more investments be made to explore new environmentally friendly energy sources and, until the deployment of these new sources, that additional investments be allocated to existing optimal energy production solutions. We also recommend transparently informing and educating European citizens on specific energy sources. We strongly recommend taking into account the overall ecological and social impacts of the energy production process for current and future generations.

We face very high levels of carbon emissions and other toxic substances from energy production that degrade climate and air quality. To comply with the EU guidelines, the recommendations of the IPCC reports and the objectives of COP26, we need to strengthen research and investment to achieve climate-neutral energy production.

Sub-axis 2.2 Protecting our biodiversity

10. We recommend drastically reducing the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers in all types of agriculture by ensuring the application of stricter common standards, accelerating research on natural alternatives and supporting the adoption of new solutions, including training for farmers.

Although progress has been made with regard to fertilisers and alternative pesticides, most of them are not yet usable by large farms. A more sustained effort is therefore needed to develop new solutions. Research should be encouraged through public spending and higher standards for the use of pesticides and fertilisers. Research results need to be rapidly disseminated at EU level.

11. We recommend extending protected areas for biodiversity conservation (mammals, birds, insects and plants) and strengthening the rule of law regarding human intervention in these areas. Protected areas will be considered not only as islets, but also as a continuum with greener urban areas, in line with harmonised EU standards.

Biodiversity suffers greatly from deforestation. The creation of protected areas is one of the main means of protecting terrestrial biodiversity. However, it is difficult to preserve protected areas near polluted cities or avoid human interference when the surrounding areas leave little room for nature. We need to green the living areas and integrate them into their surrounding nature.

12. We recommend redirecting generic subsidies to agriculture mainly towards projects related to the development of sustainable agriculture, including respect for nature and

workers. Beneficiaries should respect clear environmental standards and be closely monitored.

We believe that only sustainable agriculture should be encouraged, which implies reallocating the funds currently used for generic subsidies. In addition, it is possible to increase the efficiency of the funds used by focusing on transformative projects and innovative solutions rather than on annual payments. Better monitoring of the ecological impact of agricultural activities and projects should be ensured. Workers' human rights must also be seen as an integral part of sustainability.

13. We recommend that the EU ensure fair competition for environmentally friendly agricultural products by setting higher standards for both EU and imported products, ensuring traceability, labelling and quality control.

The lower productivity of sustainable agricultural products undermines their cost-competitiveness. Imported products should meet the same strict standards regarding the environmental impact of their production. Our authorities should be able to ensure the traceability of imported agricultural products.

14. We recommend rapid and massive reforestation and afforestation in the EU, thanks to optimised land use. Particular attention should be paid to reforestation of exploited or destroyed forests and afforestation of areas with degraded soils. New, more responsible solutions should be promoted for better use of wood, for example to replace plastics and other chemicals, achieve increased energy efficiency from biomass and recycle wood products.

Reforestation has a clear positive impact on the environment and biodiversity in general. At the same time, we need to use less wood to heat ourselves, but more to make them products with high added value; for example, to replace plastics, the use of wood is paramount.

Sub-axis 2.3 Safe and Healthy Foods

15. We recommend the rapid and gradual removal of unsustainable packaging used for food, including plastic packaging and other non-biodegradable packaging. To this end, we suggest offering financial incentives to companies moving to fully biodegradable forms of packaging, investing in finding alternatives and imposing sanctions on companies that do not use biodegradable packaging.

Plastic waste, especially microplastics, is becoming increasingly abundant and slowly degrading. Plastic consumption undermines the quality and safety of food and, at the same time, poses risks to human and animal health. In addition, existing EU legislation to reduce non-biodegradable packaging is insufficient.

16. We recommend the gradual abandonment of intensive farming, including the end of degrading living conditions for animals. We propose to establish common standards for livestock farming (e.g. maximum number of animals, adapted outdoor space) and to invest more in non-intensive methods (extensive and sustainable agriculture) by providing financial incentives and training for farmers to support this development.

The phasing out of intensive agriculture will reduce environmental pollution levels and strengthen the protection of nature. In addition, the phasing out of intensive livestock farming will reduce the amount of drugs needed to combat animal diseases and improve the quality of our diet. Intensive farming also does not respect animal welfare, but there are more sustainable forms of farming, such as extensive farming; it is necessary to provide subsidies to farmers to help them embark on this path.

17. We recommend strengthening controls on the prohibition of unnecessary use of antibiotics and other veterinary medicinal products in feed additives: let's make this initiative happen! We propose that the use of antibiotics in livestock farming should only be permitted when absolutely necessary, to protect animal health and welfare, rather than in a preventive manner. In addition, there is a need to invest more in the search for more effective antibiotics, developing alternatives while building on ongoing research in this area.

Human resistance to antibiotics is reduced due to the consumption of food derived from animals to which antibiotics have been administered. In addition, it takes time to develop appropriate solutions to replace existing antibiotics and to ensure that farmers are informed and willing to use them. We recognise that there are EU antibiotic directives; however, these have not been implemented in the same way in all Member States. Finally, veterinary medicinal products are misused for doping purposes; therefore, stricter legislation in this area will enhance the welfare of animals and improve their quality of life.

18. We recommend that EU legislation require reporting the use of hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors in food production in order to specify the type, quantity and exposure of the final product used. Labels clearly indicating the substances present and the reasons for their use must appear on the packaging of all food products concerned. In addition, research on the effects of hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors on human health should be accelerated.

Currently, the traceability of food products is insufficient, in particular as regards hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors. We believe that transparency in food production is necessary to meet accountability. In addition, consumers should be able to know the composition, in its entirety, of the foodstuffs they consume and be able to freely choose what they eat. In addition, there is insufficient research on the impact on humans (and potential risks) associated with the consumption of food products containing hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors.

19. We recommend discouraging the consumption of processed foods by applying taxes on foods that are harmful to health and by investing funds in healthy foods. We propose to set up a European-wide rating system for healthy foods based on best practices in the Member States and to place labels on foods to inform consumers of their health effects.

In this way, the funds raised can be used to develop awareness-raising and promotional campaigns, prioritise healthy eating in the education sector, and make unhealthy foods less visible in supermarkets. Investments in healthy food also contribute to improving the general health of the population and, consequently, reducing the level of public spending needed to address health problems resulting from poor nutrition. In addition, we believe that taxes and subsidies will encourage businesses to produce healthier food.

Axis 3: reorienting our economy and consumption

Sub-axis 3.1 Regulating overproduction and overconsumption

20. We recommend that the EU take more measures to allow consumers to use products longer and to encourage them to do so. The EU should combat planned obsolescence by extending the product guarantee and setting a maximum price for spare parts after expiry of the warranty period. All Member States should introduce a tax reduction for repair services, as is the case in Sweden. Manufacturers should be required to indicate the expected lifetime of their products. The EU should provide information on how to reuse and repair products through a website and through education.

Our waste society is not viable because it generates too much waste. By applying the proposed measures, we will evolve towards a society in which products will be reused and repaired, the number of which will decrease, thus reducing overconsumption.

21. We recommend that the EU apply stricter environmental standards and ensure fair working conditions along the production chain. EU production standards should be more sustainable and harmonised between Member States and be applied to imported goods. These standards must also be of a social nature, including a decent income for workers and satisfactory working conditions in factories. There should be consequences for goods that do not meet these standards.

It is important to establish environmentally and socially homogeneous manufacturing standards in Europe to ensure that all products offered are produced sustainably. These measures are essential to reorienting our economy and changing business production patterns.

22. We recommend that the EU and Member States put in place measures to limit advertising of products that harm the environment. Products with low durability should be subject to a mandatory non-liability clause in all forms of advertising showing that they are harmful to the environment. The EU should ban advertising for products that are not sustainable at all.

Advertising encourages consumption; products that harm the environment should not be highlighted. In this way, consumers will be less likely to buy environmentally harmful products.

23. We recommend that the EU set up and develop deposit systems infrastructure for all primary packaging of glass, plastic, aluminium, etc., uniformly across the EU. Manufacturers should, as far as possible, reuse the return packaging by sterilising them rather than simply recycle the materials. In addition to food and beverage packaging, the device should also cover other types of bottles and containers, such as shampoo bottles.

At present, consumers are throwing too much packaging, polluting and destroying our ecosystems. Deposit systems help reduce waste by encouraging citizens to bring back packaging rather than throw it away. Through the development of this system, we will use fewer resources; the amount of waste generated will be reduced.

Sub-axis 3.2 Reducing waste

24. We recommend promoting stronger implementation of circular economy policies at European level, targeting both businesses and citizens, in the form of financial incentives for those complying with them.

Many people will eventually find themselves unemployed if production companies reduce their workforce or even end up in a state of cessation of payment/ferment. Retraining measures for the unemployed will encourage environmentally friendly practices while limiting unemployment and promoting the modernisation of a diversified economy.

25. We recommend that the EU regulate the use of environmentally safe packaging (i.e. packaging based on biodegradable or recyclable or more sustainable materials, if possible) and/or the use of less bulky packaging, also with a QR code providing information relevant to the recycling and/or disposal process of packaging after use.

This recommendation will result in a reduction in packaging, a reduction in waste and, consequently, pollution; the environment will therefore be cleaner and, ultimately, the carbon footprint will be less. The tax burden on producers will also be lower.

Sub-axis 3.3 Fair products, equal access and fair consumption

26. We recommend that the European Union establish a legal framework to ensure that all European consumers have affordable and improved access to quality and local food products.

Indeed, there is currently no common interpretation at EU level of what should be considered local and quality food. This gap needs to be filled.

The import of poor quality products has a direct negative impact on the environment. To fight climate change, we must tackle all its causes, including importing low-quality products: there is a need to reduce transport distance and promote seasonal products.

This recommendation is promising as it could also apply to non-food products.

27. We recommend that the European Union encourage research and development through funding programmes to ensure that more sustainable and affordable products on the market are available on the European market. The European Union must also hold consultations with citizens, at all levels of decision-making, including at local level, to determine their needs for sustainable products.

We believe that research on sustainable products is insufficient and there is an urgent need to allocate more financial resources to research so that Europeans can access more affordable sustainable products.

Citizens must participate in the decision-making process. The programme for research and innovation actions must be drawn up jointly with citizens. They should be informed of the follow-up and the results should be communicated to them.

28. We recommend that the European Union introduce a regulatory mechanism for fashion items entering the common market. This mechanism would be intended to encourage better consumption through an indicator ensuring that the product meets sustainability criteria.

The fashion sector, which produces too many poor quality goods outside European borders, does not apply ethical standards and does not adopt sustainable behaviour.

We need to find a fair mechanism that will allow consumers to consume better. However, it is important not to increase taxes, which would have negative consequences for consumers by reducing their purchasing power.

Consumers should know under what conditions the products they buy are manufactured and whether they meet sustainable quality standards.

Axis 4: towards a sustainable society

Sub-axis 4.1 Renewable energies, from now on

29. We recommend that the EU take steps to make CO2 filters mandatory, especially for coal-fired power plants, during a transitional period, as long as we continue to rely on conventional energy. In addition, we recommend that the EU provide financial assistance to Member States that do not have financial resources to implement CO2 filters. The aid is conditional on compliance with EU climate policies related to the Paris Agreement, the Green Deal and any new climate law.

This is a concrete step to be taken in parallel with the continued investment in research on the safety of energy production and which aims to help EU Member States gradually achieve the common CO2 reduction targets.

We know that the use of conventional fuels leads to greenhouse gas emissions and EU Member States need to reduce the use of conventional fuels to comply with the Paris Agreement. As it is not possible to immediately end CO2 emissions and we are still dependent on coal, we need to take action in the short and medium term.

Reducing CO2 emissions is of common interest to all citizens, both within and outside the EU; the EU, as an institution, has its own responsibilities and the institution makes recommendations and provides solutions because Member States cannot achieve the objectives on their own.

30. We recommend reducing intensive industrial husbandry to reduce methane production and water pollution. To this end, the EU is revising its Common Agricultural Policy to direct its subsidies towards sustainable and local agriculture, including through a labelling system that allows consumers to recognise sustainable meat products. We also encourage the EU to invest in methods of reuse of waste from animal production and other industries.

The population is growing, which will result in increased demand for meat in the future. This is why meat consumption needs to be reduced.

Since methane produces greenhouse gases, we believe it is natural to start by reducing livestock emissions.

We all know that less meat should be consumed and therefore the number of cattle should be reduced accordingly.

31. Although the production of green hydrogen is an expensive process, as it takes 75 % of energy to obtain 25 % hydrogen, this type of energy has many positive aspects. The best solution can be to produce CO2-free energy alongside the development of green hydrogen. Wind energy should be used for the production of green hydrogen and the EU should invest more and increase wind energy production and store it for future needs.

Green hydrogen is flexible and can be stored for use when needed. It does not cause CO₂ pollution.

Sub-axis 4.2 Supporting change

32. We recommend that the EU put in place a system of coercion and reward to combat pollution, including water, soil, air and radiation. Fines must be imposed on polluters, combined with the mandatory support of a specialised organisation, specifically designed to help entities eliminate pollution and restore the ecosystem. This specialised organisation should play a leading role in preventing and controlling pollution levels.

Because it is important to focus on the responsibilities of polluters and to encourage entities to reduce pollution by targeting zero pollution. It is essential to have a healthy planet, as it is directly linked to our well-being and our future existence.

33. We recommend that the EU set up a specific website/platform verified by multiple experts — with diverse and regularly updated environmental scientific information — that is easily accessible and transparent for all citizens. This website/platform will be associated with a forum where citizens and experts can interact. We also strongly recommend launching a media campaign to promote this website/platform (e.g. via social media such as YouTube, TikTok and LinkedIn).

All citizens must have independent sources of information, based on scientific evidence, to understand the challenges related to climate change (its consequences and the measures to be taken to reverse it), as well as to deal with false news. The media campaign will raise awareness of the existence of this platform/website. It is also important that the information provided by the website/platform is understandable to all citizens, with access to source material for those who wish to deepen the topic.

34. We recommend that the EU reduce the amount of imported goods that do not meet EU environmental footprint standards.

In doing so, we are ensuring that goods imported into the EU have a greener footprint. The aim is to reduce pollution globally. It is also important to present the standards to countries if they wish to export goods to the EU.

35. We recommend that the EU encourage, promote and facilitate dialogue on climate change between all levels of decision-making, from very local (citizens) to global (national, international and intercontinental), in order to address the concerns of all stakeholders.

Because dialogue and consensus are the best way to address climate change challenges: if the parties understand each other, there is more willingness to find common ground.

Sub-axis 4.3 Environmentally friendly transport

36. We recommend that the EU financially support European Member States to improve connectivity in rural areas. This requires developing a European public transport network based on affordable prices (prioritising railways) and incentives for the use of public

transport. To this end, internet connectivity should also be developed in a short and realistic timeframe in rural areas.

We make this recommendation because there is no equal access to public transport and internet connectivity between rural and urban areas. A common European project would be strengthened as all citizens would feel that they had the same rights. Strengthening the public transport network and internet connectivity would encourage people to settle in rural areas. This process would reduce pollution as fewer people would live in overcrowded cities.

37. We recommend improving existing transport infrastructure that has fallen into disuse or can be further improved from an ecological point of view (establishment of electric trains). This process must be carried out without prejudice to environmentally protected areas.

Improving existing infrastructure would avoid spending too much resources and damage important protected areas for biodiversity conservation. Increasing rail infrastructure would reduce CO₂ emissions and promote the mobility of people from urban to rural areas.

38. We recommend that the EU encourage the purchase of electric vehicles that meet good battery life standards. To this end, the EU could take incentives for all Member States and improve electricity infrastructure. At the same time, the EU should invest in the development of other clean technologies, such as biofuels and hydrogen for vehicles whose electrification is difficult to achieve, such as boats and trucks.

We make this recommendation because electricity is the fastest way to reduce vehicle emissions, with other energy sources such as hydrogen and biofuels. Indeed, the fastest, economical and feasible solution is electricity, followed by biofuels. In the longer term, green hydrogen should play a complementary role in covering transport modes that cannot be electrified.

Axis 5 Care for all

Sub-axis 5.1 Strengthen the health care system

39. We recommend that the European Union guarantee common health standards, but also advocate for decent minimum wages, maximum working hours and the same training standards, for the same qualifications, for health professionals throughout the European Union.

If we do not have common standards of healthcare, wages and common training for health professionals, differences between Member States could lead to unbalanced situations across the European Union. Standardisation of healthcare could contribute to a stronger, more efficient and more resilient system (e.g. the COVID-19 crisis concerning the stability of our systems). It would also facilitate the sharing of knowledge and information in the health professional sector.

40. We recommend that the European Union ensure that treatments throughout the EU are of equal quality and at a fair local cost. This could be ensured, for example through an extension of the competences of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) or the creation of a new European public procurement agency, which would be competent to negotiate and obtain more appropriate prices for medicines for all Member States. The risk of monopolies in the pharmaceutical industry must be minimised.

The equality of medical provisions and treatment in the EU guarantees equal health rights for all European citizens. Increased purchasing capacity ensures better purchasing conditions. However, this should not lead to monopoly structures and pharmaceutical lobbying. Managing the COVID-19 crisis has been a good example of collaborative health management by the European Union as a whole.

41. We recommend the creation of a European database on health care, in which medical records would be accessible in case of emergency or illness. Participation should be optional and personal data protection should be ensured.

Access to data and the use of data make it possible to react quickly in cases where life is at risk. Piracy or misuse are major threats to such a European healthcare database system, hence the need to secure data, while participation remains optional, and of course to prevent security-related threats.

42. We recommend that the European Union continue to develop and synchronise existing health research and innovation programmes, as is the case under the existing Horizon Europe programme. The results of the studies should be freely available in all Member States.

Scientific cooperation at EU level could enrich the scientific capacities and knowledge of individual researchers. Knowledge sharing could, for example, lead to early diagnosis and better treatments to reduce serious and fatal diseases across Europe. It would also promote European self-sufficiency in medicines and equipment.

43. We recommend that the EU increase its budget for joint health research and innovation projects (without budget cuts in other EU health-related programmes). This would also strengthen European scientific and research institutions as a whole.

Health research and investments will strengthen preventive medicine in the long term and reduce health-related costs. Increased funding could prevent European brain drain to other developed countries with higher R & D budgets for health. This funding should not come from existing financial resources for health care.

Sub-axis 5.2 A broader view of health

44. We recommend the establishment of a Health Week as an EU initiative in all Member States, the same week, dedicated to all health issues, with a focus on mental health. During this week, all major mental health topics will be covered and promoted collectively, as well as other already existing initiatives, such as those of Mental Health Europe.

We make this recommendation because all European citizens must feel accepted and included, especially if they suffer from mental health problems. In addition, there is a need to standardise and improve awareness of mental health problems, as well as to prevent related social problems such as discrimination. Moreover, as mental health problems have increased with the pandemic and are likely to continue, this initiative is all the more important.

45. We recommend that women’s hygiene products cease to be considered luxury goods in terms of taxation, as they are essential products. We also recommend that hormonal contraceptive products used for medical reasons, such as fibromyalgia and endometriosis, be taxed as regular medical treatment. We also recommend that the European Union encourage the harmonisation of medically assisted reproductive treatment for all women (single or married) in all Member States.

In some European countries, women’s hygienic products are taxed as luxury goods, which is unfair. Some hormonal contraceptives are used for medical purposes and should therefore be taxed accordingly. Because reproductive treatments for women, such as in vitro fertilisation and egg freezing methods, have different eligibility conditions across Member States, and the European Union must strive to harmonise them.

46. We recommend that the European Union adopt a firm position to encourage all Member States to include in their school curricula, where appropriate, issues relating to mental health and sex education. To help Member States adopt these issues in school curricula, the European Union should develop and make available a standard programme on mental health and sexual issues.

There is a need to reduce discrimination and taboos with regard to mental health problems. Disinformation and non-scientific approaches must also be avoided. In addition, sex education is fundamental to a healthy life and community, and prevents problems such as teenage pregnancies.

47. We recommend that the European Union develop a better communication system for all its mental health initiatives, namely the public health portal on best practices, within the Member States and for all citizens. MEPs could present these best practices to each other in order to make them better known in all Member States.

Citizens are not well informed about EU initiatives and sharing best practices allows us to learn from each other.

Sub-axis 5.3 Equal access to health for all

48. We recommend that the EU establish and promote minimum standards for quality dental care, including prophylaxis, for all EU Member States. Children, low-income groups and other vulnerable groups should be given free dental care. Within 15-20 years, the EU should ensure that affordable dental care is accessible to all.

We make this recommendation because dental care is currently not affordable for many people living in the EU. The absence of dental care and dental prophylaxis is detrimental to their health and life prospects. The EU should start by setting a minimum standard for dental care and require free dental care for children and low-income groups. Eventually, everyone should be entitled to quality dental care.

49. We recommend including health and healthcare in the competences shared between the EU and its Member States. In order to include this new shared competence, it is necessary to amend Article 4 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

We are making this recommendation because the European Union does not currently have sufficient powers to legislate in the field of healthcare. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the need for an increased EU presence in health policies. This Treaty amendment will allow the EU to do more to ensure healthcare for all EU citizens and to issue binding regulations and decisions.

50. We recommend that the EU offer free first aid courses to all EU citizens. The EU could consider making these courses compulsory for students and in the workplace (both in the public and private sectors). These courses must also be practical, recurring and adapted to the age of the students. A minimum number of defibrillators should also be available in public places in all EU Member States.

We recommend it because many people in the European Union are not prepared to act when a person needs help and because they do not know first aid techniques. That's why many lives are lost. In some public places, no defibrillator is available.

51. We recommend that the European Union ensure that private healthcare providers do not unfairly benefit from public funds and do not draw on the resources of public health systems. The European Union should make firm recommendations to Member States to increase funding for public health care.

We make this recommendation because the European Union and its Member States have an obligation to ensure access to healthcare for all their citizens. In addition, a stronger public health system also requires better preparedness for future pandemics.

Annex: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED BY THE PANEL THAT WERE NOT ADOPTED

Axis 1: Better ways of life

Sub-axis 1.1 Healthy lifestyles

We recommend that the EU send a recommendation to all Member States on best practices on banning or restricting alcohol and tobacco advertising in all forms of media and for all age groups, but with particular attention to young audiences. The EU should ensure the enforcement of laws restricting the sale of these products to minors. All Member States should ensure the implementation, with sanctions, of the legal provisions on smoking in public spaces, in particular in schools, and create spaces reserved for smokers.

Health-harmful lifestyles cannot appear in advertising and should be less visible in public life. Moreover, since alcohol and tobacco are among the most used harmful substances, this recommendation will prevent their misuse.

We recommend that the EU encourage Member States to include courses in national school curricula to learn how to cook in a sustainable, healthy and tasty way. To this end, the EU can make healthy cooking guides available both online and in print. Young people should be reached by actively advertising in traditional and social media. We should also educate parents to learn how to best use food to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Research in this area should be promoted and enriched.

Organising cooking and nutrition classes at school would improve the health of young people and discourage the consumption of fast food. Educating young people would allow them to explain to their parents what they learned. In addition, educating parents about healthy lifestyles would allow them to set an example to their children.

We recommend stepping up the European Commission’s public campaign for healthy lifestyles, HealthyLifestyle4All, and the positive impact of social activity through concrete examples and a comprehensive strategy. Information campaigns for well-structured target groups should be defined and appropriate means of communication should be chosen for each of these groups. In addition, it is important to put in place reward and incentive systems to promote positive behaviour. Campaigns should involve influencers, celebrities or authorities. They need to highlight the dual health, environmental and climate benefits. In addition, grants should be available in all Member States to promote free public sports infrastructure.

Healthier lifestyles have a positive effect on the health care system because they reduce health problems. Physical health affects mental health and happiness. The current campaigns are not sufficiently known. They are more effective and motivating when personalities and influencers are associated with it.

We recommend an information campaign on healthy eating and nutrition. The EU should encourage higher taxation on meat and sugar in Member States. It should examine the possibilities of distinguishing between healthy foods and harmful foods and apply differentiated VAT to them. We recommend placing very clear warning signals on products that are very harmful to health (such as tobacco products). In addition, we recommend a European-wide nutritional score system, providing relevant information and QR code that allow consumers to make better informed decisions. Explore opportunities to make healthy foods cheaper than junk food and further encourage farmers to produce healthy products.

A healthy diet is the basis of a healthy life. It is necessary to intervene both on the producer side and on the consumer side. The production of healthy products also has positive effects on the environment and can help support local farmers. If healthy food production increases, prices drop and demand increases.

Sub-axis 1.2 Environmental education

We recommend that the EU set up a funding mechanism to promote the inclusion of a long-term environmental education programme in national education systems for children in primary and secondary schools. This funding mechanism should include funding for parents in need of financial assistance.

Current education systems do not contain enough practical elements that facilitate direct and deep interactions between children and the environment. Existing programmes, designed from a short-term perspective, are heterogeneous and do not promote the necessary change of attitude. Parents should be supported to ensure that all children can benefit equally from the programme and that none are excluded for financial reasons.

Axis 2: Protecting our environment and health

Sub-axis 2.1 A healthy natural environment

We recommend immediately implementing the highest possible water quality standard across the EU. To save water, we offer a reward system based on water pricing to encourage and encourage less consumption, for example: 1) by creating a dynamic system that discourages consumers from exceeding the average water consumption (for example, a 10 % increase in water consumption leads to an 11 % increase in the price), 2) by creating a market system for quotas for water polluted by manufacturing companies, which would be similar to the market for carbon permits already in place.

This recommendation is justified by the fact that price increases encourage all users to make better informed decisions. Given the different realities of EU countries and in order to achieve a socially equitable system, we can support poorer people in their water management through co-investment in water supply infrastructure and research.

Axis 3: reorienting our economy and consumption

Sub-axis 3.1 Regulating overproduction and overconsumption

We recommend that the EU impose fines on companies that eliminate unsold products produced by overproduction.

In some cases, companies believe it is more cost-effective to discard unsold goods rather than recycle or reuse them. It is therefore important to discourage overproduction through the imposition of fines so that this practice is no longer profitable for producers.

Sub-axis 3.2 Reducing waste

We recommend that the EU design and implement a waste management policy for households and citizens, drawing attention to the actual amount of waste they produce and complementing it with the necessary measures to raise citizens' awareness of the benefits of reducing waste generation and selective waste collection. Measures targeting socially disadvantaged families (e.g. young families with children, the elderly, etc.) should also be implemented, while respecting the principle of "leave no one behind".

The aim of such a policy is to develop a uniform approach to waste management within households; it also facilitates environmental protection through waste reduction, further stimulates the circular economy and increases the efficiency of waste collection. Finally, which is not negligible, it raises citizens' awareness and reinforces the sense of environmental responsibility.

We recommend that the EU encourage free competition and encourage the private sector to contribute more actively to waste treatment, including waste water, and to waste recycling and recovery activities.

The EU is the appropriate level to implement this Recommendation as it complements the Waste Framework Directive and the Circular Economy Action Plan. In addition, the implementation of the Recommendation will strengthen innovative waste management solutions, improve the quality of waste management and increase the volume of waste treated, as more companies will participate in these activities.

Sub-axis 3.3 Fair products, equal access and fair consumption

We recommend relocating industries to the European Union in order to provide high-quality fair products and influence climate issues.

The European Union has know-how that needs to be promoted on its own market.

Due to the relocation of industries outside the EU, especially in Asia, some professional skills are also being relocated. This recommendation involves the vocational training of European workers. We stress the need to avoid relocation between the different Member States in order to avoid unfair competition.

We have observed that the massive relocation of industries around the world has an impact on European industries. Therefore, local production will improve the health of citizens and the environment.

Axis 4: towards a sustainable society

Sub-axis 4.3 Environmentally friendly transport

We recommend that large cities be fined or subsidised according to the environmental and pollution performance of their public transport (electric vehicles, green public transport, creation of pedestrian areas, promotion of bicycle use, etc.). In particular, fines or subsidies applicable to local authorities in a city should be determined on the basis of changes in green transport compared to the starting situation in that city. It is the European Union which, through its legislation, should define performance indicators for pollution-related measures and determine the proportional reduction. In this regard, the starting point of each city should be taken into account.

We make this recommendation because cities have been affected by air pollution, which has caused health problems. Developing green transport would improve people's lives and health and reduce the greenhouse effect. Subsidies and sanctions are effective measures to promote change and facilitate adjustment to different situations in different cities.

We recommend that EU legislation limit and regulate the use of short-haul flights and cruise ships. People should be offered environmentally friendly transport alternatives. One such alternative should be the standardisation of railways in order to connect the European capitals. We also recommend that the EU provide subsidies to make the transport of goods more environmentally friendly, including rail and boat transport (for short journeys).

We make this recommendation, because short-distance trips are too frequent, polluting and easy to replace. Limiting cruise ships would reduce marine pollution (a major environmental problem), as well as negative impacts on coastal cities. That's why we need to put in place more affordable alternatives to more polluting solutions. Uniform rail gauge would improve rail connections between European capitals.

Axis 5: Care for all

Sub-axis 5.2 A broader view of health

We recommend that the European Union, in line with its HealthyLife4All campaign, also encourage initiatives such as social sports events, school sports activities, biannual Olympics open to all ages and all sports [not for professionals]. We also recommend the development of a free European sports app to encourage collective sports activities. This

app should help people meet through sport. In addition, these initiatives should be widely known and disseminated.

To improve the health of the European population, the European Union must promote sport and healthy lifestyles. In addition, the population is very often unaware of the relationship between sport and a healthy lifestyle. The app is important, because people are more willing to do sports if they do it together.

European Citizens' Panel 4: "The EU in the World/Migration"

RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE PANEL (TO BE SUBMITTED TO PLENARY)

Axis 1: Self-sufficiency and stability

Sub-axis 1.1 — EU Autonomy

1. We recommend that strategic European manufacturing products (such as agricultural products, semiconductors, medical products or innovative digital and environmental technologies) be further encouraged and financially supported in order to be available and accessible to European consumers and to reduce as far as possible dependencies on non-European suppliers. Such support could include structural and regional measures, support for the maintenance of industries and supply chains within the Union, taxbreaks, subsidies, an active SME policy or education programmes to safeguard relevant skills and jobs in Europe. Nevertheless, an active industrial policy should be selective and focused on innovative products or products essential to guarantee basic goods and services.

We recommend these measures because Europe is far too dependent on non-European suppliers in key areas that risk causing diplomatic conflicts and leading to a shortage of basic products or services or of strategic importance. As production costs are generally higher in the EU than elsewhere in the world, a policy of active encouragement and support for these products will allow Europeans to buy competitive European products and be encouraged to do so. This policy will also strengthen European competitiveness and preserve future industries and jobs in Europe. In addition, greater regionalisation of production will reduce transport costs and avoid environmental degradation.

2. We recommend that the EU reduce its dependence on oil and gas imports. This would require active support for public transport and energy efficiency projects, a European high-speed freight rail network, the expansion of clean and renewable energy supply (including solar and wind energy) and alternative technologies (such as hydrogen or energy recovery of waste). The European Union should also encourage a change of mindset and encourage the abandonment of private cars in favour of public transport, car-sharing by means of electric vehicles and bicycles.

We recommend these measures because they create a situation that promotes both Europe's autonomy by reducing its external dependencies and the achievement of ambitious climate and CO2 emission reduction_{targets}. They will also enable Europe to become a major player in future technologies, strengthen its economy and create jobs.

3. We recommend that a law be adopted at EU level to ensure that all EU production and supply processes and imported goods comply with European standards of quality, ethics and sustainability as well as all applicable European human rights standards, and that products that comply with these criteria are certified.

We recommend these measures because they allow consumers and traders to have easy access to information about the products they buy or sell. To do this, simply consult the certification system. Certification also reduces the gap between cheap and expensive products available on the

market. Cheap products will not meet the required criteria and will therefore not be able to present themselves as being of good quality. By meeting the certification criteria, the environment will be protected, saving resources and encouraging responsible consumption.

4. We recommend the implementation of a European programme to support small local producers in strategic sectors in all Member States. These producers would benefit from vocational training, financial support through subsidies and (where raw materials are available in the Union) an incentive to produce more eligible goods to the detriment of imports.

We recommend these measures because by supporting producers in strategic sectors located in the Union, the Union is able to acquire its economic independence in these sectors. This can only encourage the strengthening of the entire production process and thus encourage innovation. This will result in a more sustainable production of raw materials in the EU that will reduce transport costs and protect the environment.

5. We recommend improving the implementation of human rights at European level as follows: raising awareness among countries that do not comply, to the extent appropriate, with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) or the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; ensure strict monitoring, coordinated by the European Union and the Justice Scoreboard, of the extent to which human rights are respected in the various Member States and ensure their strict compliance through various forms of sanctions.

We recommend these measures because human rights have already been accepted by Member States when they ratified the European Convention on Human Rights, but it is now necessary to improve their acceptance in each of the Member States so that human rights are known and actively implemented in those Member States.

6. We recommend launching a review and organising an intensive communication campaign at European level to ensure that EURES (the European Employment Services Network), the EU Immigration Portal and the European Skills Profile Tool for third-country nationals are better known to European citizens and used more frequently by EU companies to publish and advertise their job offers.

We recommend not creating a new online platform for the publication of job offers for young Europeans. There are already more than enough initiatives of this kind at European level. We believe that in order to raise awareness of the existing workforce and employment opportunities at European level, it is preferable to improve what already exists.

Sub-axis 1.2 — Borders

7. We recommend the establishment of a labour migration mechanism in the EU based on the real needs of European labour markets. There should be a unified system for the recognition of professional and academic diplomas that exist within the European Union and in third countries. There should be offers of professional qualification as well as cultural and linguistic integration offers for qualified migrants. Asylum seekers with the right qualifications should have access to the labour market. There should be an integrated agency for which the European network of employment services could form the basis.

We recommend these measures because Europe needs skilled labour in certain sectors where it is not possible to fully cover demand by EU workers. There are currently not enough viable ways to legally apply for a work permit in the EU. A European system for the recognition of professional and academic diplomas will make it easier to meet these needs and simplify labour migration within the Union and labour migration from countries outside the Union. The demand for labour could thus be better met and illegal immigration would be better managed. Opening up the labour migration mechanism to asylum seekers would speed up their integration into European economies and societies.

8. We recommend that the European Union strengthen its legislation in order to give Frontex more power and independence. It will thus be able to intervene in all Member States to ensure the protection of all the external borders of the Union. However, the Union should carry out audits of Frontex's organisational processes as it must operate in a transparent manner in order to avoid any kind of abuse.

We recommend these measures because it is unacceptable, in our view, for Frontex to be denied access to borders, especially when there is a violation of human rights. We want to be sure that Frontex applies European legislation. Frontex itself must be subject to checks and verifications in order to avoid any inappropriate behaviour within it.

9. We recommend that the European Union organise, in particular for economic migrants, the possibility of selecting citizens in the country of origin (based on their proven skills, background, etc.), in order to determine who could come to work in the EU according to the needs of the economy and the vacant jobs of the host country. These selection criteria must be public and accessible to all. To do so, a European Immigration Agency (online) should be set up.

We recommend these measures because, in this way, there would no longer be a need to cross borders illegally. The flow of people entering the EU would be controlled, which would reduce the pressure at the borders, while making it easier to meet the labour needs of the host countries.

10. We recommend that the European Union ensure that the reception policy and facilities are identical at all borders, respect human rights and ensure the safety and health of all migrants (including, for example, pregnant women and children).

We recommend these measures because we attach great importance to equal treatment of migrants at all borders. We want to ensure that migrants do not stay too long at borders and that Member States are overwhelmed by the flow of migrants. Member States must be well equipped to accommodate them.

Axis 2: The EU as an international partner

Sub-axis 2.1 — Trade and relations from an ethical perspective

11. We recommend that the EU impose restrictions on imports of products from countries that allow child labour. To do so, a blacklist of companies should be drawn up which would be regularly updated in line with developments. We also recommend ensuring progressive access to education for children who stop working, as well as raising consumer awareness

about child labour through information officially disseminated by the European Union, for example through campaigns or storytelling.

We recommend these measures because we believe there is a link between lack of schooling and child labour. With this recommendation, we want to raise consumer awareness and reduce the demand for products made by children so that this practice ends up disappearing.

12. We recommend that the European Union develop partnerships with developing countries to support their infrastructure and share expertise in exchange for mutually beneficial trade agreements to accompany them in the transition to green energy sources.

We recommend these measures to facilitate the transition of developing countries to renewable energy through trade partnerships and diplomatic agreements. The European Union and developing countries would thus develop good long-term relations, which would contribute to combating climate change.

13. We recommend that the European Union impose a European environmental impact indicator (ecoscore) on all consumer products. The Ecoscore would be calculated on the basis of emissions from production and transport, as well as the harmfulness of the content, on the basis of a list of hazardous products. The Ecoscore should be managed and controlled by a European authority.

We recommend these measures so that European consumers are better aware of the environmental footprint of the products they buy. The Ecoscore would make it easy to indicate the extent to which a product respects the environment through a scale common across Europe. The Ecoscore should have a QR code on the back of the product in order to be able to consult additional information on its environmental footprint.

Sub-axis 2.2 — International Climate Action

14. We recommend that the European Union adopt a strategy to make it more autonomous in its energy production. A European body bringing together the current European energy institutions should coordinate the development of renewable energy according to the needs, capacities and resources of the Member States while respecting their sovereignty. The institutions would encourage the exchange of knowledge among themselves in order to implement this strategy.

We recommend these measures because our current dependence makes us vulnerable in the event of political tensions with the countries we import our energy. We are now seeing this with the electricity crisis. Nevertheless, such coordination should respect the sovereignty of each country.

15. We recommend strengthening environmental standards for the export of waste within and outside the EU, as well as stricter controls and sanctions to stop illegal exports. The EU should encourage Member States to further recycle their own waste and use it to produce energy.

We recommend these measures to put an end to environmental damage by countries that dispose of their waste to the detriment of other countries, especially when there is a complete lack of compliance with environmental standards.

16. We recommend that the EU encourage more resolutely the ongoing ecological transition by aiming at the elimination of polluting packaging. This should be done by encouraging the reduction of packaging or promoting greener packaging. In order for small businesses to adapt, they should receive support and adjustments.

We recommend these measures because we need to reduce the use of natural resources, including raw materials from countries outside the EU. We must also reduce the damage caused by Europeans to our planet and its climate. It is essential to better support small businesses so that they can adapt without having to raise their prices.

17. We recommend that the countries of the European Union take a more serious look at the issue of nuclear energy together. Collaboration should be stepped up to assess the use of nuclear energy and its role in Europe's green energy transition.

We recommend these measures because the nuclear issue cannot be solved by a country in isolation. There are now more than 100 reactors in half of the Member States and new reactors are under construction. As we share a common electricity grid, the low-carbon electricity they produce benefits all Europeans and increases the energy autonomy of our continent. In addition, the abandonment of nuclear waste or an accident would affect several countries. Whether the use of nuclear energy is decided or not, Europeans must discuss it together and define more convergent strategies while respecting national sovereignty.

Sub-axis 2.3 — Promotion of European values

18. The EU should be closer to citizens. We recommend that the EU establish and strengthen links with citizens and local institutions such as local authorities, schools and municipalities. The aim is to improve transparency, reach citizens, better inform them of concrete EU initiatives and better communicate general EU information.

We recommend these measures because current information on the EU is not sufficiently accessible to all social groups and does not affect ordinary citizens. They are often boring, difficult to understand and unfriendly. This situation needs to change so that citizens have a clear vision of the EU's actions and role. To attract public interest, EU-related information must be easy to find, motivating, interesting and written in common language. Here are our suggestions: the organisation of visits of European politicians to schools, radio campaigns in the form of podcasts, letters, press articles, advertising buses and social media, local citizens' assemblies and the creation of a working group specifically to improve EU communication. These measures will allow citizens to obtain information about the EU that is not filtered by national media.

19. We recommend greater participation of citizens in EU policies. We propose the organisation of events involving the direct participation of citizens on the model of the Conference on the Future of Europe. They should be organised at national, local and European level. The EU should define a coherent strategy and centralised guidance for these events.

We recommend these measures because these participatory democracy exercises will provide correct information on the EU and improve the quality of EU policies. Events should be organised in such a way as to promote the fundamental values of the Union — democracy and citizen

participation. These events would provide an opportunity for politicians to demonstrate to citizens that it is important to them that citizens are informed of current events and are associated with their definition. Centralised guidance will ensure consistency and consistency of national and local conferences.

Axis 3: A strong EU in a peaceful world

Sub-axis 3.1 — Security and Defence

20. We recommend that future “European Union Common Armed Forces” be used primarily for defence purposes. Any aggressive military action, whatever its nature, is excluded. In Europe, this would provide the means to provide assistance in the event of a crisis, especially in the event of a natural disaster. Outside the European borders, this would allow the deployment of resources to territories with exceptional circumstances, exclusively within the framework of a legal mandate of the UN Security Council, and thus in compliance with international law.

If implemented, it would allow the European Union to be seen as a credible, responsible, strong and peaceful partner on the international stage. Its enhanced capacity to respond to crisis situations at home and abroad should thus protect its core values.

Sub-axis 3.2 — Decision-making and EU foreign policy

21. We recommend that all areas where decisions are taken by unanimity should now be taken by qualified majority. The only exceptions should be the admission of new Member States into the Union and the amendment of the fundamental principles of the Union enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

This would strengthen the EU’s position in the world by presenting a united front vis-à-vis third countries and facilitate its overall response capacity, including crisis response.

22. We recommend that the European Union strengthen its capacity to impose sanctions on Member States, governments, entities, groups or organisations and individuals who do not respect its fundamental principles, agreements and laws. It is imperative that the sanctions that already exist are swiftly implemented and effectively complied with. Sanctions imposed on third countries should be proportionate to the action that triggered them, be effective and be applied in a timely manner.

For the EU to be credible and reliable, it must impose sanctions on those who violate its principles. Such sanctions should be applied effectively and expeditiously and should be subject to controls.

Sub-axis 3.3 — Neighbouring countries and enlargement

23. We recommend that the European Union allocate a specific budget to the development of educational programmes dedicated to the functioning of the EU and its values. These programmes will then be offered to Member States if they so wish to integrate them into their school curricula (primary and secondary education and universities). In addition, a specific course on the EU and its functioning could be offered to students wishing to study

in another European country through the Erasmus programme. Students who choose this course would be given priority in order to benefit from these Erasmus programmes.

We recommend these measures in order to increase the sense of belonging to the EU. In this way, citizens will better identify themselves with the Union and convey its values. In addition, these measures will improve transparency about the functioning of the EU and the benefits of being part of it as well as the fight against anti-European movements. These measures should deter Member States from leaving the EU.

24. We recommend that the EU make greater use of its political and economic weight in its relations with other countries in order to prevent certain Member States from being subjected to bilateral economic, political and social pressure.

We recommend these measures for three reasons. First of all, they will strengthen the sense of unity within the EU. Secondly, a unilateral reaction will be a clear, strong and swift response to avoid any attempt by third countries to bully or crack down on EU member countries. Finally, they will strengthen the security of the Union and ensure that no Member State feels abandoned or ignored. Bilateral reactions divide the EU and are a weakness that third countries use against us.

25. “We recommend that the Union improve its communication strategy”. On the one hand, the EU should increase its visibility on social networks and actively promote its content. On the other hand, it should continue to organise conferences such as the Conference on the Future of Europe every year. We also recommend that it continue to encourage innovation by promoting an accessible European social network.

These proposals would not only reach young people, but also increase the interest and participation of European citizens through a more attractive and effective communication tool. The organisation of events, such as the Conference on the Future of Europe, should enable citizens to be more involved in the decision-making process and ensure that their voices are heard.

26. We recommend that Member States adopt a strong vision and a common strategy to harmonise and consolidate European identity and unity before further enlarging the Union.

We believe that it is essential to strengthen the EU and strengthen relations between Member States before considering the integration of other countries. The more Member States in the EU, the more complicated the decision-making process; hence the importance of reviewing unanimous voting in decision-making processes.

Axis 4: Migration from a human point of view

Sub-axis 4.1 — Addressing the causes of emigration

27. We recommend that the European Union actively participate in the economic development of third countries and countries from which the largest flows of migrants originate. With the help of relevant bodies (local NGOs and local politicians, expert field workers, etc.), the EU should look for ways to intervene peacefully and effectively in countries where the largest flows of migrants originate and which have agreed to the modalities of cooperation. These interventions should have tangible and measurable effects, which should be clearly highlighted so that European citizens can understand the

Union's development aid policy. Thus, EU development aid actions should become more visible.

Even if the EU is working on international development, it must continue its action and invest in the transparency and visibility of its policy in this area.

28. We recommend the establishment of a common European framework for the harmonisation of working conditions across the Union (minimum wage, working time, etc.). The EU should strive to create common basic labour standards to prevent citizens from leaving their country to seek better working conditions elsewhere. Within the framework of these standards, the EU should strengthen the role of trade unions at transnational level. By doing so, the EU would recognise that internal economic migration (migration of EU citizens) is a serious problem.

This recommendation stems from the finding that a large number of people in the EU migrate for economic reasons, due to the disparity in working conditions between Member States. It is necessary to prevent this brain drain so that Member States retain their talents and their workforce. We support the free movement of citizens, but believe that the migration of EU citizens between the different Member States, when it is not desired, is due to economic reasons. That is why it is important to establish a common framework for work.

Sub-axis 4.2 — Human Considerations

29. We recommend the implementation of a common migration policy based on the principle of solidarity. We want the focus on the refugee problem. A common procedure for all EU Member States should be based on the most effective practices in all EU countries. This procedure should be implemented proactively by the national authorities and by the EU administration.

The refugee problem affects all member countries. At present, these states have too different practices, with negative effects on refugees and EU citizens. It is therefore necessary to adopt a coherent and consistent approach.

30. We recommend that the EU step up its efforts to inform and educate citizens of Member States on migration-related issues. This should be achieved by educating children as early as possible from the beginning of primary school on topics such as migration and integration. If we combine this early education with the activities of NGOs and youth organisations, as well as with large-scale media campaigns, we could fully achieve our goal. In addition, many communication media could be used: leaflets, television and social networks among others.

It is important to show that migration also has many positive aspects, such as the additional labour force. We would like to stress the importance of raising awareness of both processes, so that citizens understand the reasons and consequences of migration to eliminate the stigma that arises from being perceived as a migrant.

Sub-axis 4.3 — Borders

31. We recommend that Directive 2013/33/EU on minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers in the Member States be replaced by a mandatory EU regulation, which will apply uniformly in all Member States. Priority should be given to improving reception and accommodation facilities. We recommend the creation of a specific EU monitoring body for the implementation of the Regulation.

Indeed, the Directive is not implemented uniformly in all Member States. We must avoid repeating the conditions observed in the Moria refugee camp. The recommended Regulation should therefore be implemented and include mandatory sanctions. The monitoring body should be robust and reliable.

32. We recommend that the EU ensure that all asylum seekers and refugees take language and integration courses while their application for residence is examined. Courses should be mandatory, free of charge and include personal assistance for initial integration. They should start within two weeks of the application for residence. Incentive and sanction mechanisms should also be put in place.

Learning the language and understanding the culture, history and ethics of the country of arrival is an essential step in integration. The length of the delay before the start of the initial integration process has a negative impact on the social assimilation of migrants. Sanction mechanisms can help identify migrants' willingness to integrate.

Axis 5: Responsibility and solidarity in the EU

Sub-axis 5.1 — Distribution of migrants

33. We recommend replacing the Dublin system with a legally binding treaty to ensure a fair, balanced and proportionate distribution of asylum seekers in the EU on the basis of solidarity and justice. Currently, refugees are required to apply for asylum in the first Member State of arrival. This system change must be as fast as possible. The European Commission's proposal for a new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum from 2020 is a good start and should take a legal form, as it provides quotas for the distribution of refugees between EU Member States.

We recommend this because the current Dublin system does not respect the principles of solidarity and justice. It places a heavy burden on Member States close to the EU's external borders that asylum seekers cross to enter its territory. All Member States must take responsibility for managing refugee flows into the EU. The EU is a community of shared values and must act accordingly.

34. We recommend that the EU assist its Member States in processing asylum applications at a faster pace and according to common standards. In addition, humanitarian housing should be provided to refugees. In order to unload the countries of arrival and to be able to process their asylum applications elsewhere, we recommend that refugees be relocated quickly and efficiently to the different Member States after their first arrival in the EU. To this end, EU financial support and organisational support from the EU Agency for Asylum are needed. Persons whose asylum application has been rejected must be returned to their country of origin effectively, provided that their country of origin is considered safe.

We recommend this because asylum procedures currently take too long and may differ from one Member State to another. By speeding up asylum procedures, refugees spend less time waiting for a final decision in temporary accommodation facilities. Asylum seekers can be integrated more quickly.

35. We recommend strong EU financial, logistical and operational support for the management of the first reception, possibly leading to the integration or repatriation of irregular migrants. The beneficiaries of this support are the EU border states which bear the burden of the migration inflow.

Due to their geographical location, some Member States are the most affected by the influx of migrants.

36. We recommend strengthening the mandate of the EU Agency for Asylum in order to achieve a fair distribution of asylum seekers across Member States. In order to achieve this, account should be taken of the needs of such asylum seekers as well as the logistical and economic capacities of the Member States and their needs in the labour market.

A coordinated and centralised distribution of asylum seekers, considered fair by Member States and their citizens, avoids chaotic situations and social tensions and strengthens solidarity between Member States.

Sub-axis 5.2 — Common approach to asylum

37. We recommend either creating a comprehensive European institution or strengthening the EU Agency for Asylum so that it can process asylum applications for the whole of the European Union and act on the basis of uniform standards. The agency should also be responsible for distributing refugees in an equitable manner. It should also define safe and unsafe countries of origin and be responsible for returning asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected.

The current asylum policy is characterised by unclear responsibilities and different standards between EU Member States. The treatment of asylum procedures is therefore not the same in the different Member States. In addition, the European Union Agency for Asylum currently has only a power of influence. It can only advise Member States on asylum issues.

38. We recommend the establishment, without delay, of specialised asylum centres for unaccompanied minors in all EU Member States. The aim is to welcome and take care of minors according to their special needs and as soon as possible.

We make this recommendation because:

- 1) Many minors are likely to be traumatised (because they come from conflict zones);
- 2) Different children have different needs (depending on age, health, etc.);
- (3) if implemented, it would ensure that vulnerable and traumatised minors receive all necessary care as soon as possible;
- 4) these minors are future European citizens and should therefore, if properly treated, contribute positively to the future of Europe.

39. We recommend the establishment of a common, fast and transparent system for processing asylum applications. This process should provide for minimum standards and be applied in the same way in all Member States.

We make this recommendation because:

- (1) if this recommendation were implemented, the processing of asylum applications would be faster and more transparent;
- 2) the slowness of the current procedures leads to illegality and crime;
- 3) The minimum standards envisaged in our recommendation should include respect for human rights, health and the educational needs of asylum seekers;
- 4) the implementation of this recommendation would result in better access to employment and self-sufficiency, which would allow for a positive contribution to European society; asylum seekers whose professional status is regularised are less likely to be abused in their working environment; this could only promote the integration of all concerned;
- 5) extended stays in asylum centres have an adverse impact on the mental health and well-being of the occupants.

40. We strongly recommend a comprehensive review of all agreements and legislation governing asylum and immigration in Europe. We recommend adopting an approach for the whole of Europe.

We make this recommendation because:

- 1) since 2015, all current agreements are inapplicable, impractical and unsuitable;
- 2) the EU should be considered as the main “agency”, which oversees all other agencies and NGOs whose task is to deal directly with asylum issues;
- (3) the Member States which suffer the most from the situation are those which are largely left to struggle with the problem on their own; the ‘à la carte’ choices of some Member States do not give an image of unity;
- 4) new targeted legislation would improve the future of all asylum seekers and strengthen Europe’s unity;
- 5) the shortcomings of the current legislation give rise to conflicts and a lack of harmonisation throughout Europe and lead to increased intolerance among European citizens towards migrants.
- 6) stricter and relevant legislation would reduce crime and abuse of the current asylum system.

Annex: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED BY THE PANEL BUT NOT ADOPTED

Axis 1: Self-sufficiency and stability

Sub-axis 1.1 — EU Autonomy

If requested by developing countries, we recommend that intervention programmes for economic development be developed on the basis of partnerships tailored to the needs of each country and/or on the basis of trade agreements. This requires first assessing the economic potential of the countries in question and then providing them with the necessary economic support and vocational training.

This would lead to greater industrial independence and improve the overall migration situation by creating jobs; it would also lead to better trade agreements in developing countries.

Axis 2: The EU as an international partner

Sub-axis 2.1 — Ethical Perspective on Trade Relations

We recommend that the EU introduce rules requiring companies to audit their supply chain and regularly submit a comprehensive audit report, as well as provisions to reward or restrict imports based on ethical criteria. Companies should provide an internal and/or external audit report based on their size.

The ethical aspect of trade with the EU needs to be developed. This can be done by monitoring business activities in international supply chains, and encouraging companies to behave according to ethical criteria, such as hazardous products, labour rights and conditions, child labour and environmental protection. This recommendation would not apply to online products purchased directly by the consumer.

Axis 3: A strong EU in a peaceful world

Sub-axis 3.1 — Security and Defence

We recommend rethinking the current European security architecture to make it a more efficient and efficient supranational structure, with increased capabilities, with a view to the creation of a common European Union army. To this end, the national armed forces should be gradually merged and transformed. The aim is that this merger of military capabilities across the European Union will also promote European integration in the long term. The creation of a common EU army would also require a new cooperation agreement with EU Member States and non-European NATO members.

If this recommendation is implemented, we believe that military structures within the European Union will become more cost-effective and better able to respond and act when needed. This integrated approach would strengthen the EU's ability to act decisively and in a coordinated manner in critical situations.

Axis 4: Emigration from a human point of view

Sub-axis 4.1 — Addressing the causes of emigration

We recommend that the EU put in place a protocol of action in preparation for the next migration crisis, that of climate refugees. Under this protocol, the EU needs to broaden the definition of refugees and asylum seekers to include those affected by climate change. As the country of origin of many migrants will have become uninhabitable, the protocol must also ensure that new uses are found for areas affected by climate change, with the aim of supporting those who have left these areas. For example, flooded areas could be used to create wind farms.

We make this recommendation because we are all responsible for the climate crisis. So we have a responsibility to those who are most affected. Even if we have neither forecasts nor concrete data on future refugees, climate change will undoubtedly affect millions of people.

Sub-axis 4.2 — Human Considerations

We recommend that legal and humanitarian roads and means of transport be strengthened and financed without delay so that refugees can move from crisis areas in an organised manner. A special safety system for European lanes should be set up and regulated by the

body specifically set up for this purpose. This agency must be set up in accordance with the legislative procedure and have special powers laid down in its rules of procedure.

Trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants are serious issues that need to be addressed. Our recommendation would certainly reduce these concerns.

Sub-axis 4.3 — Borders

We recommend that a European directive ensure that every living area in each Member State has no more than 30 % inhabitants of third countries. This target is expected to be achieved by 2030 and EU Member States need to receive support for the implementation of this target.

We are making this recommendation because a more equitable geographical distribution will result in a better acceptance of migrants by the local population and thereby enabling them to better integrate. This percentage is based on a recent political agreement in Denmark.

II A — National Panels: Belgium



Here we can find all the recommendations made by the 50 citizens of the citizens' panel organised under the auspices of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for External and European Affairs Sophie Wilmès as a contribution of the Belgian Federal Government to the Conference on the Future of Europe. The theme of this panel was “How to involve citizens more in European democracy”. Although it is well aware that the Conference has a wider scope than EU affairs alone, the subject of this panel clarifies why so many explicit references are made to the EU and its institutions. Where appropriate, reference shall be made to Europe in general.

To reflect all citizens' contributions, this report presents all recommendations, including those that did not obtain a simple majority at the final voting session on all recommendations. They are clearly recognizable due to the percentage **in red and bold**. In addition, some recommendations contradict each other and even in the final discussions, citizens have remained inconclusive about them. These recommendations are recognizable because they are in *italics*. For a single recommendation, the division was so clear that the vote ended with an *ex-aequo*, this is indicated **in orange and bold**. Citizens share the fact that opinions on these recommendations differed. They therefore propose that the CoFE bodies and the EU institutions be vigilant in the implementation of these recommendations, as there is a form of division based on voting.

1. Communication

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. Communication on the EU is unsatisfactory	1.1 We propose to include courses on the European Union as from the third level of primary school. The aim is to reach all citizens and improve knowledge of the European Union.	88.4 %
	1.2 The European Union, and in particular the Commission, should make available an educational material on the functioning of Europe to the Ministries of Education of the different Member States. In addition to explaining the functioning, composition and powers of the institutions, these formations should also provide a brief overview of the history of European integration. Particular attention should be paid to the use of clear and understandable, accessible language, as well as educational tools such as documentaries, clips or school television programmes, in all 24 languages.	95.0 %
2. The European project remains foreign to citizens	2.1 We propose that the European institutions ensure in their communication that they better explain what falls within the EU's area of competence but also what is not within its competence.	97.6 %
	2.2 The European Union should include familiar examples from the daily life of Europeans in its communication. These explanations should be relayed within the Member States through agreements between the European institutions and national public television channels in order to reach a wide audience.	80.5 %
	2.3 In addition, nationals of Member States should be regularly informed — through video clips, for example — about the role of the European Union in other Member States. The advantages and disadvantages of Europe would thus be better put into perspective in the debates on the future of Europe.	85.7 %
	2.4 In order to strengthen the European identity, we propose to regularly recall and make accessible information on what Europeans' lives would be like without the EU and its concrete achievements.	92.7 %
	2.5 We also propose to make Europe Day (9 May) a European public holiday for all EU citizens.	81.4 %
	2.6 We recommend that the European institutions pay even more attention to the simplification, understanding and accessibility of information on priority topics dealt with at European level.	97.6 %
	2.7 We recommend that the European Union provide a scoreboard showing for each country the resources allocated by the EU to each priority theme. All such information should be accessible from the European Union website.	93.0 %
	2.8 We recommend that the European Union provide a clear	90.7 %

	presentation of the ongoing legislative work. All such information should be accessible from the European Union website.	
	2.9 We want the European institutions to be more accessible to Europeans. Their participation in debates at European Parliament sessions should be facilitated.	79.0 %
	2.10 We recommend extending the participation in the Erasmus programme to all students, regardless of their educational path (vocational technology, alternation). All should be able to participate in European exchanges.	79.5 %
	2.11 We recommend allowing the working population to benefit from European exchange programmes, regardless of the sector of activity, also for local businesses. All should be able to participate in European exchanges.	83.7 %
	2.12 We recommend creating European citizenship courses for all European citizens.	83.7 %
3. EU legislation is not applied in the same way in the Member States.	3.1 We recommend that the European Union make more use of directly applicable legislation in the Member States. This would reduce national differences in the implementation of EU legislation, which weakens the European project. This would also enhance the most important European achievements such as the internal market, the Euro and the Schengen area.	81.4 %
4. European democracy is under threat.	4.1 We recommend that the EU Communication on European Democracy should relentlessly and unambiguously recall what it means in Europe for Europeans.	78.0 %
	4.2 The values and principles of the Treaties of the European Union to which the Member States have subscribed upon accession are irreversible. Their protection must continue to be ensured.	81.0 %
	4.3 The protection of the values and principles of the Treaties is ensured by the European Court and cannot be called into question by the Member States.	81.0 %
5. Information on the EU is not easily accessible and difficult to understand	5.1 We recommend strengthening the verification of information on European issues. This information disseminated and verified by the institutions must be easily accessible to the European public and to the national media of each Member State.	83.3 %
6. National media often convey a negative image of the EU	6.1 The EU must also be more present in the everyday lives of Europeans by communicating more proactively. (E.g. by sponsoring, for example, cultural events that bring citizens together and make them proud to be an EU citizen. Reporting and teasers would also allow Europeans to have access to contextualised information about the EU).	85.7 %
7. Citizens do not know those who	7.1 We recommend that parliamentarians be better known in their home countries, especially outside of election periods. They must	92.7 %

represent them in the European Parliament.	be more accessible. The reasons for their votes in the European Parliament must be made more easily accessible to European citizens via the European Union website.	
	7.2 We recommend that national political parties ensure the rejuvenation of candidates on the lists presented in the European Parliament elections. Such a mandate should not be regarded as a reward for good and loyal services rendered in national policy.	74.4 %
8. The EU communication is too uniform; it does not take into account the diversity of the population	8.1 In order to reach a sufficiently wide and diverse audience, we recommend that the EU should take into account, by means of inclusive communication from the conception stage, the educational grade of the persons concerned, their possible disabilities. In addition, we also recommend involving individuals and organisations (street educators, neighbourhood agents, CPAS, civil society) in the transmission of this communication.	73.2 %
	8.2 In order to reach the labour force, we recommend investing more in the use of existing communication channels to periodically provide appropriate information about the EU, for example through explanatory programmes. In addition, we recommend relying on ambassadors (both individuals and organisations) that promote the EU project.	83.7 %
	8.3 In order to reach young people and students, we recommend that, alongside existing channels such as education and relevant youth movements, ambassadors should be called upon, especially for influencers who can reach young people through social media. Another recommendation would be to organise a pan-European competition to create a cartoon character that appeals to young people and sends them European messages.	69.8 %
	8.4 For seniors, we recommend using the same channels as those offered for the labour force. In addition, we recommend looking for the right balance between digital and non-digital communication (written press, radio, face-to-face events) to meet everyone's needs, including those who are less comfortable in a digital environment as well as those who are less mobile in society.	85.7 %
	8.5 We recommend that through the integration courses that already exist in many Member States, the EU commits to include "new Europeans" (people who through one or other legal immigration procedure reside in the EU), and can make them aware of the other traditional channels through which the EU communicates. Finally, we also recommend giving a place to the local associative world.	76.7 %
	8.6 We also recommend taking the EU to the streets with inclusive communication. For example, (digital) billboards could be used, as could new means of communication such as QR codes and traditional means.	62.8 %
	8.7 Other recommendations would be to make the EU more	68.2 %

	visual (through small films or infographics), to create a European sports movement to create a connection/a sense of belonging and to make the European anthem better known.	
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2. Disinformation

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. The risk of misinformation is increasingly present in the media	1.1 We recommend revising the media funding model, as well as mandatory publication of revenue sources, in a clear and accessible manner. The media funding model drives them to sensationalism, and thus to publish information out of context, turning them into disinformation.	73.8 %
	1.2 We recommend mandatory citation of sources by the media by providing links to verify them. Otherwise, information should be labelled as unverified.	90.2 %
	1.3 We recommend that the European Regulator for Combating Disinformation (see point 2) should also be responsible for the accreditation of information verification organisations (“fact checkers”)	85.4 %
	1.4 We recommend the establishment, in each member state, of an independent authority responsible for verifying media neutrality. This authority should be financed and monitored by the European Union.	75.6 %
	1.5 We recommend disseminating information about the URLs of official EU websites in order to reassure citizens about the origin of the information.	90.2 %
2. Many citizens doubt media neutrality	2.1 We recommend the creation of a European regulator to combat disinformation. In particular, the task of that regulator would be to lay down the criteria for a neutrality label and to establish, where appropriate, a system of sanctions or incentives linked to compliance with neutrality standards. Alternatively, adherence to a charter of ethics could be considered. The label would be granted by the independent national authority and would take into account measures taken by the media to combat disinformation.	87.5 %
	2.2 We recommend the installation of a European hotline allowing citizens to denounce disinformation concerning European (political and economic) competences.	82.1 %
3. Citizens are not aware of the risks of	3.1 We recommend that platforms be obliged to publish clear and understandable information about the risks of	85.7 %

misinformation to which they are exposed.	disinformation to which their users are exposed. This information should be automatically communicated as soon as an account is opened.	
	3.2 We recommend mandatory training in the use of the media, from an early age and adapted to the different levels of the education system.	74.4 %
	3.3 We recommend that the European Union launch repeated campaigns on disinformation. These campaigns could be identified by a logo or mascot. The European Union could force social networks to relay them through the dissemination of spots.	87.5 %
4. The means to combat disinformation are insufficient.	4.1 We recommend publishing in plain and intelligible language information about algorithms organising messages received by platform users.	83.3 %
	4.2 We recommend that users be able to disable behavioral bias-enhancing algorithms in a simple way. The obligation to provide users with access to other sources defending different positions on the same subject could also be examined.	80.0 %
	4.3 We recommend that the European Union support the creation of a social media platform that meets its own standards in terms of neutrality and the fight against disinformation. Alternatively, the multilingual platform created to support the Conference on the Future of Europe could be added with new features.	56.4 %

3. Citizen panels

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. Difficulty in ensuring the representativeness of a citizen panel. Ultimately, only a small part of the population is involved.	1.1 We recommend monitoring what the most recent scientific work on deliberative democracy suggests in terms of sampling, developing and scientific validation of the selection method in order to ensure the best possible representativeness.	89.7 %
	1.2 We recommend that there be a sufficient number of people around the table to ensure the diversity of opinions and profiles, including — but not only — people who are directly concerned with the topic.	90.2 %
	1.3 We recommend adding, in the criteria governing sampling, the criterion of parenthood (i.e. whether or not the person has children?), in addition to more traditional criteria such as gender, age, place of residence or level of education.	33.3 %

2. Difficulty in organising a panel at European level.	1.4 We recommend setting quotas by geographical area, i.e. determining that a European citizen panel must be composed of X people per European geographical area (to be determined) so that this panel can truly be qualified as European and meaningfully deliberate.	73.2 %
	1.5 We recommend that the population registers (or their equivalent, depending on the country) be used as the primary databases for the draw in order to give everyone the same chance to be able to be chosen, and to generate interest in a subject within the population.	70.0 %
	1.6 We recommend that participants be compensated to value their investment and attract people who would not participate if they were not compensated.	87.5 %
	1.7 We recommend informing — quite minimally: neither too much information nor too complicated information — first participants through presentations by experts to ensure that even people without prior knowledge feel comfortable participating in the discussions.	82.9 %
	1.7.2 We recommend that the topic of the Citizens' Panel be communicated in advance so that people can know what topic they are committing to debate.	78.6 %
	1.8 We recommend not to require citizens to participate.	97.6 %
	2.1 We recommend allowing meetings of the European Citizens' Panel to be held in hybrid format (presential/distancial). People who cannot physically move could also participate.	70.0 %
	2.2 We recommend that the European Union, for greater ease of access and organisation, delegate the organisation of citizen panels (on European themes) to different levels of authority, at national level.	69.0 %
	2.3 We recommend that a single topic be chosen per panel organised at European level. This will enable all participants to discuss the same subject, no matter where they come from in Europe.	80.5 %
3. Avoid the panel citizens are not diverted for purposes other than those declared.	3.1 We recommend that any citizen may submit a subject for discussion, and so that this right is not reserved to the political world or to the world of lobbyists.	82.1 %
	3.2 We recommend that the right of initiative be vested in the European Parliament, so that the European Parliament defines the topic to be discussed and then adopts the texts necessary to follow up on the recommendations arising from the deliberations.	63.4 %
4. Difficulty in deciding how best to	4.1.1 We recommend setting up a permanent citizen panel, alongside the parliament, which takes on specific	54.8 %

organise the process for the best representation of citizens.	tasks. It would be renewed regularly. This would make it possible to bring citizens together in the long term and take the necessary time for debates. Time allows for nuance of debates and consensus. Alongside this permanent panel, ad hoc citizen panels discuss topics chosen by the permanent panel. We propose to follow the model of the German-speaking Community.	
	4.1.2 We recommend setting up only one or more non-permanent European citizens' panel(s), which would only meet and discuss a specific topic for only a given period of time.	58.5 %
	4.2 We recommend not organising European Citizens' Panels on urgent issues, as sufficient time is needed to ensure the quality of the debates.	63.4 %
5. All too often, citizens participating in participatory democracy initiatives such as citizen panels do not receive feedback on the follow-up given to their work, whether short-term or long-term.	5.1 We recommend giving citizens feedback on the follow-up given (or not) to recommendations issued after European citizens' panels. If the recommendations are not followed, the European institutions involved must state the reasons for their decision (e.g. lack of competence). To this end, we recommend the writing of regular summaries throughout the process following a panel.	97.5 %
	6.1 We recommend organising citizen panels, also with children from an early age (e.g. 10-16 years old) to raise awareness of participation and debate. This can be organised in schools.	59.5 %

4. Referendums

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
	0.1 We recommend that referendums be held at European level on European affairs.	73.3 %
1. The culture of the referendum varies greatly from one Member State to another	1.1 We recommend commissioning research on how to create a common referendum culture in Europe.	70.7 %
	1.2 We recommend research (by independent experts) on the necessity and possibility of holding a referendum on a particular topic at European level	77.5 %
2. The formulation of the question posed in a referendum can have an adverse	2.1 We recommend setting up a scientific committee to think about how to ask questions that would be the subject of a European referendum in the most objective way possible.	87.2 %

impact, as can the ability to answer only with 'yes' or 'no', which often polarises debates and societies.	2.2 We recommend asking multiple-choice questions, going beyond the simple alternative between 'yes' and 'no' in order to bring nuance or even attach conditions to 'yes' and 'no' (i.e. 'yes if', 'no if').	65.0 %
	2.3 We recommend that white votes should not be taken into account in the calculation of any majority (simple majority or absolute majority). There must still be enough votes (the quorum must be respected).	75.0 %
The choice of subject is also delicate.	2.4.1 We recommend that a question raised in a European referendum should fall within the scope of any European subject falling within the competences of the European Union.	87.5 %
	2.4.2 We recommend excluding topics that could be a source of conflict between Member States.	39.0 %
	2.5 We recommend that technical and difficult questions can also be asked, with clear wording, because people have the ability to be sufficiently informed.	77.5 %
3. The referendum is not a democratic tool if only the political world can decide to organise one.	3.1 We recommend that the European Parliament have a right of initiative to hold European referendums, and that it should then be able to implement its outcome (the European Commission and the Council should follow without the possibility of blocking).	67.5 %
	3.2 We recommend that the initiative can also come from the citizens themselves (e.g. by following rules similar to those applying with regard to the European Citizens' Initiative).	77.5 %
	3.3 We recommend that the practical organisation of a European referendum should be a neutral body.	75.0 %
4. The consultative or binding aspect of the referendum must be clearly defined.	4.1.1 We recommend that the outcome of a European referendum be binding only when certain conditions in terms of turnout are met.	92.7 %
	4.1.2 We recommend that the results of a referendum be binding only if certain majorities are reached (51/49, 70/30). These conditions are established before each referendum.	72.5 %
	4.2 We recommend that the outcome of a European referendum be binding if the initiative of its organisation was taken by citizens (who would have managed to gather a number of signatures for this purpose) but indicative if the initiative was taken by a political institution.	47.5 %
	4.3 We recommend making the result of a European referendum binding only on certain subjects, but not on	40.0 %

	those for which the consequences of the vote could be very serious.	
5. The population is often poorly informed before being called to vote in a referendum. At the same time, it is crucial to control the information communicated in order to avoid harmful influences (internal or foreign) on voting.	5.1 We recommend that, before any European referendum, the public be clearly informed of the impact of the vote on their daily lives, through brochures, as is done in Switzerland, and/or information sessions.	97.5 %
	5.2 We recommend setting up, for each European referendum, a scientific committee guaranteeing the neutrality of the information communicated.	87.2 %
6. Although a referendum invites the entire population to vote directly (unlike the citizen panel), there is always a certain absenteeism, more or less important.	6.1.1 We recommend that participation in the vote in a European referendum be mandatory.	43.6 %
	6.1.2 We recommend that voting in a European referendum be voluntary.	52.5 %
	6.2 We recommend, in order to reduce absenteeism, to allow electronic voting in addition to paper voting (or in addition to other means of voting, such as postal voting). Electronic voting is particularly interesting for people going on vacation, and it also encourages people less interested in voting because the compulsion of travel is no longer there.	90.0 %
7. Too often, citizens participating in participatory democracy initiatives like referendums do not receive a return on the follow-up given to their vote, whether in the short term or in the long term.	7.1 We recommend giving citizens feedback on the follow-up given (or not) to the decision taken by citizens through a European referendum.	92.5 %

5. Existing tools

5.1. European elections.

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. There is a difference in regulations in the	1.1 We propose that there should be a mandatory vote participation for the European Parliament, but with sufficient information for citizens to understand the reasons for this.	50.0 %

different Member States	1.2 Our recommendation is to make the election rules for the European Parliament as much as possible in all countries, including the minimum age.	87.2 %
2. There is not sufficient diversity in the age, origin and gender criteria of MEPs.	2.1.1 We propose that MEPs be of all ages and backgrounds.	82.1 %
	2.1.2 We propose that MEPs choose deliberately for a European career and not just because they are at the end of their career.	82.5 %
	2.1.3 We propose to opt for a balanced gender distribution, for example by alternating genders on the electoral rolls. The EU must establish these criteria and verify whether they are met in the quota composition. If a candidate refuses his term of office, the next candidate in order of preference and having the same gender will take his place.	82.5 %
	2.1.4 We recommend that candidates on the European lists exercise their mandate if elected.	89.2 %
3. We vote for the European Parliament and have no say in the composition of the committee	3.1 We propose that there be a treaty amendment whereby the largest party in the European Parliament can appoint the President of the European Commission.	48.6 %
	3.2 We recommend making the composition of the European Commission more transparent, according to some basic basic rules, so that the composition reflects the voice of the citizen and that the citizen knows how the selection took place.	88.9 %
4. There is not much information about the candidates, we do not know much about them and their programme as well as the political fraction they will represent in the European Parliament.	4.1 We propose that European candidates present themselves locally in a more concrete way with their objectives and programmes through different channels (communication).	84.2 %

5.1.2 European Ombudsman

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. The site in languages other than English only includes information in English on the first two pages. This creates a barrier for citizens who do not master English	1.1 We propose to put the information on the home page in the language of each citizen and to post, if it is not possible to translate it, the news in English elsewhere on the site.	89.2 %
2. The Ombudsman is not	2.1 We propose that the Ombudsman be part of the	71.1 %

party to the penalty and any compensation for the complainant	process of finding and implementing the solution/sanction/compensation and have a voice in the matter.	
3. The deadline is sometimes very long for the validation of registration on the site (validation email) It sometimes takes 24 hours and demotivate the citizen who moves on to something else.	3.1 We propose to introduce an immediate validation system.	47.4 %
4. When we submit a complaint, the question is asked: have you used all possible procedures? The citizen does not always know all the procedures and cannot answer the question.	4.1 We propose to include a link to a simple presentation/explanation of other procedures	89.5 %
5. The Ombudsman's website is well done but does not have a clear European image, so this leads to questions for the citizen (am I on the right site, is it credible? ...).	5.1 We propose to review the graphical charter of the site and align it more with that of the EU (first advice: raise the European flag to the top of the page). It must be clear at the first "click" that the citizen is on the website of the Ombudsman of the Institutions.	78.4 %

5.1.3 Public consultation

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. The website of the consultations has changed and the citizen is sent at first instance to an obsolete site. You have to search to find the address of the new site.	1.1. We propose to delete the old site and reference the new site first.	81.6 %
2. The roadmap (English) and the opinions (language of the citizen editor) of a consultation are not translated into the language of the citizen reader	2.1. We strongly recommend translating the roadmap into the citizen's language. The road map in English blocks any citizen who does not master English in his participation.	81.6 %
	2.2. We propose to put a tab/icon "automated translation" at each review, which connects to an open source translation engine like Google Translate or DeepL.	65.8 %
3. You must subscribe to have follow-up of the consultation	3.1. We propose to send the process tracking automatically to anyone who has reacted, with the	89.5 %

	possibility to unsubscribe.	
4. We do not know whether the number of opinions in a sense influences the commission or whether similar opinions are taken as a single opinion (weighting or not). If the number of opinions in a sense counts we are concerned about the weight of lobbyists/activists/ large companies in the consultations and de facto the actions taken by the EU vis-à-vis citizens and the associative world	4.1. We recommend putting clear information on the site about this.	81.6 %
	4.2. If the number of opinions in one direction has an impact, we recommend setting up a system capable of filtering lobbyists/activists/large companies etc. so as not to give them an disproportionate weight.	60.5 %
	4.3. We recommend creating artificial intelligence software that ranks different reviews and counts opposite or favorable reviews.	47.4 %
	4.4. We propose to organise relays between citizens and associations (militants): have places where citizens could come and give their opinions, in the form of 'Europe Houses' that could help disseminate citizens' opinions to the European level. These places should be set up in different locations, at the local level, and relocated.	62.2 %
5. The notice form is not clear: there is an open question, and a questionnaire. What is the role of each document, what should be completed?	5.1 Clarify this information on the site.	81.6 %
6. There are too many skill levels when it comes to tools	6.1 We propose to create a dispatching centre that will allow requests to be directed to the competent level of authority.	78.9 %

5.1.4 European Citizens' Initiative

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. Citizens who do not have the internet are more difficult to reach.	1.1 We suggest that local authorities or libraries, which are independent of government, may be involved in disseminating this initiative and collecting signatures. Both electronically and on paper. The EU should take stock of this network by country and make it available to initiators.	71.1 %
2. The number of countries that need to participate is too small to have sufficient support.	2.1 We propose to increase the number of countries from which signatures are collected to 13 countries in order to have greater support for the proposal. The number of signatures must be respected in proportion to the number of inhabitants.	64.9 %
3. The cost and effort to collect signatures is high	3.1 We propose that there be EU funding to support these initiatives.	71.1 %
	3.2 We propose that a body be set up to facilitate coordination	75.7 %

	between different countries.	
4. The procedure is complex for citizens.	4.1 We propose to set up a helpdesk to help citizens complete the process.	83.8 %
5. The outcome of the citizens' initiative is unclear.	5.1 We propose to oblige the European Commission to discuss and work on the follow-up of the proposal, and not simply to reply and acknowledge receipt. If the Commission decides not to act on the proposal, it must justify it.	100.0 %
	5.2 We propose to organise a consultation of citizens when receiving a European Citizens' Initiative to ask them for their opinion on it before the committee monitors it. This would avoid having only extreme opinions/votes for the initiative and having the opinion of people who have not signed. In addition, if all citizens give their opinion, the suggestion will have more weight at EU level and its follow-up.	55.3 %

5.1.5 Right to petition

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. The European Commission has the final decision, there is no certainty about the outcome	1.1 We propose that the European Parliament's recommendation be followed by the committee.	81.1 %
2. There is little transparency about the process and motivation of the decision.	2.1 We propose to keep the person submitting the petition informed of progress and decisions at regular intervals. The final conclusion must also be reasoned.	94.4 %
3. It is difficult for citizens to demonstrate the need for new legislation.	3.1 Our recommendation is that a petition should also be used as a tool to demonstrate the need for new legislation.	78.4 %

II B National Panels: France



Conférence
sur l'avenir
de l'Europe

L'avenir est entre vos mains

Contribution citoyenne à
la Conférence sur l'avenir
de l'Europe

This document is a summary of the report on "Citizens' contribution to the Conference on the Future of Europe" organised by France. The full version of the report in French is available at the following link:

<https://participation-citoyenne.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2021-11/20211126%20-%20COFE%20-%20Rapport%20final.pdf>



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Introduction

The Conference on the Future of Europe is an unprecedented citizen participation exercise to consult citizens of the 27 Member States of the European Union in order to put them at the centre of the decisions that will be taken for years and decades to come. EU citizens are therefore invited to make their voices heard, proposing changes and concrete ways of action that will enable Europe to set a new ambition and address the global challenges it faces today.

The French Government supports the initiatives of the Trio Presidencies of the Conference on the Future of Europe, in particular by encouraging its citizens to make a significant contribution to the online platform and to organise events throughout the country.

In parallel with these European initiatives, the Government wished to conduct a participatory exercise at the national level.

With the support of the Ministry for Relations with Parliament and Citizen Participation (MRPCC) and the expertise of the Inter-Ministerial Centre for Citizen Participation (ICPC), the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) organised a citizen exercise based on strong methodological biases (see below “Methodological commitments and biases”). MEAE relied on a supplier consortium composed of Roland Berger, Wavestone, Missions Publiques and Harris Interactive. Regional prefectures have finally played a key role in organising the 18 conferences throughout the country.

As part of this consultation, a single question was asked to the participants: ***As French citizens, what changes do you want for Europe?*** (See Annex IV “Mandate of participation”).

This national exercise took the form of 18 regional conferences, in the 13 metropolitan regions and the 5 French ultramarine regions, which took place over three weekends in September and October 2021 and each brought together between 30 and 50 citizens drawn by lot (746 in total). The synthesis of these 18 regional panels was then carried out at a national conference held from 15 to 17 October 2021 at the Economic, Social and Environmental Council (EESC in Paris) and which brought together 98 voluntary citizens among the participants in the regional conferences.

In addition, and in order to highlight the words of young French people ahead of the European Year of Youth in 2022, an online consultation entitled “*Speak to Youth*” was organised by the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs in partnership with Make.org. More than 50,000 young people aged 15 to 35 expressed their ideas and priorities for the Europe of 2035.

This report presents the main results of the two consultations conducted by the Government.

Consultation methodology

The recruitment of citizens participating in regional conferences combined a random selection of participants by random draw of their telephone numbers, and a targeted selection of profiles to reach a panel as representative of the diversity of each territory as possible.

During the regional panels, participants spoke by alternating working time in groups, per table of 6 to 8 citizens accompanied by a facilitator and presentation times in plenary. Experts were present during the reflection time to answer citizens’ questions and shed light, while keeping a position of neutrality.

Citizens were first invited to discuss their current perception of Europe. They then expressed their **wishes for the Europe of 2035**, as a group and then in plenary. These discussions made it possible to identify between 3 and 8 wishes per region. For each of these wishes, citizens then formulated the **changes** they deemed necessary to reach the desired Europe and then illustrated them with concrete proposals to be implemented. This process resulted in a total of 515 changes and 1,301 concrete proposals at the national level.

Each regional conference resulted in the writing of a regional synthesis report delivered to all participants ahead of the national conference.

The National Synthesis Conference brought together 98 randomly drawn citizens among the participants in the 18 regional conferences. In order to ensure a diversity of the national panel, 6 citizens were drawn by lot among the volunteers of the regional conferences in metropolitan France and the Réunion and 4 citizens for ultramarine conferences, respecting parity and a diversity of age in each regional draw (see Annex II).

In preparation for the national conference, the 515 changes identified at the regional conferences were analysed and reconciled when their underlying intention appeared similar or near, so as to constitute 14 groups of changes reflecting a common wish for Europe (see Part 6). These 14 European wishes served as the basis for the work of the 98 participants of the national conference, whose mission was to enrich the work carried out in the regions and to confront the wishes of Europe, the changes and the proposals with the help of twenty experts to arrive at a list of priority changes. Each group finally selected 3 key changes, the first of which was voted on by all 98 citizens, establishing a final ranking of the 14 priority changes. A synthesis report consolidates all the work of this conference.

The online consultation “Parole aux Jeunes” conducted in partnership with Make.org took place from May to July 2021. More than 50,000 participants took part and submitted nearly 3,000 proposals for Europe. On the basis of all the reactions of young citizens, 35 major ideas were identified, 22 of which were widely acclaimed and 13 were the subject of controversy among the participants (see Part 11).

Exit point and duty immediately

This report will be submitted to the Government by citizens on 29 November 2021, in the presence of French elected members of the Plenary Assembly of the Conference on the Future of Europe. It will be presented to the trio of presidencies of the Conference during the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union (PFUE).

At the end of the National Synthesis Conference at the EESC, and in order to meet the high expectations of citizens drawn by lot, a Citizen Follow-up Committee embodying the follow-up right of the participants was set up. This committee, composed of 15 members — 14 representatives of regional conferences and a representative of the “Parole aux Jeunes” consultation — will have the task of informing citizens about the future of their proposals. At each meeting of the Plenary Assembly of the Conference, one or one of the members of the Monitoring Committee will participate as a representative of the French exercise to highlight the proposals set out in this report, while building a common position with all the European citizens represented.

All the documents of the French consultation will be public and accessible to all on the citizen participation platform of the French State: participation mandate, regional summaries, national synthesis, guarantor report and final report.

Presentation of the main results

(the original was in the form of an illustration)



Panorama de la contribution française à la conférence sur l'avenir de l'Europe

Les citoyens tirés au sort devaient répondre à la question :
« En tant que citoyens français, quels changements souhaitez-vous pour l'Europe ? »

TOP 10 DES CHANGEMENTS PRIORITAIRES POUR L'EUROPE DE 2035



1. Développer la **sobriété énergétique** pour consommer moins en arrêtant le superflu



2. Renforcer la **défense et la sécurité communes** de l'Union européenne



3. Favoriser la **performance économique collective** à travers une industrie autonome, compétitive et valorisée par l'UE



4. Mettre en place un **pouvoir citoyen** à plusieurs échelons : participation, décision, contrôle



5. Tendre vers une **fédération d'États d'Europe** dotée de compétences fortes dans des domaines d'intérêt commun



6. Proposer des **programmes d'échanges** tout au long de la vie

Source : Changements ayant recueilli le plus de votes lors de la conférence nationale sur l'avenir de l'Europe (15-17 octobre 2021).

Source: Changes that won the most votes at the National Conference on the Future of Europe (15-17 October 2021)

Overview of the French contribution to the Conference on the Future of Europe

Citizens drawn by lot had to answer the question: "As French citizens, what changes do you want for Europe?"

Top 10 priority changes for Europe of 2035

1. Develop **energy sobriety** to consume less by stopping the superfluous

2. Strengthening the European Union's **common defence and security**

3. Fostering **collective economic performance** through an autonomous, competitive and valued industry by the EU

4. **Empowering citizens** at several levels: participation, decision, control

5. Moving towards a **federation of European states** with strong competences in areas of common interest

6. Offer lifelong **exchange programmes**



7. Partager les cultures européennes par des **manifestations et des évènements fédérateurs**



8. Harmoniser la **santé** et la rendre accessible à tous les Européens par une politique commune de santé



9. Développer et piloter au niveau européen les **filières stratégiques** pour assurer notre souveraineté



10. Améliorer la **protection des milieux et des écosystèmes** et créer des **zones protégées** au cœur des zones urbaines, périurbaines et rurales

Consultation en ligne « Parole aux jeunes »



Le 9 mai 2021, le secrétaire d'État chargé des Affaires européennes a lancé une consultation « **Parole aux Jeunes** » menée par Make.org qui s'est déroulée entre mai et juillet 2021.

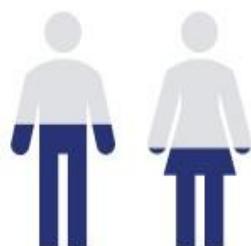
50 000 jeunes âgés de 15 à 30 ans ont répondu à la question : « **Quelles sont vos priorités pour l'Europe de demain ?** », avec 2 918 propositions déposées.

Les **idées plébiscitées par les Jeunes français** dans le cadre de cette consultation en ligne s'intègrent à la contribution citoyenne à la Conférence sur l'avenir de l'Europe (cf. détails dans la 2^e partie de ce rapport)

Presentation of the panels of regional conferences

A diverse panel of 746 citizens

Overview of participants in the 18 regional conferences



60% 40%

7. Sharing European cultures through **unifying events and events**

8. Harmonising **health** and making it accessible to all Europeans through a common health policy

9. Develop and steer **strategic channels** at European level to ensure our sovereignty

10. Improve the **protection of environments and ecosystems** and create **protected areas** at the heart of urban, peri-urban and rural areas

10% 15% 28% 29% 18%

Conferences on the future of Europe throughout France

18 regional conferences, 13 in metropolis and 5 overseas



Methodological biases

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Territorialisation et proximité

- Consultations organisées dans 13 régions métropolitaines et 5 régions d'outre-mer
- Une consultation nationale de synthèse



Diversité des profils et tirage au sort

- Tirage au sort par génération aléatoire de numéros de téléphone
- Panels représentatifs de la diversité de la population et des points de vue sur l'Europe



Transparence de la démarche

- Supervision par un collège de 3 garants
- Publication en ligne de l'ensemble des documents de synthèse



Débat ouvert sans thématique imposée

- Liberté totale des thèmes traités laissée aux citoyens
- Absence de cadrage thématique



Expertise inversée

- Pas d'apport d'information préalable
- Réflexion collective basée sur le vécu et les opinions des citoyens, apport d'expertise sur demande des citoyens



Collégialité et gouvernance agile

- Gouvernance hebdomadaire avec l'ensemble des parties prenantes



Devoir de suite

- Mise en place d'un comité de suivi citoyen
- Engagement du gouvernement à porter la parole citoyenne dans l'exercice européen

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Neutrality

During a consultation, the organising team must ensure that it remains neutral in the facilitation of exchanges as well as in the drafting of summaries presenting the results. Stakeholders in the scheme — facilitators, facilitators, experts — should not express their own views or seek to direct the debate subjectively.

The objective of neutrality was pursued at all stages of the consultation, ensuring in particular an unbiased selection of participants, full freedom in debates and a lack of influence on citizen speech by the sponsor or stakeholders. This imperative of neutrality has materialised by an objective and transparent recruitment process of participants, coherent methodological biases (reverse expertise, lack of thematic framing of debates) and a special focus on the posture of the various speakers (facilitators, facilitators, experts). Finally, the organising team made sure to value all the words and not to filter citizen proposals.

A **college of three guarantors**, appointed by the Presidents of the National Assembly and the European Parliament and by the Government, has also ensured that all opinions are expressed and taken into account.

Duty immediately

Citizens, whether or not they have participated in the consultation, have the right to be informed of what has been chosen of their proposals and the opinions they have drawn from them, and for what reasons. This is called **duty immediately**.

It is defined by the Interdepartmental Centre for Citizen Participation (ICPC) and the Interdepartmental Directorate for Public Transformation (DITP) as the commitment made by the public decision-maker to provide citizens with a clear and legible response to the outcome of the consultation. Concretely, the duty of follow-up is to return to the citizens to explain to them how their contributions are taken into account and have an impact on the decision-making and on the practices of the administration.

The Government took up this duty as a follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe and announced an ambitious follow-up mechanism following the national conference described in the next part of this report (see ‘ *Methodological Parties* ’).

B. Methodological parties

These three State commitments were reflected in the consultation methodology in the form of **seven strong methodological biases**.

1. Territorialisation and proximity

The national component of the Conference on the Future of Europe took the form of 18 regional conferences, in the 13 metropolitan regions and the 5 French ultramarine regions, followed by a national conference in Paris. By this choice of organising panels at local level, the wish was to **gather a voice as closely as possible to the citizens**. This bias also enriched the consultation by showing the lines of consensus and dissensus between the territories on different subjects.

2. Diversity of citizens’ profiles and use of the draw

A target for the recruitment of 50 citizens per regional conference was set ahead of the process, with the exception of the ultramarine conferences of Martinique, Mayotte, Guadeloupe and Guyana, with 30 to 40 citizens each, and the Grand Est conference in which 5 German citizens from the three frontier Landers were also present. A **random generation** of telephone numbers made it possible to draw lots of citizens invited to participate in regional conferences.

To be eligible, citizens drawn by lot had to be over 18 years of age and be French or permanent residents in a

regular situation. Each regional panel of citizens had to be **representative of the diversity of the regional population** and bring together a **diversity of views on Europe**. The precise methodology for recruitment by drawing lots is set out in Annex II.

3. Transparency of the approach

A **college of three guarantors** appointed by the Secretary of State for European Affairs, the President of the National Assembly and the President of the European Parliament followed the whole process in order to ensure its neutrality and regularity. In particular, the guarantors have: monitored the sincerity of the recruitment of citizens drawn by lot, made recommendations for the selection of experts and ensured that the debates were well organised. At the end of the procedure, the guarantors will make public their opinion on the consultation. This document will be posted on the state citizen participation platform.

Will also be published on the platform for citizen participation of the State: the summaries of the eighteen regional conferences, the summary of all the changes expressed at the regional conferences, the synthesis of the national conference, and finally the final report submitted to the Government.

4. An open debate without an imposed theme

In the context of this national consultation, a single question was formulated for the attention of the participating citizens: “ *As French citizens, what changes do you want for Europe?*”.

Through the unfolding and methodology put in place, citizens were able to determine for themselves the agenda of the desired changes, without being constrained by a specific theme or a prior normative framing.

The aim was to allow citizens of regional conferences to enjoy full freedom in the topics they wished to address. The Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs for the national part of the Conference on the Future of Europe has thus chosen to develop a complementary approach to the European exercise, which is structured around nine themes: climate change and environment; health; a stronger economy, social justice and employment; the EU in the world; values and rights, rule of law, security; digital transformation; European democracy; migration; education, culture, youth and sport; other ideas^{xiv}.

The themes of the exchanges of regional conferences were thus defined by the citizens themselves and not by the sponsor of the exercise.

5. Reverse expertise

In order to influence as little as possible the participants in the process of identifying their wishes for Europe, the choice was **made not to provide prior information or expertise** (e.g. on the current project of the European Union, its competences or the functioning of the institutions) but to start from the questions of the citizens themselves. This methodological bias is based on the principle of ‘ *reverse expertise*’ according to which **collective reflection** is built on the basis of the experiences and opinions of citizens, who then question experts to support their discussions and consolidate their working hypotheses.

To achieve this objective, **experts** were mobilised in the various regions (three on average), particularly from academia and Europe Direct information centres in the territories concerned. They were present on Saturday and Sunday to answer citizens’ questions, speaking only at their request. Fact **checkers** were also reachable in order to quickly verify the factual questions addressed by citizens.

At the National Synthesis Conference at the EESC, 19 high-level experts from academia, think tanks and diplomatic corps attended the working groups. These experts accompanied a group throughout the weekend, allowing them to deepen the changes expressed in the regions.

XIV <https://futureu.europa.eu/processes?locale=fr>

6. Collegiality and Agile Governance

The whole process was **co-built** by the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE), with the support of the participatory strategy of the Inter-Ministerial Centre for Citizen Participation (ICPC) of the Inter-Ministerial Directorate of Public Transformation (DITP) and the Ministry of Parliamentary Relations and Citizen Participation (MRPC). The scheme was implemented by a supplier consortium composed of Roland Berger, Wavestone, Missions Publiques, and Harris Interactive for the steering of the process, the animation of conferences, the drawing up of citizens and the drafting of reports and summaries, in collaboration with the regional prefectures for the local organisation of regional conferences.

Specific governance has been set up around a project team chaired by MEAE, bringing together the CPIC, the MRPC and the supplier consortium.

7. Duty of follow-up and articulation with the European exercise

On the occasion of the national conference, several elements of the **follow-up duty** of the French institutions following the exercise carried out for the Conference on the Future of Europe were announced:

- **Making available all the information** on the approach, this document as well as the synthesis reports of the regional and national conferences, in a transparent and accessible way to all on the new platform for citizen participation, launched on the occasion of the return to the Government;
- Organisation of an **event to return to the Government** the final report of the national component of the Conference on the Future of Europe in November 2021;
- Setting up a **citizen monitoring committee** to ensure that the outcome of the process is in line with the proposals made. This committee will be composed of 15 citizens, including 14 participants from the regional conferences and one participant from the “*Words to Youth*” consultation;
- **Delivery of the French contribution to the Conference on the Future of Europe to the European institutions** in January 2022;

The proposals of French citizens will be brought to the collective reflection of the Member States and the European institutions. As the country holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2022, it will be up to France to speak the voice of its citizens while working to define a common position on a continent-wide basis.

First part: presentation of the results of the regional conferences on the future of Europe

In each of the 18 regional conferences, citizens expressed their wishes for the Europe of 2035 individually and then as a group. Between 3 and 8 wish groups emerged in each region, leading to a total of **101 Europe desired throughout France**. Citizens then formulated changes that they considered necessary to reach the desired Europe and then illustrated them with concrete actions. This process generated a total of **515 changes** and **1,301 concrete actions throughout France**.

In the weeks that separated the regional conferences and the national conference, a grouping of 515 changes into coherent groups was carried out by the project team. All the changes expressed in the regions were subjected to a lexicological analysis and close when their underlying intention seemed similar or close, so as to set up for the national conference working groups with a common wish for Europe. Finally, **the changes identified in the regions were grouped into 14 distinct European wishes**.



Question to citizens	What is your wish for the Europe of 2035?	What changes are needed to reach this desired Europe?	What concrete proposals would you make to implement these changes?
Outcome of regional conferences	101 wishes	515 changes	1301 concrete proposals
	Ordering 515 regional changes in 14 consistent wishes by the organisation team	Grouping, prioritisation and detail of changes by participants during the national conference	
Outcome of the national conference	14 wishes	80 changes	Key implementation steps and success criteria for each change

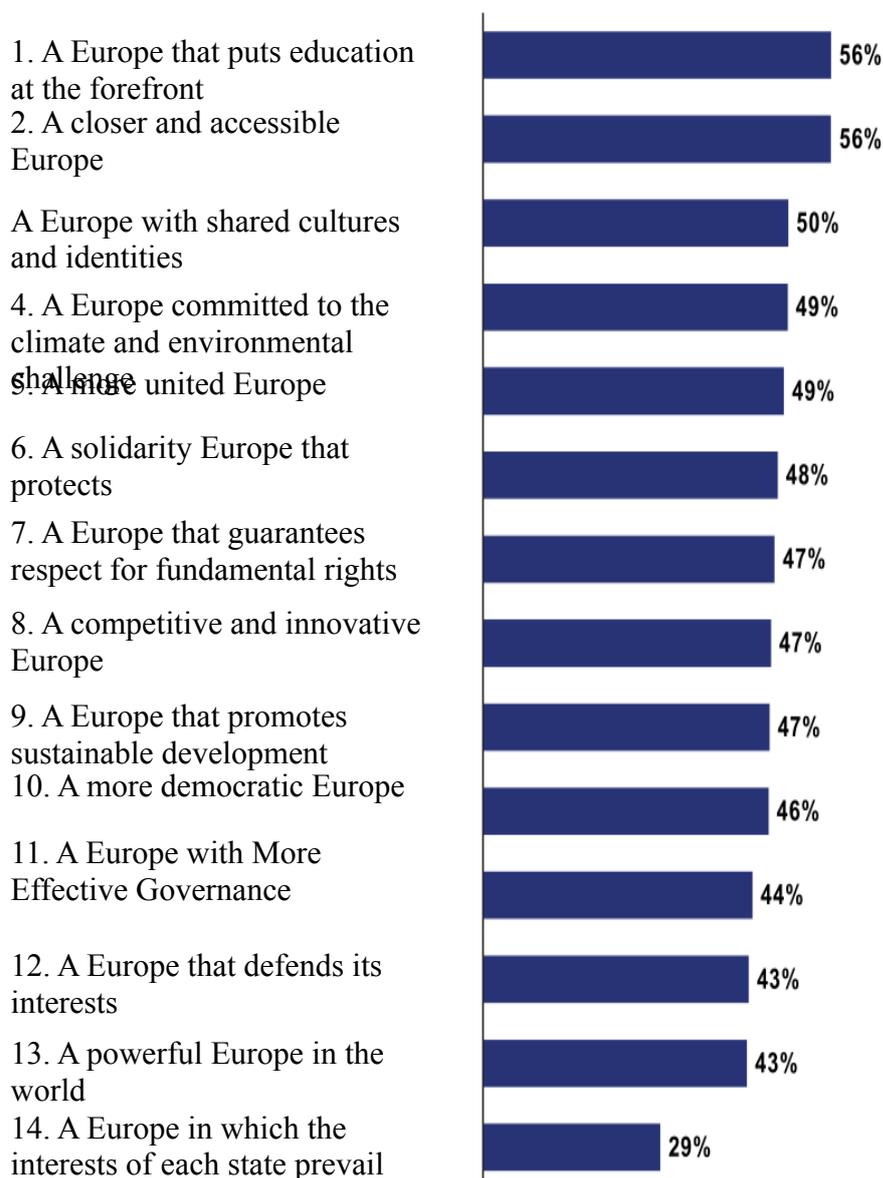
a. Ranking of the 14 wishes of Europe

At the end of each regional conference, participating citizens voted to express their support for the changes identified by the different working groups.

On the basis of the groupings carried out prior to the national synthesis conference, it is possible to determine — thanks to the votes on the changes in each region — the wishes of Europe having been the most popular among the citizens. Thus, the wishes “ *a Europe that puts education at the forefront*” and “ *a closer and accessible Europe*” have been widely welcomed, with changes supported on average by 56 % of citizens at regional conferences.

Ranking of Europe’s wishes by popularity rate

What changes would you like to see implemented?



B. Presentation of the 14 priority changes resulting from the national conference

At the National Synthesis Conference, the 100 participating citizens worked on one of the 14 established wish groups. At the end of the work, each group selected to represent its wish for Europe **a priority change to be put in place by 2035**. These 14 priority changes were then proposed to the vote of 100 citizens on the last day of the national conference. The result of this vote is set out below, in descending order according to the number of votes obtained for each change.

The change that obtained the most votes from the 100 citizens of the national conference is ‘*Develop energy sobriety to consume less by stopping the superfluous*’.

14 key changes for Europe in 2035

- (1) Develop energy sobriety to consume less off the superfluous
- (2) Strengthening the common defence and security of the European Union
- (3) Foster collective economic performance through an autonomous, competitive and valued industry by the European Union
- (4) Establishing a citizen power at several levels: participation, decision, control
- (5) Going to a federation of European states with strong competences in areas of common interest
- 6 (6) Proposing lifelong exchange programs
- (7) Sharing European cultures through unifying events and events
- (8) Harmonising health and making it accessible to all Europeans through a common health policy
- (9) Developing and piloting strategic channels at European level to ensure our sovereignty
- (10) Improving the protection of environments and ecosystems and creating protected areas at the heart of urban, peri-urban and rural areas
- (11) Establishing European relays in the territories to listen to and advise citizens
- (12) Unify the mode of election of the European Parliament for the twenty-seven states and improve the proximity of citizens by replacing the current vote with a one-time vote at regional level
- (13) Defining a common policy to improve the reception and social and occupational integration of migrants (including irregular migrants)
- (14) To preserve the specificities (food labels, artisanal production, traditions) of the different European regions, in order to avoid uniform lifestyles and ensure traceability and quality of products

For each priority change, the citizens of the group concerned gave a definition of change, proposed concrete actions to be implemented for its implementation and indicated the criteria for success by 2035.

Change 1 — Develop energy sobriety to consume less by stopping the superfluous

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe committed to the climate and environmental challenge

What does this change mean?

Keywords: Development of renewable energies, decrease in energy consumption

This change aims to encourage the reduction of energy consumption in Europe and the development of renewable energy. Its prioritisation by citizens transcribes their desire to include Europe and its inhabitants in a **determined approach** to the climate and environmental challenge.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

This change is reflected in the development of **ambitious research programmes** on renewable energy sources and the **deployment of European investment funds** with direct participation in companies in the sector.

For citizens, this change would be successful if **binding energy consumption targets and key indicators of sobriety**, such as a decline in the European car fleet or meat consumption, were put in place. The ambition is also to succeed in setting **consumption quotas by sector** taking into account the fluctuations in consumption of companies and respecting the confidentiality of their data.

Change 2 — Strengthening the European Union's common defence and security

Wish of associated Europe: A powerful Europe in the world

What does this change mean?

Keywords: European army, strategic autonomy

This change responds to the unanimous will of citizens to achieve **autonomy** in defence and security in Europe, so as not to depend on foreign powers.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

The success of this change would first and foremost result in the appointment of a **European Commissioner** for Defence and Security.

In defence matters, the creation of a **permanent, reactive and projectable army** around the world would allow Europe to protect its borders and intervene, if necessary, at the request of third countries.

In terms of security, Europe should, in the eyes of its citizens, guarantee the **security of its supplies** and protect its **strategic research**, in priority sectors such as space, cybersecurity, the medical sector and the environment. Better **protection of external borders** should also help stop illegal immigration and trafficking.

Change 3 — Promoting collective economic performance through an autonomous, competitive and valued industry by the European Union

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe that defends its interests

What does this change mean?

Keywords:

European preference, protection of know-how, development of European champions

This change aims to achieve three objectives: strengthen a policy of “**European preference**” within the Union, guarantee the **protection of essential goods and know-how**, and create “**European champions**”.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

Achieving these objectives requires first of all the implementation of a “**European preference**” **policy** in the context of tenders, and the introduction of a **carbon tax** on imports.

The protection of know-how would result in increased control of foreign repurchases and investments, and the development of **relocation** aid.

Finally, the creation of “European champions” involves encouraging European **industrial alliances** in strategic sectors and boosting public venture capital investment.

The success of this change is materialising for citizens by developing European industrial alliances in key sectors, increasing the number of business relocations and improving the trade balance.

Change 4 — Empowering citizen power at several levels: participation, decision, control

Wish of associated Europe: A more democratic Europe

What does this change mean?

Keywords: increase in voter turnout, European satisfaction barometer, generalisation of citizens’ consultations

With this change, citizens are proposing to develop a “*complete citizen experience*” for Europeans, increasing their **involvement** at all stages of decision-making processes. It reflects the willingness of citizens **to make their voices heard** and to influence public policies affecting their daily lives.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

This is mainly for citizens to develop and sustain citizen participation initiatives. To this end, several levers

could be implemented: the establishment of a **permanent consultative chamber**, the registration of **citizen power** in the European Treaties or the creation of a **label** certifying the laws which have been the subject of a citizens' consultation.

The success of this change would be manifested by the rise of indicators such as **electoral participation, the interest and confidence** expressed in the European Union and the **attendance of European websites**. The increase in the number of decisions taken after a citizens' consultation and the increased use of **European Citizens' Initiatives (ECI)** are also seen as markers of success.

Change 5 — Towards a federation of European states with strong competences in areas of common interest

Wish of associated Europe: A more united Europe

What does this change mean?

Keywords: institutional unification, President-elect, strengthening EU competences

This change reflects the citizens' ambition to **unify** the European political institutions. The model displayed is that of a federation of states with the objective of **strengthening the shared or exclusive competences** of the European Union, without however moving towards a federal state.

What are the key milestones and success criteria?

Internally, this change could involve the development of **citizen participation**, the creation of European **ministries within the** Member States and, in the longer term, the **election** of the President of the European Commission **by universal suffrage**.

Externally, the strengthening of the European voice abroad would be translated into an **incarnation** through a **unique representative of Europe** on the international stage.

This federation of states would also benefit from an increased **European budget**, with the ambition of reaching 10 % of GDP (compared to 2 % at present).

Change 6 — Proposing lifelong exchange programs

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe that puts education at the forefront

What does this change mean?

Keywords: school Exchanges, Erasmus

Widely acclaimed, this change reflects the importance to citizens of meetings and experiences abroad, as a powerful ferment of European sentiment. The ambition is to move “*from academic knowledge to a **lived, experienced and sensitive approach** to Europe*” and to understand education in the broad sense as **lifelong learning**.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

The success of such a change is mainly due to the introduction of **an extended mobility offer**, including inter alia school exchanges, twinning, travel and professional mobility. For citizens, this offer must be accessible to all, especially those with low resources or disabilities. For example, the Erasmus programme could cover all Europeans without age or resource limits. These programmes must be conceived as **diverse, inclusive and accessible** with simplified administrative procedures.

In addition to mobilities, the importance of **developing bridges between education systems** (equivalences of diplomas, etc.) and enhancing Europe’s attractiveness to avoid talent leakage abroad was also mentioned.

Change 7 — Sharing European cultures through unifying events and events

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe with shared cultures and identities

What does this change mean?

Keywords: European Festival, European Public Holiday, World Exhibition of Europe

This change aims **to create and live a European spirit** through shared experiences, events and festive events.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

The events imagined by the citizens are intended to be **fun, unifying and popular** to be shared by the greatest number. To do this, they should involve **all audiences** (including children, school audiences, young people and Erasmus students) and take place in **various places** (retirement houses, schools, public administrations, prisons, etc.).

In particular, two events were envisaged to bring Europeans together: a **universal exhibition of Europe** which would make it possible to represent all the Member States and a **recast of Europe Day** on 9 May, which would include in particular an educational event so that ‘*we do not forget the peace linked to Europe and its values*’. At the same time, European representatives could meet the schoolchildren of the continent in

their schools in order to strengthen the proximity and understanding of Europe of citizens from an early age.

Change 8 — Harmonising health and making it accessible to all Europeans through a common health policy

Wish of associated Europe: A solidarity Europe that protects

What does this change mean?

Keywords: universal health coverage, harmonisation of care, health as a fundamental right

In order to guarantee access to health for all Europeans and to respond to *the ‘need for protection and solidarity’*, a **supranational health system** was unanimously proposed. It would be based on fair funding between Member States and build on the best EU systems. Such a change reflects the willingness of citizens to see Europe take a more active role in protecting its inhabitants, especially in the field of health where actions so far are considered too timid.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

To implement this change, the principle of **European universal social security** was approved by the majority. However, the arrangements for implementing this system could not be decided. While some argue for *“a centralisation of data allowing [European] health workers to access all the patient’s medical history”*, others perceive this measure as *“an additional deprivation of liberty, and a system of control”*.

Transparency and harmonisation of regulatory requirements across the continent, as well as a **European Health Plan**, have nevertheless been identified as prerequisites for any significant transformation.

Change 9 — Develop and lead strategic channels at European level to ensure our sovereignty

Wish of associated Europe: A competitive and innovative Europe

What does this change mean?

Keywords: development of European champions, control of foreign investment, digital autonomy and energy

Piloting strategic sectors such as health, food, energy, digital technology, defence, transport and new materials at European level responds to the **need for sovereignty** identified by citizens. This would limit competition between European companies, promote the **emergence of continental champions** and **reindustrialise Europe** through a European preference.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

To achieve this sovereignty, a **European authority** could be tasked with leading these sectors by

issuing authorisations to buy-in European companies by foreign competitors and ensuring that imported products meet the same standards as EU production. In the medium term, **30 % to 50 %** of European consumption in these strategic sectors should be **produced on the continent** and up to **70 %** in the long term. Meeting these criteria would ensure self-sufficiency and the **influence** and even **export** of the European industrial model.

Change 10 — Improving the protection of environments and ecosystems and creating protected areas at the heart of urban, peri-urban and rural areas

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe that promotes sustainable development

What does this change mean?

Keywords: more environmentally friendly urbanisation, respect and protection of soils

The aim is to **limit the negative impact of urbanisation on soils**. Strong actions would **limit disasters related** to soil destructuring such as landslides and **improve the quality of life in urban areas**, notably through the planting of trees.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

It was proposed to act on two levels: first, to **reverse the trend on new constructions** to reduce the rate of soil sealing, and secondly to **encourage soil restoration** to ‘return to nature what belongs to it’.

Change 11 — Establishing European relays in the territories to listen to and advise citizens

Wish of associated Europe: A closer and accessible Europe

What does this change mean?

Keywords: Houses of Europe, referent Europe local, better access to information

The aim of this change is to provide concrete answers to the **lack of embodiment of the European Union** in everyday life, noted by many participants, and to work towards bringing Europe and its citizens closer together.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

To address this distance between the EU and citizens, a **specialist referent** could be appointed to each town hall with a mission to listen and advise citizens. The information provided by this report could be socio-economic, in particular on access to European or informative aid, for example on the role of lobbyists. The information provided would be aimed at both the general public and professionals, in particular to advise SMEs and help project leaders access EU funds. In the long term, this change could lead to the creation of **places dedicated to Europe**, similar to the existing houses of Europe, but at the communal level allowing

for a fine territorial network.

The success of this change would be complete if every citizen knows ‘*as an obvious*’ the existence of this reference and this place of resources dedicated to Europe that would provide resources, listening, information and advice.

Change 12 — Unify the mode of election of the European Parliament for the 27 states and improve the proximity of citizens by replacing the current vote with a one-time vote at regional level

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe with More Effective Governance

What does this change mean?

Keywords: institutional change, followed by citizens of actions throughout the mandate

This change reflects the desire of citizens to strengthen their **proximity to elected** officials and to follow their actions throughout their mandate. It responds to the widely shared observation of a lack of translation of citizens’ concerns into concrete actions by the elected representatives of the European Parliament.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

The change in the mode of election would consist **of a unification of the voting system** at European level and the transition from national to regional constituencies, estimated to be possible by 2035.

Change 13 — Defining a common policy to improve reception and social and occupational integration of migrants (including irregular migrants)

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe that guarantees respect for fundamental rights

What does this change mean?

Keywords: European Migration Office, ensuring a decent reception throughout Europe

This change aims to improve the reception of migrants within the European Union, a problem unanimously identified as an **emergency** by citizens. At a break with the current situation, the establishment of a **common, concerted and solidarity immigration policy** appears to be a major vector of peace.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

The success of such a change would result in the gradual implementation of a common policy on the reception of migrants.

A **citizens' initiative** should refer the matter to the Commission and allow in the medium term the adoption of a **common standard** determining a framework for the reception and social integration of migrants. In the long term, this standard would be supported by the creation of a **specialised European immigration office** and the recognition of migration policy as a competence of the European Union.

Change 14 — Preserving the specificities (food labels, artisanal production, traditions) of the different European regions, in order to avoid uniform lifestyles and ensure traceability and quality of products

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe in which the interests of each state prevail

What does this change mean?

Keywords: European labels, valuing the diversity of cultures and traditions

The ambition of this change is to preserve the **diversity of European traditions and productions** and to **avoid the standardisation** of lifestyles, often referred to as criticism of the European Union.

What are the key steps and success criteria?

For citizens, the main aim is to make the existing database listing the various **European and national labels** more accessible. To do this, the creation of a “*three-click*” website is proposed: one click to access the site, a second to display a map of the regions of the European Union and one to show the description of the labels of each region.

The success of this change would consist of enhanced **communication** around existing achievements, resulting in a better **understanding** of the diversity of European cultures on the part of citizens.

Second part: presentation of the results of the “Words to Youth” consultation

The dates of the consultation
from 09/05/2021 to 18/07/2021

Participation figures
50008 participants
2,918 proposals
338330 votes

The “Walk to Youth” consultation was launched at the initiative of the State Secretariat for European Affairs. This consultation takes place in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, an unprecedented participatory democracy exercise led by the European institutions, whose objective is to enable all European citizens to express their views on what they expect from the European Union. The lessons of the consultation will feed into the work of the Conference on the Future of Europe and the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

4 main lessons

1. A massive mobilisation of young people: more than **50,000 young French citizens** took part in the consultation, across all territories.
2. **The most important consensus concerns European policies to combat climate change, the relocation of production to Europe, the revitalisation of European democracy, the weight of the EU in the world (economy, research, human rights, diplomacy).**
3. **The idea of a more powerful and united Europe goes through the whole consultation, reaching consensus on several points:**
 - A stronger Europe economically (especially through relocation) to cope with China or the United States
 - A diplomatic Europe that weighs more on the international scene
 - A Europe leader in the fight against climate change in the world
 - A Europe brought together by its youth
 - A united Europe in research and innovation
4. **Four complementary ideas** to those from the citizens’ panels were also welcomed by young people:
 - An environmentally and socially responsible European economy
 - A Europe geographically more connected by rail
 - A fiscally fairer Europe
 - Strong action by the European Union in support of women’s rights

22 popular ideas and 13 controversial ideas spread across the 9 themes of the Conference on the Future of Europe

*The **acclaimed ideas** are based on the proposals mostly supported by the participants in the consultation. The proposals acclaimed are the proposals that attract the most support, they capitalise on average **79 % of ‘votes for’**.*

*The **controversial ideas** are based on the proposals most debated by the participants in the consultation, with a balance between votes for and against. The controversial proposals are the most highly debated proposals of the consultation, capitalising on average **40 % of ‘votes for’, 38 % of ‘votes against’**.*

The analysis of these proposals identified 22 acclaimed ideas and 13 controversial ideas. These 22 acclaimed ideas and the 13 controversial ideas were divided into 9 axes corresponding to the main themes of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Synthesis of acclaimed and controversial ideas

Climate change and environment			
Putting in place a stronger European ecological policy	Moving towards a more sustainable agriculture	Acting more strongly for the protection of biodiversity	
Developing rail transport in the EU	Accelerate the energy transition	Limiting packaging and improving waste management	
Raising awareness of the environment	Promoting eco-responsible construction processes	Investing more in nuclear power	
European democracy			
Better communicate about the role and work of the EU	Changing the democratic functioning of the European Union	Fight against disinformation	
Making Europe a Federation	Leave more autonomy to the Member States	Building stronger European executive power	
Giving young people a place in the European institutions			
Economy, social justice and employment			
Relocating production to Europe for more autonomy	Making business practices and trade more responsible	Fighting tax evasion and optimisation	
Harmonising European wages	Establishing a universal income	Reorienting Europe towards an anti-capitalist model	
Education, culture, youth and sport		Digital transformation	
Enabling young people to exchange more with other EU countries	Encourage the learning of non-English languages	Investing in scientific, digital and environmental research	Raise awareness of digital technology and its dangers
Making European stays compulsory for young people		Developing cryptocurrencies in Europe	
Values and rights, rule of law, security		Health	
Strengthening EU action to respect human rights	Strengthening women's rights	Investing in Health	Improve the quality of our food products
The EU in the world		Immigration	
Making the EU able to weigh internationally	Creating a European Armed Force	Reducing or accompanying immigration in Europe	

Predominant idea (> 10 acclaimed proposals)

Singular idea (<10 acclaimed proposals)

Controversial idea (> 3 controversial proposals)

Conclusion

“In a word, for you, Europe in 2035 will have to be...”:



Response of the citizens of the national conference to the final question:

In a nutshell, for you, Europe in 2035 will have to be...

II C National Panels: Germany

National Citizens' Panel on the Future of Europe in Berlin

— Citizens' recommendations —

Germany held its National Citizens' Panel on the Future of Europe on 5, 8, 15 and 16 January. The citizen selection process followed the stratified random selection of participants in the European Citizens' Panels. 12,000 German citizens were invited to participate; of the respondents, some 100 were selected, taking into account the current census data of the Federal Republic of Germany, in order to reflect the diversity of German society and the population as a whole. During the National Citizens' Panel, participants discussed five themes: the EU in the world; a stronger economy; climate change and the environment; social justice; European values and the rule of law. They then developed concrete recommendations for each of these themes, which were adopted at the final plenary session on 16 January:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=cefqmarZXzY

Round Table 1:

Linking foreign trade interests to climate policy measures

We recommend that the EU (in particular the European Commission) launch an investment package for climate-friendly technologies and innovations, including funding programmes. This package of measures should be financed by climate-related import duties, which would be specifically affected and passed on as financial compensation for climate damage. In this context, a system of points for assessing sustainability would be put in place for certain products. A clear EU position and a strong and innovative Europe would contribute to achieving the global climate goals. This would help to consolidate the role of the European Union as a global pioneer and responsible model, which guarantees wealth and can lead to sustainable change on a global scale. These goals are important to us, as the EU makes a sustainable contribution to the fight against climate change, which could, in the long term, play a key role in consolidating global peace.

Round Table 2:

Create incentives to implement production in the EU, in particular with regard to commodities

In order to facilitate the production of commodities in the EU, we recommend speeding up and standardising approval procedures, reducing bureaucracy and granting subsidies to companies moving into the EU and/or establishing production sites in the EU. The EU should massively promote renewable energy in order to reduce energy costs.

Through these measures, we want to shorten supply chains and make them more climate-friendly, help strengthen the EU and create jobs in which human rights are respected.

These objectives are important to us because the relocation of production to the EU would make the EU more autonomous internationally, and less politically vulnerable.

Round Table 1:

Digi-Score — a point system for a strong EU-wide digital economy

We propose the establishment of a publicly accessible digital dashboard, called Digi-Score, managed by the European Commission (DG CNECT). This would be a precise ranking system to indicate and compare the current level of digital maturity of EU companies. With this proposal, we want to encourage more digitalisation across Europe. Companies with a low digital score would be entitled to targeted support to help them catch up.

This objective is important to us as it would help pave the way for increased productivity, efficiency and sales, thereby strengthening Europe's role as a basis for production.

Round Table 2:

Information platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience at EU level

We recommend that the EU set up an information platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience at EU level. Our aim is to share information on existing transnational education and training activities in the EU, to present examples of best practices and to give citizens the opportunity to present new ideas for cross-border exchanges. In addition, additional information could be provided on available technical expert forums (e.g. on energy, environment or digital transition).

We believe this is important because citizens need transparency regarding the cross-border education and training activities that are available. They should receive better guidance at EU level on existing forums and platforms.

Round Table 1:

Product Life Guarantee Regulation

We recommend that the EU adopt legislation to establish an extended, guaranteed and specific life span for each product manufactured and sold in the EU, and to be transparent with consumers in this regard.

Resources are limited and this would save money and reduce waste, which would benefit the environment, the climate and consumers.

We want to encourage manufacturers to bring more durable and repairable products to the market.

Round Table 2:

Long-term EU campaign for sustainable consumption and lifestyle

We recommend that a European body, including branches in EU countries, have own resources and lead this campaign.

Our aim is to ensure that all EU citizens recognise themselves in a common identity, become more aware of the need for sustainable consumption and lifestyle and adopt this way of life.

These goals are important to us because we want to awaken an intrinsic motivation for a sustainable lifestyle.

*Round Table 1:***Creating more exchange opportunities for students in Europe**

We recommend that the European Union adopt, in addition to the Erasmus programme, a regulation on an exchange programme for pupils and students between the ages of 14 and 25, regardless of their origin, gender and level of education. This exchange programme should be systematically set up and promoted by schools at local level. Each student should have the opportunity to participate in the exchange program at any time of their schooling. To this end, the European Commission should submit a proposal to the European Parliament and the European Council.

Our aim is to give students, regardless of their academic performance and the financial support of their parents, the opportunity to participate in exchange programmes throughout Europe. A culture of European exchanges should be fostered from school age. Above all, it is important that exchange programmes are easily accessible and free from red tape. Through this exchange programme, we want to establish European solidarity and reduce language barriers. In this context, equity in education and participation in education must be borne in mind in order to strengthen intercultural and communication skills.

These objectives are important to us as they can help promote European cohesion, strengthen respect and cooperation and convey European values from an early age, so that Europe's diversity can be seen as an opportunity.

*Round Table 2:***Establishment of a basic wage specific to employment**

We recommend that the European Commissioner for Employment and Social Rights submit to the European Parliament a proposal to set up a basic wage specific to employment in all Member States. This basic wage should consist of a minimum income sufficient to ensure subsistence and a specific complement to employment.

Our aim is to ensure that professional performance and wages are comparable across the EU, in order to strengthen social justice. This objective is important to us as it would ensure that the labour market respects a fundamental EU principle: comparable living and working conditions, regardless of a person's place of residence and occupation.

Round Table 1:

Embodying European values and communicating them by appealing to emotions

We recommend making European values more concrete and communicating with more emotions. We could achieve this, for example, by means of a 'integration' package covering the media, interactive elements and greater citizen participation.

Our goal is for everyone living in the EU to know and embrace common values.

This goal is important to us because it forms the basis for our coexistence within our community of values. These values are too little known because the personal link is lacking. We need to make this connection.

Round Table 2:

Life in the EU

We recommend that the EU set up its own education and information television programme to raise awareness among all EU citizens of our shared values and ensure easy and unhindered access to this information for all. These goals are important to us because we want to better understand public opinion in each of the EU countries. In this way, we want to strengthen common ground and help bring citizens together to promote greater solidarity and train them in the rule of law in order to preserve democracy.

II D National Panels: Italy

Citizens' Panel to make recommendations for the
Conference on the Future of Europe, 11-12
March 2022

Summary report

Rome, 16 March 2022



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1. Guiding principles for the process of organising the panel

The whole process of implementation of the panel was designed to be in line with the guidance contained in the guidelines for national citizens' panels in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe. More specifically:

- **Purpose:**

All those invited to participate in the panel completed a participation questionnaire containing the objectives and purposes of the project, with specific references to the Conference on the Future of Europe, the topics covered and the modalities of participation.

- **Transparency:**

All documents presenting the initiative were made available to participants by various means, always referring to the official website of the conference. The documents were sent by email to all participants.

- **Inclusiveness:**

The invitation to participate was sent through different channels: for example, email to **SWG** community members and share the link to the application form via Twitter and LinkedIn. This resulted in a total of more than 400 accesses to the application form and 245 applications. The (random) selection of participants was carried out in such a way as to guarantee the presence of different people of gender, age, social origin, place of residence and professional status.

- **Representativeness:**

Although the sample size is not representative in the statistical sense, the sample was designed to achieve maximum heterogeneity among participants in order to reproduce a microcosm of the target audience.

- **Information:**

All participants received a wide range of information on the conference and on the topics discussed during the panel. The objectives and modalities of the project were recalled to the participants in the introductory part, in accordance with the principles of neutrality and completeness. All participants were given the opportunity to request more information and details about the event through the direct telephone numbers of the project managers within **SWG**.

- **Deliberation groups:**

The main objective of the whole process was to formulate concrete recommendations, widely shared by the participants, to be addressed to the European Union. The way in which the work was organised and the groups led resulted in a process focusing on the collection of participants' indications, their treatment and synthesis, as well as their verification and validation by the groups themselves during a subsequent working session.

- **Calendar:**

A relaxed atmosphere was created during the working sessions, giving participants all the time necessary to deepen the themes on which they had been invited to deliberate, express their views and listen to those of others. For the same reason, it was decided to divide the two main groups into two subgroups. In addition, the work was spread over two days to allow the ideas formulated to be based.

- **Follow-up:**

On the last day, all groups carried out the verification and validation of the first draft recommendations made during the first phase of the work. Once the report on the results was submitted to the European Policy Department of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the authorisation thereto, the final version of the recommendations was forwarded to all panel participants. In any case, participants were invited to continue to monitor the conference's activities on the website and through the updates to be published.

- **Integrity:**

The entire work process was conducted independently by the **SWG**, depending on the mission received. The European Policy Department of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers was continuously informed about the various stages of the initiative and the results.

- **Protection of privacy:**

The privacy of participants was fully guaranteed. In order to be eligible to participate in the panel, all candidates had to sign the informed consent form required by law.

- **Rating:**

At the end of the process, a questionnaire was sent to all participants to assess their experience. The results are summarised in this report.

2. Selection of participants and modality of participation

Selection

The objective of the pre-event communication phase was to select at least 50 Italian citizens interested in participating in the initiative.

To this end, a short self-application form was created in the form of a questionnaire to be completed online on the **SWG** platform, through which all those interested in participating in the initiative were able to apply, indicating the data needed to be inserted into the groups from which participants were randomly selected. The necessary conditions for participation were: have an internet connection, a device equipped with a microphone and a video camera, as well as sign the conference charter.

The application form was distributed on social networks from **SWG**'s accounts. To this end, six posts were posted on Twitter and one on LinkedIn, with the following results:

Social network	Dates	Number of views	Access to the application form
 Twitter	6 posts between 8 and 10 March	889	31
 LinkedIn	1 post on 8 March	410	25

At the same time, members of the **SWG** community were invited to apply, in line with an invitation strategy aimed at ensuring maximum representativeness of the Italian population, not only in terms of social characteristics, but also in terms of ideas, cultural orientations and values.

Applications could be submitted between 8 March at 8 a.m. and 10 March 2022 at 4 p.m. In total, the process generated 420 access to the application form and 225 full applications were received.

A total of **140** persons were actually eligible, of which 70 were selected on the basis of a criterion to ensure a balanced presence in terms of gender, geographical distribution, age and educational

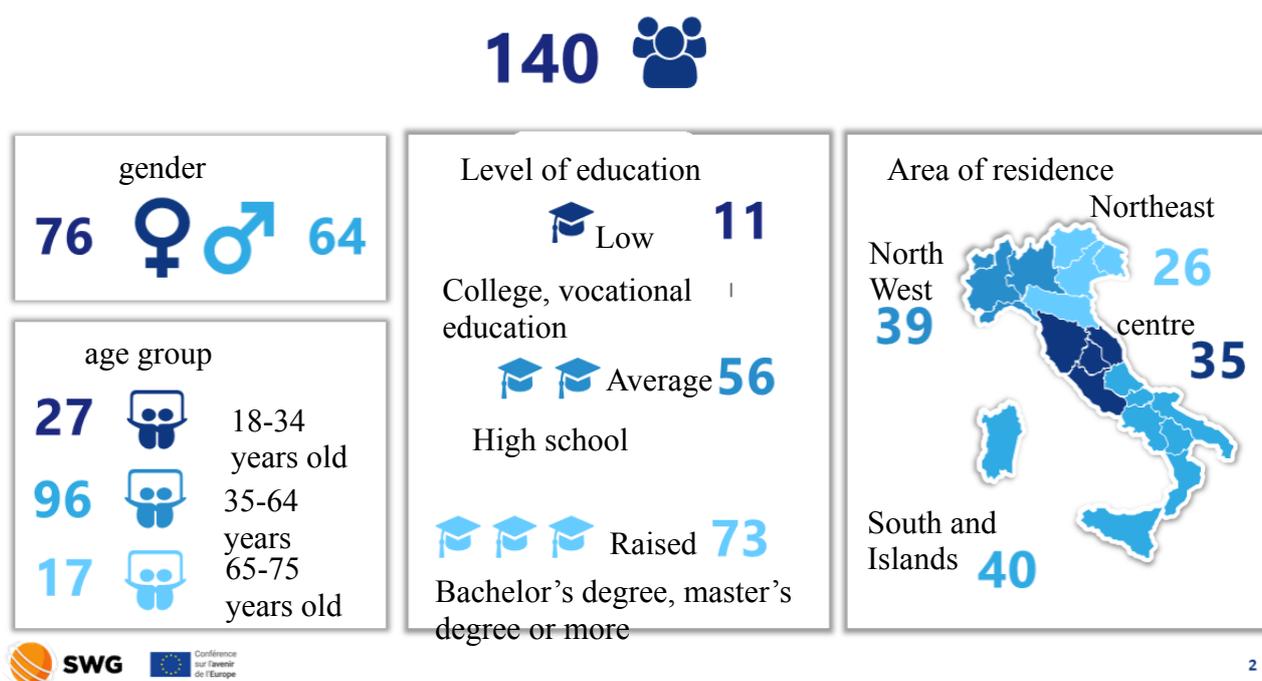
attainment.

In the context of the selection procedure, particular attention was paid to the principle of fair probability in selecting participants, accompanied by procedures based on a random criterion.

The random nature of the selection was a central element of the project to ensure the fairness of the access process. However, in the spirit of the initiative, it seemed important to put in place a strategy aimed not only at involving as many people as possible, but also at ensuring maximum heterogeneity of the people selected in order to promote maximum inclusiveness.

In summary, the distribution of eligible persons was as follows:

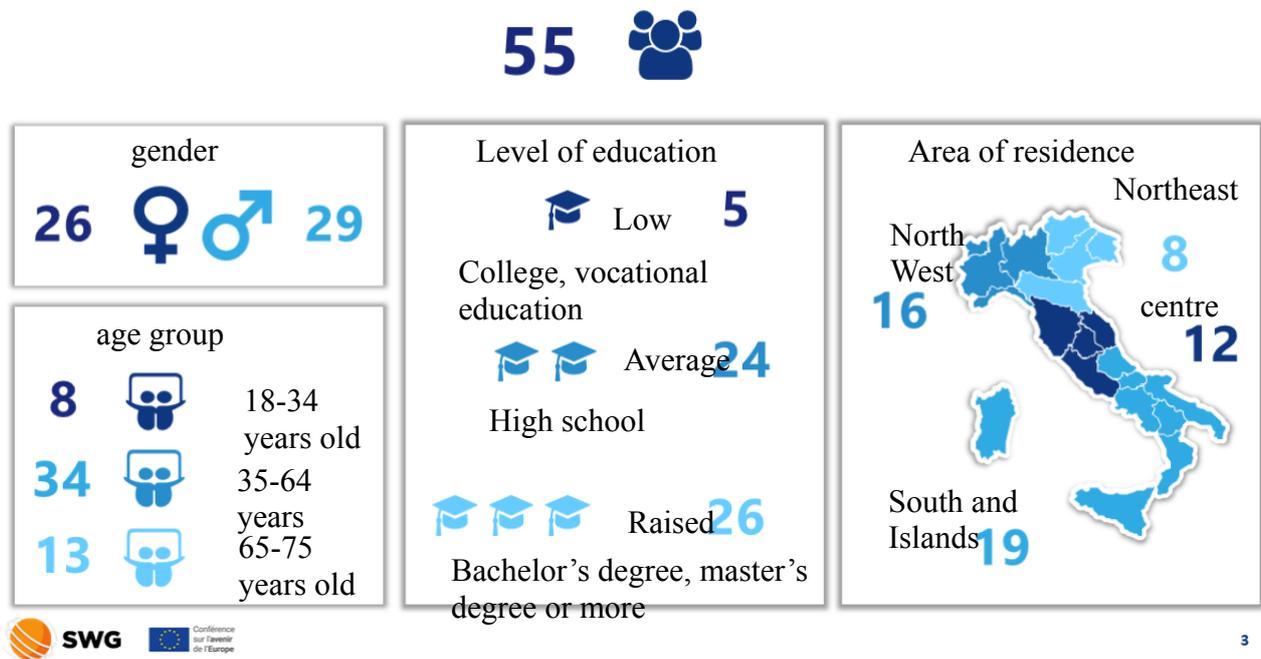
Distribution of eligible candidates



Once the 70 candidates were selected, on the very morning of the event, they received a phone call to confirm their participation. These calls were made by the **SWG** contact centre using the CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Survey) method. At the end of this phase, a total of 59 persons confirmed their participation and were registered. **Of these, 55 actively participated in the panel.**

The social and age group distribution of the panel members was as follows:

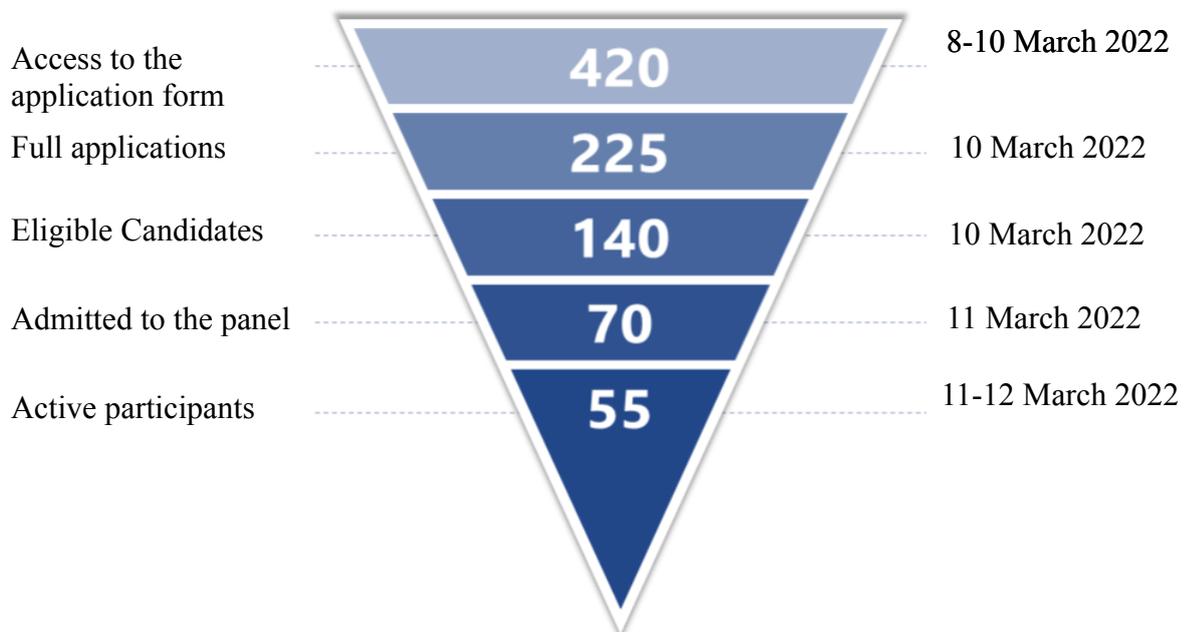
Distribution of active participants



3

Here are the results of the selection process steps:

The application process



Communication equipment

In order to ensure a high level of motivation and participation from the outset, the following documents were made available to all participants:

- **the presentation sheets of the Conference on the Future of Europe and the national panels;**
- **the Charter of the Conference on the Future of Europe;**
- **the topics to be discussed during the panels;**
- **technical and organisational information necessary for participation.**

3. Organisation of the panel

In order to allow maximum participation, including persons with professional commitments, the panel was organised over two consecutive half-days, including one on weekends, according to the following timetable:

- **Friday 11 March from 4 to 8 p.m.**
- **Saturday 12 March from 10 am to 12 pm**

This choice was intended, on the one hand, to facilitate the participation of workers in the initiative and, on the other hand, to split the attendance time to encourage greater attention and participation, as well as further reflection on the themes and proposals presented. Panel participants connected to the two working sessions using the GoToMeeting platform and were divided into four groups (two for each thematic area), led by an **SWG** moderator and assistants of a person responsible for writing the proceedings. The moderators facilitated the groups through two different avenues for discussion (one for each thematic area), with the aim of involving as much as possible all the people selected and ensuring an approach based on maximum inclusion and neutrality.

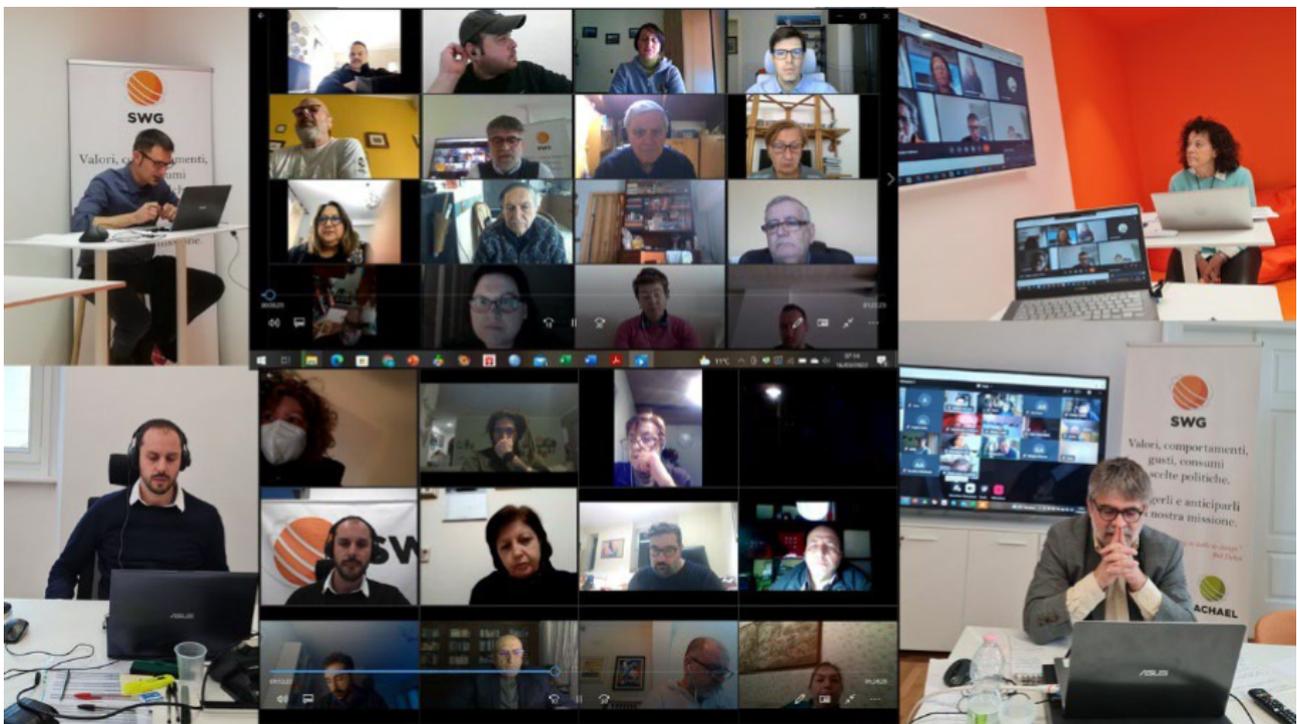
4. Programme of work

First session (Friday 11 March 2022)

- 00 p.m. — Opening of the virtual room and the possibility for participants to connect to the platform to check the proper functioning of their audio and video systems.
- 16:00 — Introduction by moderator: explanation of the reasons behind the initiative and description of the structure of the work.
- 15 p.m. — Distribution of participants in groups based on the preferences indicated during the application phase.
- 16:20 — Start of the group discussion.
- 20.00 p.m. — End of session.

Second session (Saturday 12 March 2022)

- 10 a.m. — Resumption of work by reading the results of the work of the first day.
- 10.15 a.m. — Continued discussion, in-depth discussions and comments from participants.
- 12.00 — Conclusion of work.



5. Recommendations made

A stronger economy, social justice and employment

1. Overcoming the production model of the past century

Panel participants felt that the latest global events (the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine) ostensibly demonstrated the limitations of the current European production model and highlighted the need to revisit an approach that many describe as “belonging to the past century”.

Evidence of Europe’s dependence on imports of energy and food from countries outside the European Union, as well as the discovery (during the pandemic) that we are not able to produce alone the amount of medical devices and vaccines needed to combat the spread of the virus, has given rise to the impression that our economic system is suffering from structural weakness due to a lack of self-sufficiency.

At the same time, participants clearly believe that a stronger economy, capable of creating jobs in a context of social justice, must be able to acquire important technological assets. In order to do this, it is essential to support an education system with ever-increasing attention to STEM-related subjects.

Technological innovation, sustainable energy, but also tourism and culture appear to be three fundamental axes for the development of the European economy of tomorrow, with particular emphasis on maintaining basic production in order to avoid the risk of excessive dependence on third countries on the supply of essential products and raw materials.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

1. Take effective action on climate change and alternative energy.
2. Invest in the tourism and cultural economy, also valuing the many small destinations in Europe.
3. Focus on technology and innovation as drivers of growth.
4. Reduce dependencies on other countries on raw materials, energy sources and agriculture.
5. Encourage young people to study scientific subjects.

2. Generative and inclusive production regulations

To overcome the economic logic of the past century, it is also necessary to review the rules and procedures that govern business activities. There are four recommendations in this sense, all of which respond to a common logic: on the one hand, the simplification of the rules and, on the other hand, the maintenance of a high level of vigilance against wrongdoing (in particular as regards counterfeiting and unfair competition).

Great attention is paid to the need for economic rules that are primarily generative, reducing as much as possible the choices that require standardisation of production processes (threatening specific local productions with deep cultural roots), but also the destruction of agricultural goods

due to the need to maintain predefined quantities of production.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Reduce bureaucracy (authorisations, certifications).**
- 2. Reduce the standardisation of products and recognise local and regional specificities in terms of culture and production (respect for production traditions).**
- 3. Exceed the logic of quotas in agricultural production and the resulting destruction of surplus production.**
- 4. Fight against counterfeiting and unfair competition.**

3. Measuring growth against happiness in the population rather than the quantity of products

Going beyond the production model of the past century does not only mean changing production methods, but also developing a new culture in which growth indicators are not only focused on the quantity of goods produced, but also on the ability to guarantee citizens an objective of happiness. In this new economy, goods cannot be the focal point of considerations in terms of impact and investment, but this place must return to people. This involves moving from a system of indicators based on the quantity of goods produced (GDP) to a system capable of measuring the welfare produced for people (BIB — gross domestic happiness).

RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

- 1. Develop an economy more focused on the production of happiness (gross domestic happiness) than on goods (gross domestic product).**

4. Greater integration among States

What is clear to everyone, even among those who are less satisfied with the current organisation and the results achieved so far by the European Union, is that a monetary union is not enough and that Europe must be able to evolve with increasing strength as a coherent political entity capable of negotiating with one voice outside and acting with greater solidarity internally. A stronger union is an essential aspect of strengthening the political, trade and productive strength of the European Union: the homogeneity of fundamental laws as well as an integrated and coherent system of taxation of businesses and citizens, in which wages and services to citizens are aligned. Only in this way will we have a Europe that can reduce social differences and promote quality of life. This means not going back on the achievements of recent years and preserving the concept of the welfare state, which panel participants have identified as the most advanced in the world and the most concerned about ensuring equality of opportunity and social justice for its citizens.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Do not compromise on social rights (public health, public education, labour policies).**
- 2. Consolidate what has been done with regard to the single currency and the interconnection of payment systems and telecommunications.**

However, today, everything that has been done in the past seems no longer sufficient, and the Europe of the future must make a decisive leap forward in terms of integration between Member States, according to an internal vision that is no longer based on competition, but on cooperation, ensuring that every European citizen can have the same systems of guarantees and opportunities in all the Member States of the Union.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Go beyond the selfishness of states and the tendency to seek individual benefits at the expense of others.**
- 2. Establish a system with the same laws, tax systems, rights and duties in all countries.**
- 3. Coordinated tax regimes between different states, in particular with regard to businesses (no free zones or low taxation).**
- 4. Consistent prices for products and the guarantee of equal purchasing power between different states.**
- 5. Reduce wage disparities between different states and geographical regions within the same country.**
- 6. Make the public debt of several Member States a common responsibility.**

5. Inclusion policies

A just Europe capable of offering happiness to its citizens is an inclusive Europe, which always pays great attention to the fight against inequality. The recommendations set the way forward to achieve long-standing goals (such as gender equality) and set out new requirements related to the cultural transformations of contemporary societies (digital inequality and the right to live in a healthy environment).

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Achieving full gender equality, including by strengthening paternal parental leave and childcare facilities.**
- 2. Tackling digital inequalities.**
- 3. Ensure that all European citizens can live in a healthy and sustainable environment.**
- 4. Ensure opportunities for social mobility and therefore have every opportunity for personal development and self-determination.**
- 5. Promote the renewal of generations at all levels.**
- 6. Manage the reception of refugees and migrants in a balanced manner between different states.**

Once again, the role of schools and educational policies seems to be central, not only to provide young people with the skills they need to enter the labour market, but also to build a European culture. After building a Europe of institutions, it is essential to build a Europe of Peoples. In this regard, emphasis is placed on the centrality of a common language in order to enable dialogue between citizens of different countries and equal access to services. As Esperanto's dream collapsed, the UK's departure from the European Union raised doubts about the possibility of adopting English as a common language, a key language of international relations and within the scientific and economic system.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Promote the adoption of a common language.**
- 2. Invest in the schools and teaching of European history rather than in each nation, as well as in the teaching of political economy and civic education.**
- 3. Access to culture, education and exchanges between students and citizens of different Member States.**

Inclusion policies play a key role in ensuring that citizens have access to opportunities. In this regard, the panel participants stressed that Italy was often unable to use the EU funds made available for this purpose. Inclusion and accessibility mean that the European institutions need to be closer to their citizens and these concepts go hand in hand with more information and awareness about the rights enjoyed by European citizens as such. From this point of view, the importance of a direct relationship between the EU institutions and citizens has emerged, without necessarily having to be mediated by the Member States.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Promote the use of EU funds to reduce inequalities.**
- 2. Accessibility and proximity of the European institutions to citizens.**
- 3. Clearly communicate to citizens their rights and opportunities and promote direct citizens' access to them.**

6. Employment

The issue of employment has emerged on an ongoing basis as a cross-cutting element and a direct effect of the European Union's ability to respond to its recommendations. During the debate **between** the participants, it was clear that the issue of employment is at the heart of citizens' lives, but that it goes hand in hand with the strengthening of economic and social justice issues. A European Union in which active labour policies remain central and increasingly coordinated is highly anticipated.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Promote trade between workers in Europe through a European Employment Centre.**
- 2. Have integrated employment policies at EU level.**
- 3. Provide incentives for companies that offer jobs.**

Europe in the world

Recent international events and, in particular, the war between Russia and Ukraine have had a major influence on the perception of the role that Europe will have to play at the international level. The recommendations collected focused mainly on strengthening the EU (both in terms of identity and economic power) and positioning it as a reference and recovery model in its relations with other countries.



1. Strengthening European identity

In order to be recognised beyond its borders, the European Union must first show cohesion internally, not only economically and financially, but also in terms of identity and values. An identity that is not created by approval but by the valorisation of local specificities within a framework of shared essential values.

The reflection on a possible enlargement of the Union's scope was also carried out with this in mind: according to some panel participants, it should not take place in an undifferentiated way, but rather focusing on the mutual recognition of culture and values rather than on economic standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Strengthening European cultural values and characteristics, as well as regional specificities.**
- 2. Creation of an institute for European culture to promote a culture of respect and mutual enrichment between citizens of different states.**
- 3. Redefinition of the principles of belonging for the new candidate countries, with a strengthening of factors such as cultural identity and values.**

2. Strengthening the economy and institutions

Tomorrow's Europe is expected to play a leading role at international level, which can only be assumed with a strong and independent Union from other countries. It is widely recognised that EU countries are poor in raw materials, but it seems essential that the EU is able to ensure greater independence in terms of energy supply, agriculture and technological products.

This requires specific investments to catch up in areas such as technology (where the European Union does not seem to play a leading role at present), but also in the food and energy sectors.

The war between Russia and Ukraine has also put at the centre of the debate the importance of an integrated European defence policy, with a specific identity and greater autonomy from NATO, without questioning its membership.

Finally, this implies clear choices for the future accompanied by a significant investment in science and research in order to increase the skills of young Europeans.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Strengthening internal production capacity: food chain (especially wheat) and technology (microprocessors).**
- 2. Promote typical regional and European productions.**
- 3. Strengthen European industrial clusters (e.g. steel).**
- 4. Strengthen local energy production from an ecological perspective (gas, solar, wind).**
- 5. Develop aerospace technologies.**
- 6. Setting up European scientific laboratories (European virus bank).**
- 7. Create a common European army acting within the framework of NATO, but also helping to go beyond.**
- 8. Invest in the training of trainers (European teacher exchanges, Erasmus for teachers).**
- 9. Increase the mobility of European researchers by developing new European scientific institutions.**
- 10. Foster the emergence of innovative start-ups.**

3. Cooperation and partnerships

The vision of the Europe of tomorrow is not that of a fortress defending its wealth, but of a protagonist on the international stage capable of dialogue with all the countries of the world. A dialogue that starts from a trading power and should aim for economic leadership, and that can be consolidated through the establishment of large-scale international partnerships and projects.

All this with a view to cooperation and attention to the most fragile regions of the world, with ad hoc projects aimed at highlighting the poorest countries, as well as cultural and economic exchanges with the Eastern countries.

Particular attention is also paid to the topic of migration, with better coordination between countries and the use of common procedures for the management of applications and individuals.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Boosting exports.**
- 2. Promote transnational European tourist routes.**
- 3. Develop a trading system of negotiations at European level (not individually as states or companies, but as a Union) to have greater negotiating power, but with constraints related to respect for human rights.**
- 4. Lead major international projects such as the International Space Station.**
- 5. Finance projects in Africa to build schools and hospitals, without adopting a colonial-style attitude, but focusing on respecting European values and rights.**
- 6. Invest in on-site training (especially for women) in the poorest countries.**
- 7. Promote exchanges of technicians and trainers.**

8. Establish a system of common rules for migrants' access, with different processes between humanitarian and economic migration, and with an equitable distribution between different states, but with common rules (census and control of behaviour and employment).

4. Political and cultural reference

In the scenario described above, Europe is expected to provide a clear political and cultural reference at the global level from the point of view of rights and ethics, setting an example through decision-making to ensure a healthy environment, respect for people's rights and dialogue between East and West.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

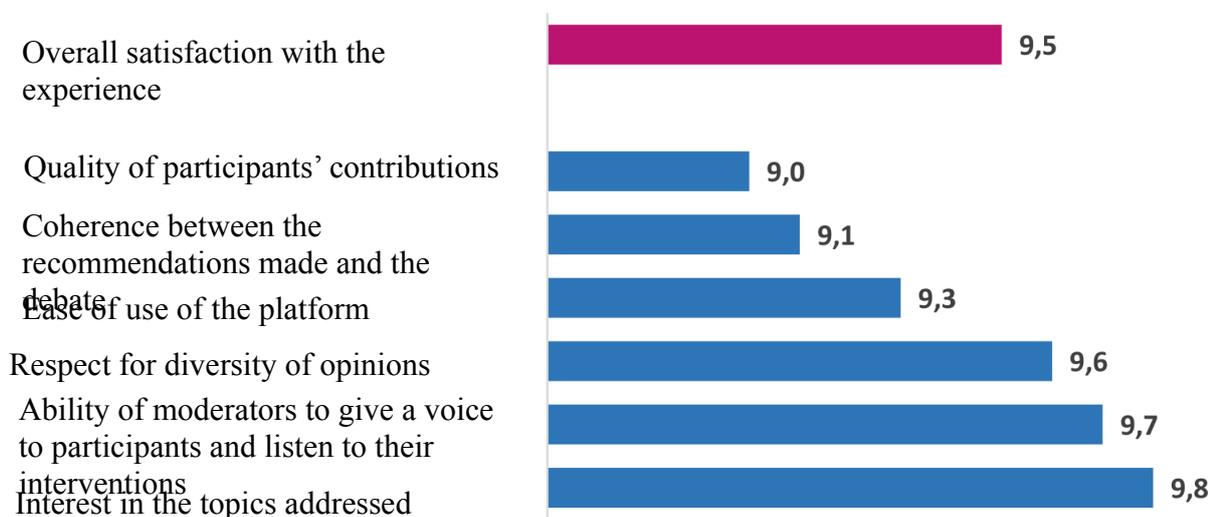
- 1. Lead the way as a green continent, achieve zero emissions before others and increase clean energy production (wind and solar).**
- 2. Export technologies to produce zero-impact goods.**
- 3. Serve as a confluence (public place, agora) between East and West, promoting cultural exchanges and joint cultural initiatives (such as World Art Days, to be organised in turn in the various European capitals, with an artistic programme including Western and Eastern artists).**
- 4. Create a European ethical model for managing migration processes that can be shared internationally.**

6. Final evaluation by participants

At the end of the two working days, all participants were asked to complete a short questionnaire to assess their experience. The evaluation questionnaire was sent two days after the end of the panel in order to give all participants time to take a step back from the experience and to be able to respond more objectively.

The results collected reveal a particularly high level of satisfaction, both in terms of interest and ease of participation and a sense of listening and inclusion.

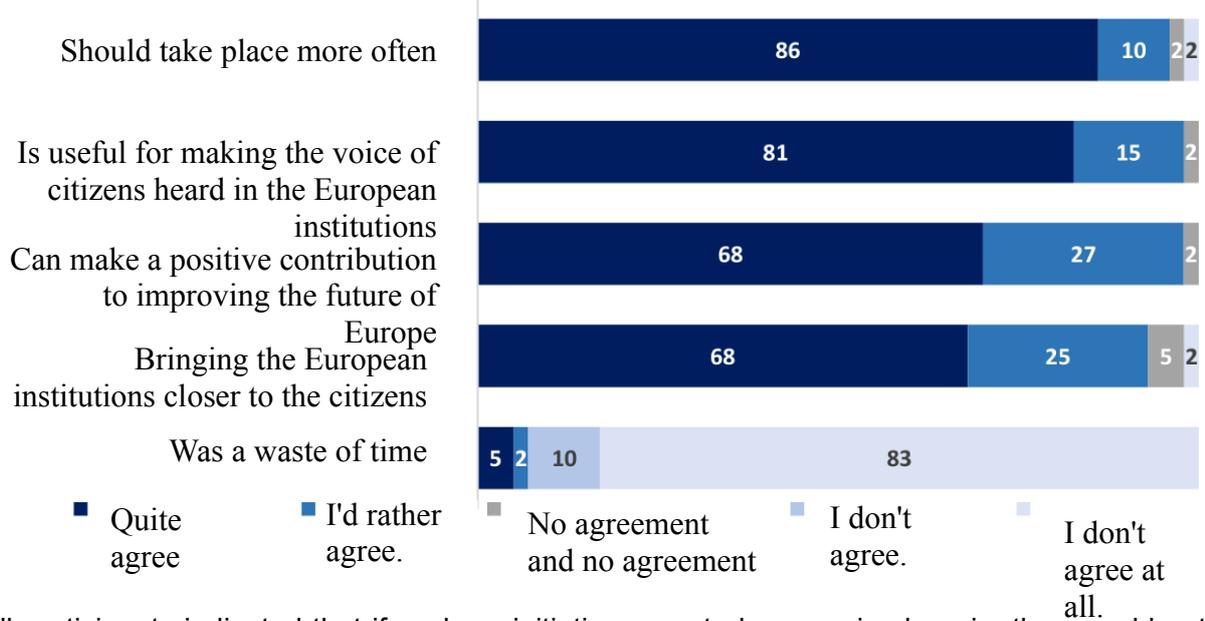
Satisfaction with participation in the panel



Although initially having different experiences, skills and motivations, participants felt strongly involved: 98 % of respondents to the evaluation questionnaire felt that they had actively participated and contributed positively to the debate.

In general, the usefulness of this experience, which has been perceived above all as an opportunity to participate actively and which has given a sense of greater proximity to the European institutions, has been very strongly felt. This led almost all respondents to request that this type of initiative be repeated over time.

EVALUATION OF THE INTEREST OF THE “ITALIAN PANEL FOR THE CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE”



All participants indicated that if such an initiative were to be organised again, they would not only be willing to participate, but would also recommend to their friends to participate.

II E National Panels: Lithuania

Lithuanian Citizens' Panel on the Future of Europe

Report

The present report consists of four parts. The first briefly presents the progress of the event. The second outlines the recommendations made by participants in the Citizens' Panel for EU and Lithuanian policies. The third provides a brief analysis of the discussions in the groups and the main outcomes of the forum. The fourth compares the results of the Citizens' Panel with those of Lithuanian citizens' surveys on the state and future of Europe.

1. Conduct of the National Citizens' Panel

In accordance with the guidelines for the organisation of national citizens' panels in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe, the Kantar TNS LT survey institute developed in December 2021, at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE), a stratified random selection methodology of a representative sample of the Lithuanian population, on the basis of which Kantar TNS selected 25 Lithuanian citizens aged 18 to 65 representing different socio-economic groups and all geographical regions of Lithuania^{xv}.

On 4 January, the selected citizens were invited to a virtual introductory session during which the idea of the National Citizens' Panel was presented and exchanges were held on the topics most relevant to the future of Europe. At the end of the event, participants received a background paper with a detailed description of the topics discussed and sources of information.

On 15 January, a panel of national citizens on the future of Europe was held at the EAW, organised by the EAW's Eastern Europe Study Centre (RESC) and the Kantar TNS LT polling institute, in which 25 selected citizens participated directly.

Participants discussed two issues related to EU policies: **the role and competences that the EU could have in foreign policy**, as well as **the EU's economic role**. At this event, each of these issues was the subject of a separate session at the beginning of which EU policy experts Linas Kojala (RESC) and Ramūnas Vilpišauskas (Professor at Vilnius University) briefly introduced citizens to the topicality and issues of the topic of the session. During the discussion, citizens were able to ask questions and share their views. Following the expert presentations, participants were divided into three smaller representative groups to each reflect on a different issue related to the theme of the session. The foreign policy issues discussed were as follows:

- 1.1. Is there a need for an autonomous EU defence and foreign policy?
- 1.2. What should be the EU's relations with its Eastern European neighbours, North Africa and Turkey?
- 1.3. What should the EU's migration policy be?

The session on the economic role of the EU gave rise to reflection on the following issues:

- 2.1. Is there a need for greater reallocation of funds from the EU budget, from the EU's

XV Sample of citizens representing Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Panevėžys and the districts (apskritis) Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Panevėžys, Alytus, Marijampolė, Tauragė, Telšiai and Utena, based on data from the Lithuanian Department of Statistics (Lietuvos statistikos departamentas).

common debt?

2.2. Should social standards be regulated at EU level?

2.3. How to strengthen the EU economy?

At the end of the session, each group had to formulate the main conclusions of the discussion, make statements of principle or concrete proposals on EU policy concerns. During the discussion with the whole panel, the representative of each group presented these findings to the other participants. Those who had been in other groups were able to ask questions and complete the proposals with their ideas. After the presentations and debates, citizens each voted two among these conclusions, with a vote for the most important proposal or declaration for Lithuania's role in strengthening the EU and the success of the EU even across Europe; and the other vote for the statement or proposal they seem most important in their personal capacity, in their interest as an EU inhabitant. After this vote, a debate took place in the panel, and the main ideas that emerged from the discussions were discussed.

In the week following the event, experts examined the content of the discussions and uncovered the essence of the ideas proposed by citizens. On 25 January a virtual recapitulative session was held and recommendations from the content of their discussions were shared with citizens. Citizens were given the opportunity to say whether they approved the recommendations, to supplement them on the substance and to evaluate them. All participants had this opportunity again one week after the recapitulative session, sending their opinions and comments in writing to the panel organisers.

2. Results of the National Citizens' Panel

This part of the report shows the results of the Citizens' Panel, with the recommendations made by the participants in the working groups and their positions on the role of the EU in foreign policy and the economy.

First session: role and competences of the EU in foreign policy

1. We call on the EU to develop a more effective policy vis-à-vis China. Lithuania needs to be supported more resolutely, but it should also better align its position with that of the EU's partners. In order to ensure that interests can be better balanced within the EU and that there is only one policy vis-à-vis China, as well as on other foreign policy issues, we recommend considering the possibility of establishing an EU Foreign Minister.
2. We recommend putting on the agenda the issue of migrant quotas at EU level.
3. We recommend setting up a dedicated committee at EU level to address migration issues, which would ensure a faster response to migration crises and the right of Member States to explain and defend their national interests, and develop and implement common migration management guidelines.
4. We recommend strengthening economic and humanitarian ties with the countries of North Africa, without losing sight of the political realities, in particular with a view to reducing the influence of China, Russia and other states in the region.
5. We recommend strengthening ties with Eastern Europe and encouraging economic measures at personal level.
6. We insist that the sanctions imposed by the EU on foreign actors be stricter, more targeted and concern important figures of the sanctioned state (e.g. political leaders).
7. We insist that the EU's common foreign and security policy is based on the fundamental principle of solidarity between the different EU Member States and the different European regions and societies.
8. We recommend that the EU review the policy of openness so far on migration, which is causing security problems, an increase in crime, and the establishment of communitarianism in society.

9. We invite Lithuania to speak more actively on migration policy issues and to launch discussions on migration-related issues.
10. We recommend that the EU pursue an active and rigorous policy towards states that use migration flows as a weapon in hybrid attacks: on the one hand by applying stricter sanctions, and on the other hand by dialogue with them with a view to de-escalation.

Second session: the EU's economic role

1. We recommend that the EU strengthen the security of supply of essential goods by various means: prioritising EU internal trade, promoting the production of advanced technologies and further diversifying import sources. We also recommend exploring new export markets.
2. We recommend reviewing the negotiation practices of natural gas contracts, with a view to both short-term and long-term contracts. We recommend further diversification of energy supply sources.
3. We recommend that the Green Deal measures and their implementation be assessed taking into account the potential negative socio-economic impacts. In order to implement the objectives of the Green Deal, we recommend that nuclear energy and natural gas be used in addition to the use of renewable energy sources.
4. We stress that it is particularly important that all Member States respect the principle of the primacy of EU law. We ask with instance that Lithuania has a clear principled position on this issue.
5. We recommend that Lithuania make more active use of good practices from EU countries with the aim of higher social standards, economic expansion and balanced and sustainable development.
6. We recommend that more attention be paid to strengthening cybersecurity, as well as data and infrastructure protection.
7. We recommend that the EU and the Member States prioritise the development of basic economic knowledge among citizens, education and the dissemination of information.
8. We recommend that the new EU trade agreements incorporate ambitious social, labour and health standards. We recommend the establishment at EU level of guidelines on what to do and not have the right to do social media platforms that manage consumers' personal data and information about them.
9. We recommend further reflection on the possibility of joint borrowing at EU level in order to obtain the best possible borrowing conditions. We also recommend developing a financially sound and responsible policy to reduce the need for indebtedness for Member States.
10. We recommend strengthening the monitoring of the absorption and use of EU funds, helping local authorities to establish a real practice of adjusting the use of funds. As the objective situation of beneficiaries of EU funds may change, the articulation between transparency and flexibility requirements is of particular importance.
11. We recommend that Lithuania continue to actively promote economic development and investment in the country's regions.

3. Discussions in the National Citizens' Panel and analysis of the results

Participants in the National Citizens' Panel discussed the most important topical issues for Lithuania (largely discussed at national level in the political and media arena) and how to address them. The general vote on the main conclusions of the panel revealed that almost 45 % of all votes cast during the two sessions were devoted to proposals on two themes: relations with China and control of migration flows (see table below). The theme of energy policy has also garnered a lot of attention. It was the subject of only one proposal, but it received the votes of almost 10 % of the participants. The result of these votes suggests that citizens' perception of the future of Europe could be decisive for today's political issues and news (at national level).

Recommendation	Vote
First session: role and competences of the EU in foreign policy	
1. We call on the EU to develop a more effective policy vis-à-vis China. The current support for Lithuania is not sufficient, but Lithuania has also not sufficiently aligned its position with that of the EU partners. In order to ensure that interests can be better balanced within the EU and that there is only one policy vis-à-vis China, as well as on other foreign policy issues, we recommend considering the possibility of establishing an EU Foreign Minister.	11 (22.9 %) important for all of Europe: 8; in a personal capacity: 3
2. We recommend putting on the agenda the issue of migrant quotas at EU level.	9 (18.8 %) important for all of Europe: 9
3. We recommend setting up a dedicated committee at EU level to address migration issues, which would ensure a faster response to migration crises and the right of Member States to explain and defend their national interests, and to develop and implement common migration management guidelines.	7 (14.6 %) important for all of Europe: 3; in a personal capacity: 4
4. We recommend strengthening economic and humanitarian ties with the countries of North Africa, without losing sight of the political realities, in particular with a view to reducing the influence of China, Russia and other states in the region.	6 (12.5 %) important in personal capacity: 6
5. We recommend strengthening ties with Eastern Europe and applying economic measures at the level of people.	5 (10.4 %) important personally: 5
Second session: the EU's economic role	
1. We recommend that the EU take various steps to enhance the security of supply of essential goods: prioritising intra-EU trade, promoting the production of advanced technologies within the EU and further diversifying import sources. We also recommend exploring new export markets.	9 (19.6 %) important for all of Europe: 3; personally: 6
2. We recommend reviewing the negotiation practices of natural gas contracts, with a view to both short-term and long-term contracts. We recommend further diversification of energy supply sources.	9 (19.6 %) important for all of Europe: 9
3. We recommend that the Green Deal measures and their implementation be assessed taking into account the potential negative socio-economic impacts. In order to implement the objectives of the Green Deal, we recommend that nuclear energy and natural gas be used in addition to the use of renewable energy sources.	6 (13 %) important in personal capacity: 6
4. We stress that it is important that all Member States respect the principle of the primacy of EU law. We ask with instance that Lithuania has a clear principled position on this issue.	4 (8.7 %) important for all of Europe: 2; in a personal capacity: 2

In addition, the most important issues for citizens, namely relations with China, migration or energy, are temporary: their resolution will have a fundamental impact on Europe's long-term future. Therefore, the likelihood that citizens thinking about the future will prioritise what is important right now is not problematic. As the construction of the future begins with a multitude of small steps

today, the perception of citizens' expectations in the short term is an essential condition for ensuring a strong long-term control of processes and problem-solving. The analysis below of the main results of the panel of national citizens is based on this observation.

The resolution receiving the highest number of votes (11 or almost 12 %) is that **the EU needs a more effective policy towards China**. This general conclusion covered several more concrete statements. First, participants stressed that at this stage, the EU's support to Lithuania in the face of economic pressure from China had not been sufficient. Secondly, the Group's representatives who communicated the conclusion stressed that Lithuania itself should make greater efforts to harmonise its policy towards China with that of the EU's partners, in particular because it is important for the EU as a whole to continue to engage in trade with China. Thirdly, citizens raised the idea that the coordination of positions and the development of a common policy on China in particular could be more effective if an EU Foreign Minister was established. Eight participants declared this conclusion particularly important for all of Europe, and three others declared it important for them in their personal capacity.

The issue of relations with China is closely linked to two other proposals with a large number of citizens' voices. Nine participants voted in favour of the conclusion reached at the second session that the **EU needs to strengthen security of supply** (three participants indicated this as particularly important for all of Europe, and six others that this is for them in their personal capacity). This conclusion also included several aspects. First, citizens stressed the need to give priority to EU markets characterised by reliable suppliers and products that meet demanding standards. Secondly, participants highlighted the need to encourage high-tech production capacity in Europe itself. Thirdly, citizens expressed support for greater diversification of import sources. In formulating these recommendations, the participants in the discussion consistently referred to China's factor: security threats related to Chinese goods, reliance on Chinese raw materials needed to manufacture advanced technologies, as well as China's practices of copying and stealing technologies from Western companies operating in its market. The proposal to **develop the EU's economic and humanitarian cooperation with the countries of North Africa** also received six votes (important in a personal capacity) on the grounds that in this region it is important to reduce the influence of China as well as Russia and other friendly states.

The results of the vote also reflected citizens' concerns about migration issues. Two of the three most vocal findings in foreign policy were devoted to migration. Nine participants voted in favour of the proposal **that the EU return to the creation of a system of mandatory migrant reception quotas for Member States** (all stressed that this proposal is of particular importance for the whole of Europe). The participants who made this conclusion expressed support for national quotas to be set according to the number of inhabitants, and for EU co-financing to meet the needs of migrants according to these quotas. Seven participants still voted in favour of the proposal **to set up a permanent technical commission at EU level to deal with migration issues, in which representatives of Member States would be seconded** (three participants consider this proposal of particular importance for Europe as a whole, four consider it important for them in their personal capacity). Participants stressed that such a body could enable the EU to respond more quickly to migration crises, while ensuring a balance between adequate respect for general EU principles and the right of Member States to defend their national interests and security.

During the debate on migration policy, participants discussed two distinct crises in the management of migration flows: in 2016, the migration crisis of the Mediterranean Sea, and in 2012 Belarus' hybrid attack on Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, during which Minsk used migrants from flows from the Middle East and Africa. A number of panel participants said that the crisis in 2016 seemed distant and irrelevant, both for Lithuania as a whole and for them in a personal

capacity, and the proposal to set up a quota system for migrants did not seem appropriate to them. According to the participants, the experience of the hybrid attack made the migration issue closer in Eastern Europe, and it forced to approach quotas as an adapted, effective and solidarity-based migration policy tool. Some participants pointed out that, in the midst of the 2021 crisis, it had become difficult to distinguish between those on the country's territory, refugees, migrants and those posing a threat. All participants in the discussion agreed that the current "open" EU migration policy does not sufficiently take into account the threats posed by migration, the national interests of Member States, their ability to integrate migrants, etc. Citizens also criticised the EU for its slowness or lack of response to Lithuania's needs, as well as its refusal to finance the construction of a wall at the external borders.

In summary, it can be said that two elements of Lithuania's hottest news in 2021 — relations with China and managing migration flows — encourage Lithuanian citizens to demand that the EU intervene more and have a more effective common policy. Citizens are concerned about China's policy and its growing influence in Europe and the EU's neighbourhood. It must be recognised that China's economic influence forces Europe to seek appropriate and balanced policy measures. In the opinion of citizens, the main solution is to strengthen the EU's common foreign policy instruments, industrial policy and cooperation with neighbours. Similarly, citizens considered that single action at EU level, as well as a possible new system of migration quotas, was probably the most appropriate way to escape the security threats posed by migration, as well as to control migration flows to Europe quickly and efficiently. In the panel's view, the best response to China's growing pressures and to Belarus' hybrid attack would be to have a deep and strengthened common EU policy.

This opinion on the crises under discussion can be compared to the proposals of the panel participants on energy and climate issues. At the end of 2021, many Lithuanian citizens had to deal directly with rising heating prices, and the energy price crisis quickly proved to be among the most important news for Lithuania. The concern about energy prices is also reflected in the participants' vote: nine citizens even voted for the conclusion that this issue is the most important for all of Europe. The main recommendation of the participants was **to review the current practice of Member States by concluding energy supply contracts with different suppliers, and by endeavouring to conclude them both in the short term and in the long term**. In other words, citizens supported the policy of diversifying energy supply sources, but made no recommendations on general EU policies and did not recommend further integration of energy policies.

On climate policy, citizens recommended **an assessment of the Green Deal measures, taking into account the expected socio-economic impact and ambition**. This proposal received the voice of six participants, each of whom considered it important in a personal capacity. Some participants expressed concern about the too fast pace of the so-called "green transition" and said that Lithuania should assess more carefully whether such a policy would undermine the interests of the country and its citizens. Some participants also revived the need to use not only renewable energy, but also nuclear energy and natural gas. In support of this position, they referred to Germany's decision to continue to use natural gas, as well as the potential of new generation "modular" nuclear reactors. On climate policy, the panel therefore prioritised Member States' policies in line with national needs, not an ambitious EU common policy on climate governance.

Given the relatively small number of participants in the panel and the disparity of citizens' responses (more unity of action or more flexibility) to the various crises, it would be wrong to consider here recapitulative and widely applicable measures. However, this dynamic of expressing opinions can lead to the proposal of topics of interest for future opinion studies of Lithuanian citizens on EU integration issues, in which account should be taken of what citizens say about

autonomous EU policies, changes in institutional arrangements and differences.

4. Results of the Citizens' Panel in the broader context of public opinion in Lithuania

In order to contextualise the results of the National Citizens' Panel, these are briefly compared in the last part with the results of two current opinion surveys as well as with the intermediate results of other preparatory work for the Conference on the Future of Europe. The first part of this report concerns a citizens' [Eu](#) robarometer survey carried out in October and November 2020 on the Conference on the Future of Europe; the second on the latest [standard Eurobarometer](#) carried out in the summer of 2021. To the extent that some of the questions in these studies focused on other political themes and citizens' expectations of the conference itself, a comparison is made below with the issues that were really addressed in the panel. The examination of the results of the preparatory work for the Conference on the Future of Europe was based on the preliminary report of this work prepared by the RESC, which included statements by citizens who participated in the work on different EU policy issues.

The results of the Eurobarometer surveys suggest that the discussions and votes of the participants in the Citizens' Panel reflect fairly well the prevailing views in Lithuanian society. The panel participants' recommendations to strengthen the common foreign and migration policy, by taking part of the decisions at EU level, correspond to the findings of the wider public opinion surveys:

- Lithuanian citizens support the EU's common defence policy more than the EU average (90 % vs. 78 %);
- Lithuanian citizens support the EU's common migration policy more than the EU average (76 % vs. 71 %; this difference is within the margin of error);
- Lithuanian citizens regard migration as one of the two main problems of the EU;
- Lithuanian citizens want more problems to be solved at EU level (49 % vs. 42 %).

Lithuanian citizens who participated in the preparatory events for the Conference on the Future of Europe also stressed the importance of cooperation in the field of defence, and that the EU's common migration policy and EU foreign policy are areas in which Lithuania would benefit from stronger EU intervention.

Eurobarometer data could shed light on panel participants' views on relations with China and energy prices: Lithuanians are more concerned than the EU average about the breakdown of relations between countries around the world and the resulting growing geopolitical tensions (33 % vs. 18 %). The panel's conclusions on the need for a more ambitious policy towards China also overlap with this data, as well as the above-mentioned position in favour of EU-level decision-making and a common EU defence policy. On the other hand, the concern of panel participants about various decisions to reduce energy prices may be related to the fact that Lithuanians are far more concerned than the EU average about rising inflation and rising prices (53 % vs. 23 %). The sensitivity to rising inflation is due to the fact that controlling price increases appears to be more important than general EU policy-making or other policy objectives.

The Eurobarometer data also suggest an interesting development of Lithuanians' perception of the migration issue from a political perspective. In the 2020 survey, Lithuanians cited migration as an important challenge for the future of the EU (16 % versus 27 %) than the EU average; In the 2021 survey, 32 % of Lithuanian respondents considered migration as one of the main problems in the EU (compared to 25 % on average in the EU as a whole). While this change of view may be due to

differences in the formulation of the issue, it overlaps with what the panel participants said in the discussions about the evolution of their views on migration issues.

Furthermore, comparing the results of the Citizens' Panel with Eurobarometer data shows a gap between, on the one hand, a relatively cautious view of the panel participants on EU policy and, on the other hand, a concern of Lithuanian citizens on climate change issues. Although panel participants encouraged to assess whether the Green Deal was not too ambitious and would not harm Lithuania's interests, the Lithuanians, according to Eurobarometer studies, consistently identified climate change as one of the main challenges for the EU. In the 2020 survey, 47 % of Lithuanian respondents considered the climate to be one of the most important challenges for the future of Europe (compared to 45 % on average in the EU as a whole); In the 2021 survey, this was the case for 28 % of Lithuanian respondents (up from 25 % on average in the EU as a whole). It should be noted that citizens who participated in the other preparatory events for the Conference on the Future of Europe also referred to climate policy as one of the areas in which Lithuania would have the most interest in stronger EU intervention. This discrepancy can probably be explained by the motivation of the panel participants' vote: all those who voted in favour of the recommendation to reassess the Green Deal measures identified this as important for them from a personal point of view. In other words, personal opposition would not be inconsistent with a finding that climate change is one of the most important challenges for EU policy.

II F National Panels: Netherlands



Our vision of Europe

Opinions, ideas and recommendations

Themes

- Values and rights, rule of law and security
- A stronger economy, social justice and employment
- European democracy
- Digital transformation
- Education, culture, youth and sport

3 December 2021

This document is a translation of the report entitled "Elven kijk op Europa; Meningen, ideeën en Aanbevelingen" ("Our vision of Europe: opinions, ideas and recommendations"), which was published in Dutch on 3 December 2021 on www.kijkopeuropa.nl. This translation is a simplified version of the report in which the original presentation (illustrations and other graphical elements) has been modified for translation purposes.

Our vision of...

Summary of the report: all recommendations in brief

Through the Citizens' Dialogue organised on the theme "Vision of Europe", we have gathered the views and ideas of Dutch citizens on the future of Europe. This led to the following recommendations to the European Union for the first five themes.

Values and rights, rule of law and security

It is important that the EU protects the rule of law. At the same time, the Dutch believe that attention should be paid to the diversity of traditions and cultures that exist in Europe. Cooperation within the EU can have many benefits in different forms, but it needs to add value to all stakeholders. This also applies to the sharing of security information. Sharing all information quickly renders cooperation ineffective.

1. Ensure that everyone can feel free and safe
2. Enlarge the EU only if it brings added value
3. Cooperation mainly in the fight against international crime and terrorism

A stronger economy, social justice and employment

The Dutch believe that there are many opportunities to strengthen the European economy. But countries cannot always be compared to each other. The tax system, in particular, should be fairer and clearer. And, in Europe, we should focus more on our strengths, such as quality and diversity. In addition, EU countries can cooperate to ensure equal opportunities in the European labour market.

4. Take into account commonalities and differences
5. Making greater use of Europe's strengths
6. Develop a fair and clear tax system
7. Ensuring that everyone can participate

European democracy

The Dutch do not need to know everything about the European Union, but want more transparency and more information. For example, knowing the views of other EU countries can contribute to a better overview. In addition, the Dutch believe that the EU should engage more often and preferably on a permanent basis with citizens. In this regard, it is important not only to take into account the different interests, but also to take decisions faster than is currently the case.

1. Giving a better overview of Europe
2. Find new ways to continuously listen to citizens
3. More transparency and clarity on the decisions taken
4. Ensuring that thorny issues can be resolved more quickly

Digital transformation

Society is increasingly dependent on the internet and big tech companies are becoming more and more powerful. This sometimes worries the Dutch people a lot. It is therefore useful for the EU to develop European (privacy) rules and standards. However, it is important that everyone can understand and apply these rules and standards. The Dutch prefer to receive support and information from the national authorities in their own language.

1. Ensuring a fast, safe and stable internet everywhere
2. Setting clear rules and standards for internet companies
3. Adding implementation and practical explanations to privacy rules

Education, culture, youth and sport

Young people studying abroad should be able to learn more from the host country than they are today. And countries with a lower level of knowledge should not lose all their talents, which go abroad. The Dutch consider that topics such as culture and abuse in sport are issues that should rather be the responsibility of the Member States themselves. And they consider it very important to have one's own national language. In general, in Europe, every person must above all feel free and be able to be himself.

1. Encouraging students to study abroad intelligently
2. Allow Member States to focus on topics such as culture and sport
3. Ensuring that Europeans get to know each other better and respect each other

Introduction

The Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe", held from 1 September to mid-November, allowed all Dutch to express their opinions and ideas on the future of Europe. The Netherlands shall present to the European Union (EU) the recommendations on which the dialogue has led, as well as the ideas and views expressed. In this report, we focus on the first five themes. The other four topics will be addressed in a forthcoming report at the beginning of 2022. ***On the Vision of Europe***

The European Union wants its citizens to share what they think about Europe. That is why the EU is organising the Conference on the Future of Europe. The opinions and ideas of citizens across the European Union will then feed into the plans for the future of Europe. As part of the conference, the Netherlands organised the Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe" at national level.

The Vision of Europe dialogue started on 1 September with the online collection of opinions and ideas through a survey of a representative panel. In order to deepen the initial results of the panel survey and to make concrete recommendations, we organised thematic online dialogues. Anyone who wanted to participate could participate. We also traveled the country to hold discussions with young people and other groups (difficult to reach).

From schoolchildren, vocational secondary school pupils and students to the Minister, farmers and migrants

In October and November, a total of eight online thematic dialogues took place, with an average of 30 participants per meeting. We also organised an online thematic dialogue and seven on-site thematic dialogues with different groups of Dutch citizens. We spoke with the Turkish community in Schiedam and were invited by the Piëzo Foundation volunteers to Zoetermeer. On the latter occasion, Foreign Minister Ben Knapen was also present at the end of the dialogue. The Minister had a discussion with participants about the dialogue and views expressed on the future of Europe. Finally, we organised six meetings with different groups of young people. For example, we were welcomed to a secondary school in Helmond, a vocational secondary school in Doetinchem and the University of Leiden.

I always like to express my opinion in front of the coffee machine. That's why I thought I had to participate.

Participant in Thematic ***Dialogue***

About this report

On the basis of the ideas and opinions we have gathered in recent months, we have drawn up a series of recommendations that Dutch citizens make to the European Union. During the discussions between Dutch citizens, interesting exchanges of views took place and innovative ideas were put forward. Suggestions were also made through the panel and the public inquiry. Some of these ideas have been incorporated into this report. The content of this report is therefore the voice of the Netherlands: our vision of Europe.

Just as there are differences of views between countries and European citizens, we also do not always agree with each other within the Netherlands. These differences of views, precisely, are valuable: they are an important feature of a democracy. The recommendations are drawn from the most frequently expressed ideas and opinions of the participants in the Vision of Europe survey. We also describe concerns, ideas and feelings that may be less widespread, but that have caught our attention during dialogues and the online survey.

It was nice to be able to talk in small groups with supporters and opponents. It's very different from how discussions usually take place on social media.

Participant in the thematic dialogue

Nine themes were identified for the Conference on the Future of Europe. These themes are also at the heart of the Vision of Europe dialogue with Dutch citizens. In October, we published an interim report giving an initial overview of the results and complementary questions based on the panel survey. In this second report, we set out the opinions, ideas and recommendations on the first five topics for the plenary meeting of the Conference on the Future of Europe in December. The following report, which will address the four remaining themes, will be published in mid-January.

Current report — December 2021

- Values and rights, rule of law and security
- A stronger economy, social justice and employment
- European democracy
- Digital transformation
- Education, culture, youth and sport

Next Report — January 2022

- Climate change and environment
- Migration
- Health
- The EU in the world

Next steps

- The Conference on the Future of Europe brings together the ideas, opinions and recommendations of all EU citizens. The meetings will be devoted not only to the results of all citizens' dialogues at national level, but also to the results of other initiatives launched in the context of the conference. For example, there are also panels of European citizens, and all EU citizens (including Dutch citizens) can access a European digital platform.

"It is a good thing that the EU is taking this initiative. I hope that the results will really be taken into account."

Participant in the thematic dialogue

- The conference will end in spring 2022. The Netherlands will then draw up a final report on the Citizens' Dialogue: a compilation of this report and the following report (including other themes). Following the Conference, recommendations will be made to the Conference Chair: the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the European Commission. They committed themselves to exploring ways and means of implementing the recommendations. For the Dutch Government, the results are also a valuable contribution to the development of the Netherlands' European policies.
- In summary, the process until spring 2022 will be organised as follows:

Chronology

Vision of Europe

First seven.	12 October	22/23 October	15 Nov.	17/18 December	21/22 January	22/24 April		
Collecting ideas online								
	Thematic dialogues							
		Intermediate results (intermediate report)		Interim report on “Economics” and “Democracy”	Interim report on “Climate” and “The EU in the world”	Final Report “Our Vision for Europe”		
		≈		≈	≈	≈		
		Meeting of the Conference		Meeting of the Conference	Meeting of the Conference	Closing of the conference	→	Recommendations for Presidents • European Parliament • European Commission • Council of Ministers
				↑	↑	↑		
	More opinions and ideas on the future of Europe:							
Dialogues with citizens			European Citizens’ Panels		European Digital Platform (also for Dutch citizens)			

Explanations to facilitate reading

In this report, we discussed five themes. For each theme, we have included successively:

recommendations based on all aspects of the Citizens’ Dialogue;

overview of opinions, ideas and views exchanged (online and with physical presence) during thematic dialogues and suggestions from the online survey, in words and images.

A description of the methodology used in the survey can be found at the end of this report.

Values and rights, rule of law and security

The EU monitors the rule of law in all EU countries and tries to reduce inequalities within the EU. The EU also wants to protect all Europeans from terrorism and crime. To achieve this, the EU is putting in place measures and rules, and EU countries cooperate intensively.

What is the Netherlands' vision of this?

Recommendations — Our vision of security and the rule of law

68 % of the Dutch believe that security and the rule of law are an important issue and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Ensure that everyone can feel free and safe

78 % of Dutch believe it is important for the EU to protect the rule of law and our fundamental rights and freedoms. And we also attach importance to the protection of consumer rights: the vast majority of citizens believe that it is a good thing that the EU requires manufacturers to include the same information on labels in all countries. However, a large number of Dutch believe that the EU needs to pay attention to differences in (governance) traditions and cultures within Europe. And this, among other things, because, otherwise, it would be difficult to cooperate effectively. We believe it is especially important that everyone feels free and safe in Europe. This includes having a roof over your head, but also education and care. And this also concerns the fact that the products found in European stores are always sure.

2. Enlarge the EU only if it brings added value

44 % of the Dutch do not think that the EU should expand to more countries. 25 %, on the other hand, are in favour of enlargement. We note that there is already a lot of debate between the current Member States. Many Dutch people think that we must first focus on this issue. And if new countries join the Union, they must really be able to meet our conditions. Today and in the future. Many Dutch consider that the current Member States must also perceive the added value of enlargement. We also believe that there are other opportunities to work together as a country for security and stability. For example, we are sometimes concerned about Russia's influence on the countries on the EU's eastern border. It is important for the EU to pay attention.

“Enlargement should not focus on costs and benefits, but on a vision of stability.”

3. Cooperation mainly in the fight against international crime and terrorism

68 % of Dutch people believe that EU security services should share their information. We believe, however, that it is important that countries should also be able to continue to decide for themselves in part what information they wish to provide or not. Sharing all information quickly renders cooperation ineffective. And the EU is so big today that we need to continue to critically examine where sensitive information arrives or is likely to happen. We want to continue to trust that our privacy is protected. We believe that it makes sense above all to cooperate in the fight against serious international crime, such as cybercrime, drug trafficking and terrorism.

If you burn once a red light in the Netherlands, there's really no reason for that to be known in Spain.

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

If you sanction a country that does not respect the rules, it is the poorest inhabitants of this country who are the first victims. That's why I think it's better to talk than sanction.

We must first ensure stability within the current club. And then only think of enlargement.

We also need to critically examine our own rule of law. There is certainly one or the other malfunction.

IDEA: “Establish strict integrity rules for politicians across Europe to prevent them from being too easily influenced.”

IDEA: "Strengthen cooperation between the police and the judiciary in EU countries."

Doetinchem Vocational Secondary School Students: Those who want to be part of the EU must respect the rules.

At Graafschap College in Doetinchem, about 20 nursing students debated the question of what, in their view, were the biggest benefits of the EU: the free market, the euro as a common currency and the fact that as a European one can easily settle and work in other EU countries. And the fact that EU countries can support each other. The union is strength," said one of the students present. The importance of the rules was also discussed. If countries do not respect them, it is often difficult to punish them harshly. According to the students, it might be helpful for this to become a little easier. One of them also mentioned the deterrent effect. If you impose severe sanctions, other countries see what can happen when you don't follow the rules.

Hindustanis from Suriname to Utrecht: Trust in the rule of law is sometimes lacking

The Asha Foundation is an organisation of Hindustanis volunteers from Suriname in the municipality of Utrecht. Participants in the thematic dialogue discussed in particular the importance of citizens' rights: the right to have a roof above the head, but also, for example, the right to non-discrimination. According to the volunteers present, there must be rules that protect these rights for all European citizens. It is not always known what is currently regulated in the Netherlands and what is currently regulated at European level. As a result, it is sometimes difficult to have confidence in public authorities. Especially since there are sometimes some malfunctions within the public authorities. "You may say that the authorities have to defend me, but they sometimes manage to sow paddle, as has been the case with the allowance case," said one of the participants. "The EU should ensure that the rules are actually respected," another participant said.

A stronger economy, social justice and employment

Small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of the European economy. The EU therefore wants EU countries to work together on recovery plans to emerge economically stronger from the COVID-19 crisis. In the long term, the EU's objective is to make the European economy healthier, greener and digital. What is the Netherlands' vision of this?

Recommendations — Our vision of the economy and employment

61 % of the Dutch believe that the economy and employment are an important theme and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Take into account commonalities and differences

71 % of the Dutch believe that the EU should ensure that businesses collaborate more, thereby strengthening the European economy. However, of these people, only a small portion thinks that the EU needs to pay more money to businesses. Above all, we believe that cooperation can be more effective. Today we see that different companies are investing in the same new technology, sometimes even with public funds. If we had a European vision of the economy, we could use that money more effectively. In doing so, however, particular attention should be paid to differences between countries.

The agricultural sector in the Netherlands is so modern. It is not always possible to compare it with that of other countries.

2. Making greater use of Europe's strengths

The Dutch believe that there are many opportunities to strengthen the European economy, but that choices must be made. That is why we believe that the EU should focus on its strengths above all. For example, we consider that Europe is good in

areas such as digital transition, sustainability and infrastructure. And what is perhaps more important: we defend quality and diversity. It is precisely the diversity of our continent, with different opinions and ideas, that we must exploit much more as an economic advantage. This can enable Europe to distinguish itself, for example, from the Chinese economy.

3. Develop a fair and clear tax system

82 % of Dutch people believe that EU countries must collectively ensure that all EU companies pay fair taxes. This includes very large companies. Today, they sometimes settle in other countries for the simple reason that they pay less taxes. The EU should combat this phenomenon, for example by setting a minimum rate for all countries. On the other hand, we believe that taxation is a competence that belongs to countries, which have their own objectives and contexts. We find that taxation is generally a complex issue. It is precisely for this reason that we would like a better tax system, which is fair and clear to everyone in Europe.

Cucumbers must have the same shape everywhere, but the tax rules are different. It's crazy, isn't it?

4. Ensure that everyone can participate

71 % of the Dutch believe that the EU should help boost employment. In this regard, we believe that particular attention should be paid to certain groups, such as young people and people away from the labour market. This can be done through rules or subsidies for companies, but also by providing specific support to employers and workers. We are thinking, for example, of awareness-raising activities or very practical issues. It is possible that, in some cases, such support can be organised more effectively at EU level and in others it may be a task rather than for the Member States themselves. EU countries should ultimately cooperate to ensure equal opportunities

in the European labour market.

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

Accelerate automation in Europe so that the goods that are currently coming from China are manufactured again here.

Take the revolution of bitcoins and other cryptocurrencies seriously. People interested in it are treated as tax fraudsters, while this type of blockchain technology is the future.

Shareholders are not the only players in the European economy. Nothing is possible without employees. "Europe needs to do more for people with disabilities. It is far too difficult for them to find a suitable job today.

Many European rules are complex and change regularly. It is therefore difficult for companies to innovate.

In the case of transformation work within my company, my local contractor could have started a long time ago. But first I had to launch a European call for tenders. It's a shame.

Participants in the online dialogue: "Thinking together on the issue of large companies"

During one of the online thematic dialogues, a debate arose about the growing power of large companies. Some participants would like the EU to take stronger action in this regard. Indeed, some companies sometimes make significant profits on which they pay little tax thanks to sophisticated arrangements. Other participants called for looking at things as a whole: these companies generate a high level of employment and benefit the national economy. "You shouldn't chase them," someone said. Another participant felt that it was in any case important for EU countries to reflect on this issue together. Big companies can currently compete between countries. That is why we need to present a more united front as an EU.

Farmers who take account of nature: "Set targets rather than quotas"

BoerenNatuur is an association of agricultural groups. A small group of members discussed, among other things, EU rules for farmers. On the one hand, they believe that the EU brings a lot of positive things, such as the ease of export to other countries. On the other hand, they think that policies could often be even more explicit. "But everyone is already working more and more in the same direction," someone said about it. In particular, improvements in procedures are possible: they are often very administrative and time-consuming. In one participant's view, the rules should not be too detailed. Prefer clear goals, such as clean water. We can then decide ourselves as a result of the width of a ditch.

European democracy

The EU encourages Europeans to vote and also wants to involve them in European decision-making and policies outside the electoral period. The EU is also taking initiatives to strengthen democracy, for example by developing an action plan focusing on free and fair elections and press freedom. What is the Netherlands' vision of this?

Recommendations — Our vision for European democracy

60 % of the Dutch believe that European democracy is an important issue and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Giving a better overview of Europe

The Dutch point out that it is often in the event of a crisis that Europe appears in the media. On the other hand, we have little information about daily decisions. As citizens, we do not need to know everything, but in order to form a good opinion, it would be good to have a better overview. For example, it would be interesting to hear more often the views of other countries on the EU. The media and education can play an important role in this regard. But the media must remain able to make their own choices. Because the Dutch consider that freedom of the press is very important in our democracy.

“Most of the time, we only hear about the EU in the event of a crisis. It is for this reason that the sentiment towards Europe remains negative.

2. Find new ways to continuously listen to citizens

51 % of the Dutch believe that the EU is not sufficiently aware of what is happening in society. To improve this situation, the EU should engage more often, and preferably permanently, in a dialogue with citizens. Many Dutch therefore believe that the Conference on the Future of Europe is a good initiative. Referendums can also be a valuable tool, but the Dutch have differing views on this. For certain topics, it is also sometimes necessary to have specialised knowledge. In any event, speaking with citizens should not be a mere formality. We believe it is important that we are taken seriously.

3. More transparency and clarity on the decisions taken

The Dutch sometimes find Europe quite complicated. Not everyone has the same level of basic knowledge. The EU needs to take this more into account. We want the EU to become more transparent and make it easier to keep up to date. The Dutch authorities also have a role to play in this regard. Many Dutch people are interested in European decisions, but feel that official channels are too difficult to find or too complex. In addition, everyone has different interests and needs. It would therefore be necessary to be able to choose the topics on which we would like to learn more. Young people are often interested in Europe, but they see little information about it on their social networks, for example.

While I was on holiday in Hungary, I saw a large sign near a new forest plantation stating: ‘This plantation was possible thanks to the EU.’ Even though I am skeptical of Europe, I still felt proud.

4. Ensuring that thorny issues can be resolved more quickly

The Dutch find it difficult to understand how European democracy works, but it seems to them that decision-making in the EU is often very slow. In the European elections, we see above all alliances between national parties. There may also be other ways to address European interests. About one third of the Dutch believe that, in elections to the European Parliament, it should be possible to vote for foreign candidates. A roughly equal number of citizens believe that this should not be possible. What matters most is that the different interests at stake are sufficiently taken into account. At the same time, it is possible to resolve thorny issues more quickly than is the case today.

In elections, I wish I could identify with someone and know what he or she is defending. It doesn't necessarily have to be a compatriot.

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

Remove the veto power of countries. The majority must decide.

For important decisions, set up discussion groups composed of citizens, perhaps on a (semi-) mandatory basis, as is done for juries in the United States.

"Ensure that EU politicians and officials visit the hinterland on a regular basis" and do not remain totally cloistered in their Brussels bubble.

IDEA: In fact, the TV news should devote a few minutes to Europe in each of its editions. Or we could launch a daily or weekly newspaper dedicated to Europe.

IDEA: Perhaps European politicians should participate more often in television programmes.

As a young person, I almost never read anything about Europe. However, I am curious to know more, but without having to make too much effort to get information.

Young members of Coalitie-Y in Utrecht: discussion on the use of referendums

The members of Coalitie-Y — a cooperation between different youth organisations — held a lively debate on the use of referendums. Opponents mentioned the risk of having debates where everything is black or white, while the topics are often much more complex. One of the participants further stated: "We can vote for the EU and stand as candidates. Referendums actually undermine this principle." Referendum supporters said they felt it useful for policy makers to know what citizens think about a specific topic: this could help provide guidance. Referendums could also help raise public awareness of the EU as a whole: what are the topics on the agenda and what are the choices to make?

Social Volunteers: There needs to be better mutual understanding between countries.

The Piëzo Foundation in Zoetermeer is made up of volunteers who are active in various ways in the field of social participation. Participants in the thematic dialogue expressed concern about the growing gap in Europe. These are, for example, the views that countries have regarding the LGBTIQ community. If countries do not understand their respective views, it is difficult to cooperate. "It is for this reason that it is essential to get to know each other better," said one participant. Today, we just don't know what people think in other countries. We do not sufficiently understand the culture and context of our respective countries. This is essential if we want to make good decisions together.

Digital transformation

In the virtual world, the requirements for internet connectivity, security and privacy are increasing. The EU feels responsible in this regard and is committed to ensuring that no one is left behind in the digital society. In addition, the EU invests in digital solutions to societal challenges. What is the Netherlands' vision of this?

Recommendations — Our virtual worldview

45 % of the Dutch believe that the virtual world is an important theme and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Ensuring a fast, safe and stable internet everywhere

61 % of Dutch people believe that the EU should ensure that every person in Europe has access to a fast and stable internet. We all see that the internet plays an increasingly important role in our lives. Our children grow up with digital education. And communication is increasingly going through the internet, both nationally and internationally. We are sometimes concerned about the high dependence on the internet. Many Dutch therefore believe that the EU is best placed to devote funds to it, provided that they are used effectively. Protection against online crime is, in our view, the most important issue to be addressed at European level. However, attention should also be paid to the fight against Internet crime at national level.

The idea of a cyber attack on our water protection system makes me feel vulnerable.

2. Setting clear rules and standards for internet companies

75 % of Dutch believe that the EU should ensure that online purchases can be made with the same level of security in all EU countries. We are all buying more and more abroad and sharing sensitive personal data in this way. This sometimes seems dangerous. It is difficult to determine which websites are trustworthy. It is good that the EU develops European privacy rules and standards that everyone can understand. The power of big internet companies is also a regular source of concern for us. We believe it is our responsibility to exercise caution in the use of our data. But we also believe that the EU can play a role in this regard. EU countries need to work together to ensure that companies like Google and Facebook don't have too much power.

Faced with a global player like Facebook, we are relatively poor as a small country.

3. Adding implementation and practical explanations to privacy rules

With the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Dutch know that all countries must comply with the same privacy laws and regulations. We think it's good to be able to count on that, because privacy is an important issue. However, some Dutch consider that privacy rules are sometimes exaggerated or illogical. In addition, this legislation can generate a lot of work for entrepreneurs. We therefore believe that more attention should be paid to the practical implementation of privacy legislation: support and information for both citizens and businesses. In particular, we believe that the Member States have a role to play. Privacy issues or issues are best managed by our national authorities in our own language.

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

IDEA: Set stricter criteria for programmers and businesses by banning dangerous programming languages.

Propose a free European antivirus software to create a European firewall.

When I cross the border into Germany, suddenly I no longer have a network on my mobile phone. It shouldn't happen anymore, should it?

With our iPhones, we can track all our travels. We also have our share of responsibility.

It's not convenient to have to fill out a different type of privacy form in each country.

IDEA: We should establish a European cyberpolice. This is clearly something for the EU.

Participants in the online dialogue: Having quality internet access everywhere is also in our own interest.

During one of the online thematic dialogues, an interesting debate was born on the role of the EU in the virtual world. All participants agreed that it was good and important to have a good internet connection throughout Europe. But is it up to the EU to deal with it? Several participants indicated that this was a task primarily for individual Member States. Another participant stressed that a stable and quality internet abroad was also an asset for the Netherlands: We are making billions of dollars from trade with other EU countries. It is therefore in our interest that these countries function well.

Students in Helmond: Identical rules and sanctions for cybercriminals

At Dr. Knippenberg College in Helmond, students aged 15 and 16 discussed the problem of Internet crime. They hear the news regularly. For example, when there has been a data leak in a company. Or when a country like Russia or China tries to steal data. Since cybercriminals often work across borders, they find it logical for European countries to cooperate. In this context, they consider the development of rules, but also the definition of sanctions. If Russian cyberpirates try to break into our homes, the EU must take strong action to prevent them.

Education, culture, youth and sport

EU countries are directly responsible for education, culture, youth and sport. The EU can and would like to assist them in this regard, for example by promoting quality education, multilingualism, the protection of cultural heritage and support for the cultural and sports sectors. What is the Netherlands' vision of this?

Recommendations — Our vision of education, culture, youth and sport

45 % of the Dutch believe that education is an important issue and that the EU must intervene in this area. For youth, culture and sport, this figure amounts to 39 %, 23 % and 19 % respectively.

1. Encouraging students to study abroad intelligently

Many Dutch believe that studying abroad has a positive impact on young people. This contributes to personal development. In addition, studying abroad can help Europeans understand each other better. It can also contribute to better integration. Many Dutch therefore find it positive that there is an Erasmus programme that encourages study abroad. But we believe that the EU should also continue to critically address this issue. In practice, for example, it seems that international students mostly stay with each other and do not always learn much about the country they are in. The EU must also prevent countries with a lower level of knowledge from "emptying" because all talents will study abroad.

"Develop exchange programmes at the level of vocational secondary education as well."

2. Allow Member States to focus on topics such as culture and sport

58 % of Dutch believe that the EU should better protect cultural heritage in Europe. We think, for example, of temples in Greece. On the other hand, we find that local culture is primarily the responsibility of the countries themselves. The same applies, for example, to abuse in sport. We consider this to be an important issue, but not a main EU mission. Europe must necessarily set priorities and significant financial resources are needed for other issues. We may sometimes make a financial contribution, but sometimes we can also collaborate together in other ways, for example by exchanging knowledge and ideas.

The protection of culture lies with the countries themselves. But if World Heritage is neglected, then I think the EU must intervene.

3. Ensuring that Europeans get to know each other better and respect each other

The Dutch appreciate when other Europeans speak English well. It simplifies things when we're abroad. And when, for example, we want to communicate with migrant workers in the Netherlands. At the same time, many Dutch consider it very important that we continue to speak and value our own language. We therefore also want other differences within Europe to be respected. Whether it is culture, education or sport, every person must feel free and be able to be themselves. Differences can sometimes cause tensions, but they also make the European continent rich. Many Dutch think that countries should be given time to familiarise themselves with their respective habits and ideas.

For me, the EU is like a group of friends. We respect our differences and I can ask for help if I need them.

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

IDEA: In addition to the local curriculum, a common European curriculum should be introduced at all levels of education.

IDEA: In addition to a capital of culture, you should also choose a capital (or country) every year in the field of education, youth and sports.

What unites us in the EU is precisely the fact that we all have our own national culture. And therefore not being

able to be gathered under the banner of a single culture.

Instead of highlighting the negative things, it's better to try to promote the sport.

I am integrated here, I pay taxes, but I am and remain Latin American. I love my tongue, my music and my food. It's not about Europe.

We talk too much about the economy in Europe. And too little well-being.

Students from the University of Leiden: Language is important, but it must remain a free choice

At Leiden University, history students spoke with each other. They feel it is important for people to speak several languages. They believe that mastering several languages is great for its personal development and good for trade and political relations within the EU. However, they believe that languages should be offered at school and not be made compulsory. They also believe that a second language does not necessarily have to be a European language. "If you live in Eastern Europe and choose to learn Russian, that's your right," said one of the participants.

Turkish Community of Schiedam: At the Hakder Foundation in Schiedam, the local Turkish community discussed the importance of fair employment opportunities for all. All participants agreed that the EU should oblige companies to offer traineeships or jobs to young people with limited prospects. They indicated that young migrants, in particular, find it difficult to find an internship or a job. They sometimes don't even dare to go to the GP because they fear having to pay for the visit themselves. Not to mention daring to apply for an internship or a job," said one of the participants. "Businesses need to be more attentive and the EU can encourage them to do so."

Description of the methodology used in the survey

The survey “Vision of Europe” consists of various forms of related dialogue to gather the views and ideas of Dutch citizens on the future of Europe and the EU. This chapter describes the methodology used to ensure that the related forms of dialogue are in line with the guidelines for national citizens’ panels in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Design of related forms of dialogue The following forms of dialogue are used:

4. Survey of a panel

Survey of a representative sample of the Dutch population.

5. Online thematic dialogues for deepening

Dialogues organised each time with a group of Dutch with the aim of deepening the conclusions of the first interim report “Our Vision for Europe” (8 October 2021) giving an initial overview of the results and complementary questions.

6. Dialogues with specific groups

Meetings with Dutch who are not used to participating in surveys and panels (online).

7. Dialogues with young people

Meetings focusing on the most relevant European themes for young people.

8. Online public survey: Questionnaire and “Swipen naar de toekomst” (Swiper to the future)

The panel survey questionnaire could also be completed by all Dutch, including those residing abroad. This questionnaire was available from 1 September 2021 to 14 November 2021. In addition, during the same period, each Dutchman was able to participate in the action “Swipen naar de toekomst” (Swiper to the future), an online tool presenting 20 claims.

1. Survey of a panel

The Dutch Citizens’ Dialogue “Vision of Europe” started on 1 September with a panel survey. In this description of the survey methodology, we briefly explain the design and implementation of this survey to a panel.

Target and target population

The survey “Vision of Europe” started with an online questionnaire on how Dutch people see the future of Europe. This questionnaire has been submitted to a representative panel and is also open to all Dutch (including those residing abroad). In addition, each person was able to participate in the action “Swipen naar de toekomst” (Swiper to the future), an online tool presenting 20 claims. The results of the panel survey fed several thematic dialogues organised as a follow-up to the “Vision of Europe” citizen dialogue process.

The target population of the panel survey includes all Dutch people aged 18 or older who were registered as residents in the population register at the time the fieldwork began. According to the Dutch National Statistical Office (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek — CBS), this target group had 14,190,874 people as of 1 January 2021. The lower limit of 18 years corresponds to the electoral majority. We call it the population of the panel survey.

Fieldwork

A panel of more than 100,000 participants from all over the country (ISO certified, Research Keurmerk groep, Nederlandse marktonderzoek Associatie) was used to obtain a digital image of the “Medium Dutch”. These participants enrolled in the survey panel to provide their views on a wide range of topics on a regular basis. In addition to their intrinsic motivation to contribute, they are paid to answer the questionnaires. Several scientific studies show that respondents who receive compensation for completing a questionnaire do not give significantly different answers (source: Does use of survey incentives degrade data quality? Cole, J. S., Sarraf, S.A., Wang, X., 2015).

Fieldwork started on 11 August 2021 and ended on 19 September 2021. For implementation, only one method of data collection was used, i.e. the Internet survey. Survey panel members received an email with a personal link to the online questionnaire. After two weeks, panel participants received a reminder. Invitations to participate were sent in batches and stratified (by ensuring an equal distribution of subgroups) until the required number of respondents was reached.

Sampling and distribution

The design of the survey is based on the principle that a minimum of 3,600 respondents must participate in the survey in order to ensure good statistical reliability. In addition, this number allows a good distribution between the different general characteristics of the population. There's not just one type of Dutchman. We have therefore ensured in advance that the sample is distributed well over a number of characteristics. The Netherlands is a relatively small country, but opinions may differ by region. The positioning and importance given to the themes can be (in part) determined by the region in which you live. For example, people living in rural areas can understand a topic such as security differently from those in urban areas. Research by the Dutch Office of Social and Cultural Planning also shows that people with a higher level of study are more often supporters of the EU than those with a lower level of study and that young people are more supportive of the EU than older people (source: Wat willen Nederlanders van de Europese Unie? Dutch Social and Cultural Office, The Hague, 2019).

This is why we have previously allocated the following three characteristics proportionally in order to ensure the representativeness of the sample: (1) residence through COROP regions, (2) age and (3) education level. The distribution of the sample was also presented according to the following general characteristics: gender, origin, main occupation, political orientation.

COROP regions have been developed on the basis of the nodal principle (a “heart” with an area of attraction or a regional function), based on the flow of people who commute. A few breaches of the nodal principle have been conceded so that the regions follow provincial boundaries. After the reorganisation of the municipalities beyond COROP limits, the distribution was adjusted (source: Dutch National Statistical Office). Within the COROP regions, we have ensured a good distribution among the age groups, with the following breakdown: ages 18-34, 35-54, 55-75 and over 75.

Finally, we ensured a representative distribution of educational levels. In the sample, the distribution of respondents corresponds to the distribution at national level of the highest level of education, which is as follows:

Highest level of education

Low: primary education, preparatory vocational education, 1st to 3rd grade of general upper secondary education/pre-university education, secondary vocational education level 1	32.1 %
Intermediate: general upper secondary education/pre-university education, secondary vocational education level 2 to 4	44.6 %
High: higher vocational education or university education	22.9 %
Unknown	0.4 %

Response rate

A total of 4,086 people participated in the survey per panel. The objective of 3 600 fully completed questionnaires is therefore achieved.

Responses by COROP regions and age	18 to 34 years old	35 to 54 years old	55 to 75 years old	more than 75 years old
Northern Drenthe	11	14	17	5
South-East of Drenthe	10	12	14	4
Southwest of Drenthe	7	10	11	3
Flevoland	29	33	28	6
Northern Friesland	20	22	25	8
South East of Friesland	12	13	14	3
Southwest of Friesland	8	11	11	4
Achterhoek	22	27	34	11
Arnhem/Nijmegen	52	53	55	15
Veluwe	44	48	51	17
South-West of Gelderland	16	18	20	5
Grand Delfzijl	2	4	5	1
Eastern Groningen	7	10	12	3
Rest of Groningen	36	26	28	8
Central Limburg	13	17	21	7

Northern Limburg	17	20	23	7
Southern Limburg	38	40	52	17
Centre of North Brabant	34	35	35	11

Responses by COROP regions and age	18 to 34 years old	35 to 54 years old	55 to 75 years old	more than 75 years old
Northeast of North Brabant	41	43	51	14
West of North Brabant	40	47	49	15
South East of North Brabant	55	56	58	18
Haarlem agglomeration	13	18	18	7
Alkmaar and its surroundings	14	19	19	6
Great Amsterdam	116	104	88	23
The Gooi and Vechtstreek	13	21	19	7
IJmond	12	14	15	4
Tip of Northern Holland	22	27	30	9
Zaan Region	11	13	12	3
Northern Overijssel	25	28	25	8
Twente	41	44	46	14
Southwest of Overijssel	10	11	12	3
Utrecht	96	100	89	27
Rest of Zeeland	16	21	23	8
Zeeland Flanders	6	8	9	3
Agglomeration of Leiden and region of bulbs	30	31	31	10
Agglomeration of The Hague	63	70	57	18
Delft and Westland	19	15	15	4
Grand Rijnmond	103	107	99	31

East of Southern Holland	22	24	25	8
South East of South Holland	24	26	26	9

Responses by level of education

Low	1382	34 %
Intermediary	1747	43 %
High	915	22 %
Unknown	42	1 %

Reliability and representativeness

The number of respondents of 4,086 makes it possible to make observations for the population as a whole with a 95 % confidence level and a margin of error of 1.53 %. The confidence level and margin of error of the results are determined by the sample size. The larger the sample, the more reliable and accurate the results can be extrapolated to the entire population.

The confidence level is defined as 1 (100 %) minus the level of meaning. It is common to be based on a 5 % meaning level. We are talking about a 95 % confidence level. In other words, if the survey were repeated in the same way and under the same conditions, the results would be the same in 95 % of cases.

Accuracy (expressed by margin of error) indicates the range of values within which the actual value in the population is located. In other words: what would be the maximum difference between the results of the sample and the results that would be obtained from the population as a whole? A margin of error of 1.53 % means that the actual value within the total population may be 1.53 % higher or lower than the sample value. For example, if a survey of a sample of people indicates that 50 % of respondents consider a particular theme to be important, the actual percentage is 1.53 % higher or lower than that 50 %, i.e. between 48.47 and 51.53 %. A maximum margin of error of 5 % is common and generally accepted in quantitative studies (statistics).

In addition to reliability, the representativeness of the sample is important. Since the invitations to participate have been sent in batches and stratified, the results are representative in terms of the characteristics of the COROP region and the age groups by COROP region. The responses are also representative from the point of view of the level of education compared to the highest level of education achieved at the national level.

Other general characteristics

A number of additional contextual questions were asked to survey participants by panel. These include gender, EU positioning, origin, main occupation and the political party for which the person would vote in the event of elections.

49 % of respondents are men, 50 % are women and 1 % prefer not to answer this question.

51 % of respondents believe it is a good thing for the Netherlands to be a member of the EU, 13 % think it is a bad thing and 36 % are neutral or have no opinion.

95 % of respondents were born in the Netherlands. 89 % of respondents indicated that both parents were born in the Netherlands. 5 % were born to two parents themselves born abroad.

Current political orientation of respondents

Party	%
VVD (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy)	14 %
PVV (Party for Freedom)	13 %
SP (Socialist Party)	8 %
D66 (Democrats 66)	6 %
CDA (Christian Democratic Call)	6 %
PvdA (Labour Party)	6 %
Partij voor de Dieren (Animal Party)	4 %
GroenLinks (Green Left)	4 %
ChristenUnie (Christian Union)	3 %
JA21	3 %
BoerBurgerBeweging (Farmer-citizen Movement)	2 %
Forum voor Democratie (Forum for Democracy)	2 %
GSP (Reformed Political Party)	2 %
Volt	2 %
DENK	1 %
Groep Van Haga	1 %
BIJ1	1 %
Fractie Den Haan	0 %
Other	2 %
White vote	3 %

I prefer not to answer	13 %
I don't vote	5 %

What is currently your main occupation?

Occupation	%
Student/Student	6 %
Part-time employee	16 %
Full-time employee	31 %
Independent contractor	3 %
Person at home	5 %
Jobseeker	2 %
Volunteer	2 %
Incapacity for work	6 %
Retired	27 %
Other	1 %
I prefer not to answer	1 %

Questionnaire

The questionnaire and this report were prepared by an independent external organisation at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The questionnaire presents a modular structure and includes the following blocks of questions, in line with the themes identified for the Conference on the Future of Europe: Important themes and the role of Europe

Climate change and environment

Health

Economy and employment

Role of the European Union in the world

Security and rule of law

The virtual world

European democracy

Migration and refugees

Education/culture/youth/sport

During the preparation of the questionnaire, great attention was paid to the quality, reliability and validity of the

questions. For this reason, a neutral, non-guided formulation of questions, assertions and response options was sought, and it was verified that the questions were formulated in comprehensible language (level B1).

The questionnaire was subjected to quality tests through face-to-face interviews with test participants belonging to the target group. This allowed us to study how questions are understood by different types of respondents. If a question seemed to represent an overly large (too complex) cognitive load, it was appropriate.

Methods of analysis

Two methods of analysis were used in this survey:

Univariate analyses

Descriptive statistics are used to describe the variables of a survey. Frequencies and averages are used in this survey.

Bivariate analyses

The bivariate analyses make it possible to examine the relationship between two variables, in this case the relationship between the importance of the different themes and the question of whether the EU should intervene in this area and the general characteristic of age. A review was carried out to determine whether different age groups attach different importance to a subject and whether there are differing views on the extent to which these are issues in which the EU should be involved.

Publication of information and completeness

This report includes a (visual) representation of the results of all questions asked to survey panel respondents. For some questions, the respondent was given the opportunity to provide “open” (i.e. not predetermined) answers. Open responses were then categorised and included in the publication. The ideas shared by respondents in the free comments are used to feed into the various thematic dialogues organised as a follow-up to the Citizen Dialogue process “Vision of Europe”.

2. Online thematic dialogues for deepening

The themes at the heart of the Conference on the Future of Europe have been deepened through eight online thematic dialogues. The purpose of these dialogues was to discover the reasons for the opinions expressed, as well as the motivations and feelings behind them. What are the perceived concerns and opportunities? The discussion sessions also allowed participants to formulate suggestions and ideas on these topics, as well as to raise issues that are not part of the conference but remain important to them.

The thematic dialogues took place on 12-14 October and 9-11 November. Four online thematic dialogues were organised in October on the themes “Economics” and “Democracy”. Four online thematic dialogues were held in November on the themes “Climate” and “The EU in the world”. On average, 29 people participated in each discussion session (231 in total). Participants were recruited from among the panel members (see point 1) and via social media.

3. Dialogues with specific groups

Some Dutch groups are known to be less accustomed to participating in surveys and panels (online). In order to obtain a representative image of “the voice of the Netherlands”, it was important that these citizens should also be able to express their ideas and opinions. That is why we also organised a number of on-the-spot dialogues for the “Vision of Europe” survey. The opinions and ideas that we were able to gather were used as a basis (among others) to formulate the recommendations.

Target groups

Hard-to-reach target groups cannot be defined unambiguously. Studies and experience allow us to know that Dutch people with **non-Western origins** participate significantly less of themselves in investigations and discussions. Since this represents a large group (14 % of the Dutch¹), they were selected to participate in the Vision of Europe dialogue. The same reasoning was followed with regard to **persons with little education**. It is also a large group (2.5 million Dutch²), which overlaps in part with the migrant group (39 %). Finally, a dialogue has been held with a group of people who are rarely found in surveys and discussions, **who are critical of Europe, but for whom Europe plays an important role in the professional sphere**. Entrepreneurs from the agricultural sector were selected.

The above-mentioned groups have been approached through organisations of which they are members, such as migrant organisations, advocacy associations and professional organisations. Since we limited the number of dialogues to eight, we couldn't be completely "exhaustive". This makes the choice of participants somewhat arbitrary. To make this choice, we also took into account the enthusiasm to participate and help mobilise their base, as well as practical issues such as availability according to dates and location.

On-site dialogues were held with members of the following organisations:

- Hakder Foundation, Alevi community, Schiedam
- Asha Foundation, Hindu community, Utrecht (two discussion sessions)
- Piëzo, civil society organisation, Zoetermeer
- Taal doet Meer, an organisation for low-educated people, Utrecht
- BoerenNatuur, association of agricultural groups
- Marokkanen Dialog Overvecht, Moroccan community, Utrecht
- Women for Freedom, advocacy organisation for women with a migrant background, The Hague

A total of 110 people participated in these discussion meetings.

4. Dialogues with young people

Young people are a priority target group of the Conference on the Future of Europe. In order to actively encourage their participation in the Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe" and to make the opinions and ideas of this group well heard, five physical discussion meetings were organised specifically for young people. A sixth planned meeting with young people could not take place due to the coronavirus-related restrictive measures.

The meetings took place in the following institutions:

Association of History Students, University of Leiden

Dr. Knippenberg College, High School, Helmond

Coalitie-Y, Economic and Social Council Youth Platform

Graafschap College, Vocational Secondary Education, Doetinchem

CSG Jan Arentsz, secondary education focusing on technological subjects, Alkmaar

A total of 95 youth participated in the discussion meetings.

Maintenance techniques used

Online thematic dialogues, dialogues with specific groups and dialogues with young people were conducted using the so-called “socratic” interview method. This method has been used for many years on Dialogue Day, where people across the Netherlands interact on issues that affect them. In the context of the Socratic maintenance method, the moderator shall take into account the following principles:

- Let the other tell their story
Don't answer it immediately with another story
- Treat yourself with respect
- Talk about one's own point of view (“I find” rather than “they say”)
- Ask for more explanations if the views expressed are limited to generalities
- Avoid judgments and analyse them
- Grant moments of silence if people need to think for a moment

During the dialogues, the following rhythm shall be used: divergence — convergence — divergence. The principle is that you must first diverge (directly express individual feelings and opinions), before you can converge (talk possible avenues) and then finally diverge again (for example, collect individual recommendations). Experience and theory show that this rhythm ensures an optimal flow of dialogue.

All dialogues were conducted by professional facilitators.

5. Online public survey: Questionnaire and “Swipen naar de toekomst” (Swiper to the future)

The panel survey questionnaire was also open to all Dutch, including those residing abroad. This questionnaire was available from 1 September 2021 to 14 November 2021. In addition, during the same period, each Dutchman was able to participate in the action “Swipen naar de toekomst” (Swiper to the future), an online tool presenting 20 claims.

Answers and use

A total of 1,967 participants completed the questionnaire and 6,968 were to the end of the screen scanning tool. Both the questionnaire and the screen scan tool were open to everyone: there were no prerequisites or selection criteria to participate. In the questionnaire, it was possible to pass questions (there were no mandatory questions) in order to maximise the response rate. Participants chose “I prefer not to respond” much more often than in the representative panel survey.

The general characteristics of the participants in the open questionnaire and screen scanning tool differ in several respects from those of the participants in the representative panel. Unlike the panel survey, the results of the open questionnaire and screen scanning tool are not representative. The results of the online open survey were used to complement the panel survey. They give an overview of the feelings and ideas circulating in the Netherlands. The suggestions for improvement mentioned in the input fields were used in the section “Discussions and ideas online and on site”. The screen scanning tool has been used to better understand some of the feelings circulating in the Netherlands. These results were taken into account in the preparation of the recommendations. Due to the requirement of representativeness, the results of the investigation opened online have been limitedly taken into account in this report.

This report is published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. www.kijkopeuropa.nl



National Government of the Netherlands

Our vision of Europe

January 2022 Report

Opinions, ideas and recommendations

Themes

- Climate change and environment
- Migration
- Health
- The EU in the world

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- 14 January 2022

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• This document is a translation of the report entitled "Elze kijk op Europa; Meningen, ideeën en Aanbevelingen" ("Our vision of Europe: opinions, ideas and recommendations"), which was published in Dutch on 14 January 2022 on www.kijkopeuropa.nl. This translation is a simplified version of the report in which the original presentation (illustrations and other graphical elements) has been modified for translation purposes.

Our vision of...

Summary of the report: all recommendations in brief

Through the Citizens' Dialogue organised on the theme "Vision of Europe", we have gathered the views and ideas of Dutch citizens on the future of Europe. This resulted in the following recommendations to the European Union for the last four themes (out of the nine themes identified in total).

Climate change and environment

- 1. Choose a clear direction for the European approach to climate change**
- 2. Ensure that countries and businesses cooperate more closely to find targeted solutions**
- 3. Create a CO2 system that is fair and feasible in practice**
- 4. Communicate in a clearer and more positive way on the climate approach**

The Dutch believe that the EU must play a leading role in the fight against climate change. Member States must be able to make their own choices, but must nevertheless cooperate to achieve the same objectives. Rather than pointing to each other, EU countries should devote more energy to exchanging knowledge and finding common solutions. A system to tax CO2 emissions can be effective, but it must also be fair, practical and clear. As a general rule, the Dutch believe that the EU should communicate more effectively and positively on climate issues.

Migration

- 1. Preventing debates on the refugee issue from becoming less nuanced**
- 2. Defining what a fair and practical distribution of refugees is**
- 3. Leveraging the knowledge and experience gained to assist the regions where refugees come from**

The Dutch believe it is important to distinguish between people fleeing dangerous areas and economic refugees. Debates about migration and integration often lack nuance. If a fair distribution of refugees in Europe is to be achieved, it is necessary to agree, within the EU, on clear criteria that take into account both Member States and those who have fled. Finally, the Dutch propose that the EU support the regions from which refugees come not only financially, but also through knowledge.

Health

- 1. Have better control over the management of a pandemic**
- 2. Ensure the availability of affordable and reliable medicines for all**
- 3. Countries must focus on improving their health systems and making it more equitable**

The Dutch believe that EU countries need to cooperate more to fight a pandemic. The way the coronavirus crisis is handled sometimes creates confusion. The rules should be more consistent with each other, without having to be the same everywhere. When it comes to vaccines or medicines, the Dutch want prices to remain as low as possible, but want to be able to rely on quality and responsible production. In addition, we believe it is important that large companies do not abuse their power, and we believe that health care must continue to be at the national level.

The EU's role in the world

- 1. Harnessing the strength of the EU in key international themes mainly**
- 2. Within and outside Europe, choose cooperation rather than struggle**
- 3. Offering, in a thoughtful way, help in the event of a conflict**

The Dutch believe that European cooperation should focus primarily on the main common interests. EU cooperation with third countries must also be part of this approach. In addition to climate change and the coronavirus pandemic, these include, for example, international security and the protection of the European economy from unfair trading practices. Within and outside Europe, the Dutch prefer cooperation to struggle. As far as the approach to conflicts is concerned, it is always preferable to resolve them without resorting to violence.

Introduction

The Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe", held from 1 September to mid-November, allowed all Dutch to express their opinions and ideas on the future of Europe. The Netherlands shall present to the European Union (EU) the recommendations on which the dialogue has led, as well as the ideas and views expressed. In this report, we address the last four themes (out of the nine themes identified in total). The first five topics have already been addressed in the report published on 3 December 2021.

On the Vision of Europe

The European Union wants its citizens to share what they think about Europe. That is why the EU is organising the Conference on the Future of Europe. The opinions and ideas of citizens across the European Union will then feed into the plans for the future of Europe. As part of the conference, the Netherlands organised the Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe" at national level.

The Vision of Europe dialogue started on 1 September with the online collection of opinions and ideas through a survey of a representative panel. In order to deepen the first results of the panel survey and to make concrete recommendations, we organised thematic dialogues online. Anyone who wanted to participate could participate. We also traveled the country to hold discussions with young people and other groups (difficult to reach).

From schoolchildren, vocational secondary school pupils and students to the Minister, farmers and migrants

In October and November, a total of eight online thematic dialogues took place, with an average of 30 participants per meeting. We also organised an online thematic dialogue and seven on-site thematic dialogues with different groups of Dutch citizens. We spoke with the Turkish community in Schiedam and were invited by the Piëzo Foundation volunteers to Zoetermeer. On the latter occasion, Foreign Minister Ben Knapen was also present at the end of the dialogue. The Minister had a discussion with participants about the dialogue and views expressed on the future of Europe. Finally, we organised six meetings with different groups of young people. For example, we were welcomed to a secondary school in Helmond, a vocational secondary school in Doetinchem and the University of Leiden.

This is the future of our children. That's why I think it's important to participate.

Participant in the thematic dialogue

About this report

On the basis of the ideas and opinions we have gathered in recent months, we have drawn up a series of recommendations that Dutch citizens make to the European Union. During the discussions between Dutch citizens, interesting exchanges of views took place and innovative ideas and suggestions were made. Some of these ideas and suggestions have been incorporated into this report. The content of this report is therefore the voice of the Netherlands: our vision of Europe.

Just as there are differences of views between countries and European citizens, we also do not always agree with each other within the Netherlands. These differences of views, precisely, are valuable: they are an important feature of a democracy. The recommendations are drawn from the most frequently expressed ideas and opinions of the participants in the Vision of Europe survey. We also describe concerns, ideas and feelings that may be less widespread, but that have caught our attention during dialogues and the online survey.

I enjoyed being able to give my opinion on topics that I think are important. And to have had the feeling of being listened to.

Participant in the thematic dialogue

Nine themes were identified for the Conference on the Future of Europe. These themes are also at the heart of the Vision of Europe dialogue with Dutch citizens. In October, we published an interim report giving an initial overview of the results and complementary questions based on the panel survey. At the beginning of December, a new report was published, setting out opinions, ideas and recommendations on the first five themes. This report addresses the remaining four themes.

Previous report — December 2021

Values and rights, rule of law and security

A stronger economy, social justice and employment European democracy

Digital transformation

Education, culture, youth and sport

Current report — January 2022

Climate change and environment

Migration

Health

The EU in the world

Next steps

The Conference on the Future of Europe brings together the ideas, opinions and recommendations of all EU citizens. The meetings will be devoted not only to the results of all citizens' dialogues at national level, but also to the results of other initiatives launched in the context of the conference. For example, there are also panels of European citizens, and all EU citizens (including Dutch citizens) can access a European digital platform.

“I hope that EU leaders will take my view into account. And that it will help them make the right choices.

Participant in the thematic dialogue

The conference will end in spring 2022. The Netherlands will then draw up a final report on the Citizens' Dialogue: a compilation of this report and the previous report, including recommendations for all nine themes. Following the Conference, recommendations will be made to the Conference Chair: the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the European Commission. They committed themselves to exploring ways and means of implementing the recommendations. For the Dutch Government, the results are also a valuable contribution to the development of the Netherlands' European policies.

In summary, the process until spring 2022 will be organised as follows:

Chronology

Vision of Europe

1 September	12 October	22/23 October	15 November	3 December	14 January	21/22 January	February	18/19 February	11-12 March	22/24 April		
Collecting ideas online												
Thematic dialogues												
		Intermediate results (intermediate report)		Interim report on "Economics" and "Democracy"	Interim report on "Climate" and "The EU in the world"		Final Report "Our Vision for Europe"					
		≈				≈		≈	≈	≈		
		Meeting of the Conference			Meeting of the Conference		Meeting of the conference	(possibly) meeting of the conference	Closing event of the conference	→	Recommendations for Presidents • European Parliament • European Commission • Council of Ministers	
						↑		↑		↑		
More opinions and ideas on the future of Europe:												
Dialogues with citizens					European Citizens' Panels				European Digital Platform (also for Dutch citizens)			

Explanations to facilitate reading

In this report, we discussed four themes. For each theme, we have included successively:
 recommendations based on all aspects of the Citizens' Dialogue;
 online and on-site discussions and ideas: overview of opinions, ideas and views exchanged (online and with physical presence) during thematic dialogues.

A description of the methodology used in the survey can be found at the end of this report.

Climate change and environment

Recommendations — Our vision for climate change and the environment

71 % of the Dutch believe that climate change and the environment are an important issue and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Choosing a clear direction for the European approach to climate change 68 % of the Dutch believe that the EU must play a leading role in the fight against climate change. Global warming is a problem and no country can solve it alone. Even if the Dutch do not all agree on climate change, we believe that the EU must have a clearer vision of the future anyway. Despite the Green Deal, we see at present that Member States are often not aligned. While countries must be able to continue to make their own choices, they must nevertheless cooperate to achieve the same goals. We also believe that, as citizens, we also have our own share of responsibility, for example in terms of adapting our consumption habits.

The Netherlands wants to abandon natural gas, whereas in Germany it is precisely encouraged to use it. Sometimes it's not to understand anything.

2. Ensure that countries and businesses cooperate more closely to find targeted solutions

When it comes to climate change and the environment, the Dutch find that countries often point their fingers. The focus is often on differences, for example between poor and rich countries within the EU. Or between highly industrialised or weakly industrialised countries. We would prefer to try to reach agreements. For example, similar companies in different countries could exchange knowledge and think together about solutions. If this were done, poorer countries could be more involved in the approach to climate change. They could participate in the reflection and could also take advantage of common solutions.

The approach to climate change should not be a race, but a cooperation.

3. Create a CO2 system that is fair and feasible in practice

The EU's approach to climate change pays a lot of attention to reducing CO2 emissions. The Dutch consider that there is a need for a better system for this purpose, which would allow both producers and consumers to be taxed fairly. The Dutch are divided as to whether the countries with the most inhabitants have the right to emit more CO2. Some countries, for example, have a very polluting industry. On the other hand, other countries have many opportunities to produce green energy. These differences should be taken into account. Without this becoming too complex, because the system must be understandable to everyone.

Industrialised countries export a lot. Do they therefore have to bear the CO2 tax_{alone}? In my opinion, the consumer should pay too.

4. Communicate in a clearer and more positive way about the climate approach The Dutch people hear a lot about climate change and read a lot about it. However, this remains an abstract and complex subject for many people. It is often perceived as something that costs a lot of money, while the approach to climate change also creates opportunities. We are thinking, for example, of stimulating local food production and developing new and sustainable technologies. The EU could expose this aspect more often and more effectively. We also believe that the Heads of Government of the Member States could themselves set a better example. Travelling less — for example between Brussels and Strasbourg — and meeting more often online could, for example, contribute to supporting sustainability.

Sustainability is still too often perceived as a cost. It should be seen as an opportunity and not a threat.

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

We should not consider CO2 emissions as a right, but as an awkward corollary.

I have the impression that in Europe, we spend more time talking about climate change than taking real action to address it.

Stricter climate rules could ultimately also prove beneficial for us. As a continent engaged in trade, we must try to see opportunities there.

We can't wait for other continents. We don't have time to wait.

IDEA: Reward countries financially if they demonstrate that their nature and biodiversity are increasing.

IDEA: "Stimulating nature-friendly tourism in poor regions of the EU."

Doetinchem Vocational Secondary School Students: Distant journeys must remain accessible to all.

The thesis that flights within the EU should become more expensive was submitted to students at Graafschap College in Doetinchem. Some students agreed that more expensive tickets would encourage people to look for cheaper alternatives. In addition, it was stressed that the EU should then ensure more environmentally friendly options, such as better rail connections. Other participants indicated that they were not in favour of higher airfare prices. "Rich people are the ones who travel the most today and they will be able to pay for it easily," said one participant. High prices won't stop them from traveling. While faraway holidays will then become impossible for "ordinary" citizens.

Nature-friendly farmers: "The EU could contribute to disseminating knowledge on sustainable solutions."

BoerenNatuur is an association of farmers' groups. During the thematic dialogue, the conversation focused on climate change and the environment.

What is likely to be improved according to the participants is the application of EU legislation and regulations by different countries. The nitrogen dossier was cited as an example. "EU legislation only states that a natural area "cannot deteriorate". But in southern Europe, this notion is interpreted differently than in the Netherlands." Most of those present agree that Europe must play a leading role in the fight against climate change. And we must not be content with speech, we must achieve results. Especially through the exchange of knowledge, farmers believe. In the agrarian sector, we are working on solutions to achieve cleaner agriculture. The EU must help to rapidly disseminate knowledge in this area."

Migration (Migration and refugees)

Borders between EU Member States are open. Cooperation is therefore being carried out within the EU on, for example, the management of external borders and the fight against smuggling of migrants. A fair distribution of refugees between the different EU Member States is also under discussion. What is the Netherlands' view on this?

Recommendations — Our Vision on Migration and Refugees

65 % of the Dutch believe that migration and refugees are an important issue and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Avoid that debates on the issue of refugees are too little nuanced

70 % of Dutch consider that Europe's external borders need to be better protected. And of these, 72 percent also think it means returning more refugees to insecure countries. The Dutch believe that more attention should be paid to the reasons that lead people to flee an unsafe country. These reasons are sometimes linked to climate change, sometimes to wars. These contexts are often mentioned only in a limited way in the debate on the refugee issue. The added value these refugees bring to a country is also rarely addressed. Finally, we believe that the EU needs to make a clearer distinction between people from insecure regions who present themselves at borders and economic refugees. In summary, we find that the debates on migration and refugees generally lack context and nuances. European politicians could remedy this situation by setting an example.

We must continue to consider refugees first and foremost as our fellow citizens. For almost no one will abandon a person in distress.

2. Defining what an equitable and practical distribution of refugees is

A European immigration service should ensure that refugees are distributed fairly among EU Member States. The Dutch also consider that clear criteria should be laid down to define what a fair distribution is. A good social system can, for example, make a country attractive to refugees, but other factors are also important for both refugees and the country concerned. In the Netherlands, we face a housing shortage, while some countries or sectors simply need more migrant workers. We consider it important for the EU to take this into account when distributing refugees. Clear mechanisms not only guarantee transparency, but also less dispute, which is ultimately in everyone's interest.

Refugees must also be able to express their talents in a destination country.

3. Building on the knowledge and experience gained to assist refugee regions of origin

67 % of Dutch people believe that the EU needs to further help insecure regions to stem refugee flows. We realise that refugees do not leave their country by simple choice. So we need to look at the causes, such as climate change or conflict, that make regions unsafe or unlivable. The EU can help refugee regions not only with financial support, but also through knowledge. In the Netherlands, for example, we have strong skills in agriculture. With modern farming techniques, we can help other countries cope better with droughts and salinisation. And people who have taken refuge in Europe can attend training in a European country and then help their country of origin themselves.

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

"The EU needs to put in place faster asylum procedures. So there will be more room for people who really need it. I know many young people around me who want to buy a house, but who find nothing affordable, while refugees see themselves offering housing. I find it difficult to accept.

Climate change will continue to lead to population displacement anyway. We can't stop these flows, but we can probably regulate them better.

I live in Betuwe. During the pears and apples season, we simply need a lot of migrant workers.

Insecure regions are not unsafe for nothing, public authorities are often unreliable. How do we know where our help and money are going?

IDEA: Consider also local strategies, such as citizen participation in the local reception of refugees and financing of local integration initiatives.

IDEA: Set up mini-houses in cities where refugees could live upon arrival. This would ease the pressure on the housing market and increase public support for the reception of these people.

Volunteers who were refugees themselves: In Europe, people often stay away from each other.

Taal Doet Meer is a volunteer organisation that ensures that the new Allophone inhabitants of Utrecht can participate in society. The thematic dialogue with this organisation focused not only on migration, but also and above all on integration. Several participants themselves arrived in the Netherlands as refugees, including one from Syria. After seven years, I still don't feel Dutch. I also didn't find a job, even though I got a master's degree. I note that European countries are primarily concerned about themselves and are not very open to other countries and cultures." Another participant noted that Europeans often remain distant from each other. Most people are alone; everyone stays in their corner. I find, for my part, that one must speak with one another and that one can learn from each other.

Youth from the National Youth Council: You should only let people in if you can take care of them.

In Utrecht, members of various working groups of the National Youth Council (CNJ) held a debate. Participants (aged 16-23) believe that when distributing refugees in Europe, account must be taken of several aspects, such as the number of inhabitants, the size of the country, the prosperity and the number of asylum seekers' centres. "Refugees should only be allowed to enter the country if they can then be taken care of," said one of them.

Young people also consider that there must be consequences when countries fail to meet their commitments to host refugees. They must, for example, be fined. "And refugees also need to have a say in where they're going to go," someone said. For example, if they already have family somewhere, we can't send them somewhere else.

Health

(Health care)

Although healthcare is primarily the responsibility of individual countries, it can be supported and strengthened by EU policies, for example in response to the COVID-19 pandemic or other (future) health crises, or in partnership research on serious diseases. What is the Netherlands' view on this?

Recommendations — Our vision of health care

64 % of the Dutch believe that health care is an important issue and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Have better control over the management of a pandemic

83 % of Dutch believe that EU countries need to work more together to prevent a contagious disease from spreading around the world. Because a virus knows no borders. We can see this during the current pandemic. Policies within the EU are sometimes confused. This is not good for compliance with the rules. We believe that the rules to combat the spread of a virus in Europe need to be better coordinated, without necessarily being the same everywhere. There must be room for local choices. Not only because the numbers of contaminations may differ, but also because there are different cultures in Europe. Some measures work better in some countries than in others.

I live in the Netherlands, on the border with Germany. The various measures adopted by the two countries to fight the coronavirus are driving me crazy.

2. Ensure the availability of affordable and reliable medicines for all

71 % of the Dutch believe that the EU must ensure that we need less third countries for the development, production and delivery of medicines. But if that means waiting longer to have medicines, opinions are divided. The Dutch believe that the production and distribution of medicines is a complex issue. On the one hand, healthcare costs are rising sharply in the Netherlands, so we consider it important to keep them at the lowest possible level. On the other hand, we want to be able to trust drugs, even when they come from afar. They must not only be of quality, but also be produced in a sustainable and ethically responsible way. In general, we believe that important medicines must be accessible to everyone, including in poorer countries.

Health care costs are already unaffordable. So we must also try to buy the new drugs at the lowest possible price.

3. Countries must focus on improving their health systems and making it more equitable

The Dutch care a lot about healthcare, and this concern goes beyond the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know, for example, of structural capacity problems in hospitals. Some Dutch people do not have confidence in the effects of market forces in the healthcare sector. We understand that pharmaceutical companies need to recoup their investments and that health insurance funds want cheap health care, but big companies should not abuse their power. The EU should adopt rules in this regard. We also believe that health care is primarily a national issue. Countries know better what the problems and priorities are at the local level. However, we find it important that European countries can learn from each other in order to improve health care.

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

As far as the availability of medicines in Europe is concerned, we could also be a little more economical. We throw too much of it today.

It is very good that Germany has welcomed patients from the Netherlands with COVID-19. I would like to see more such solidarity in Europe.

Wherever you live in the EU and whether you are rich or poor, everyone has the right to quality care.

When buying drugs, you have to consider not only costs, but also ethics. This means, for example, that child labour should not be used.

IDEA: "Improving the health of Europeans by ensuring that they are under less stress. For example, reduce the length of the working week."

IDEA: Enabling young people to make healthier choices through serious augmented reality games.

Of the inhabitants of Utrecht of Moroccan origin: Health can have a certain price.

The "Marokkaans Dialoog Overvecht" Foundation (MDO) (Moroccan dialogue in Overvecht) is dedicated to the participation of the Moroccan community in the Overvecht district of Utrecht. To this end, it encourages dialogue in the neighbourhood and thus fights against inequalities. Participants in the thematic dialogue under the Vision of Europe consider that European cooperation is very useful. However, a number consider that the Netherlands is sometimes too dependent on other countries. The management of the COVID-19 crisis was cited as an example in this regard. The many consultations within Europe had the effect, according to the participants, that the Netherlands began vaccination against COVID-19 too late. "Maybe it will cost more if the Netherlands wants to decide more on its own," someone said. But it's about health, it can cost a little more.

From Helmond's students: It is better to learn intelligently from each other than to take the same approach.

At Dr. Knippenberg College in Helmond, students aged around 16 discussed the European management of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some believe that EU Member States should have defined the vaccination programme together. Most participants felt that countries themselves had a better idea of what is needed and what works. They are therefore better able, according to them, to decide what is right for the population. They know better, for example, which sectors need vaccination first and which ones can wait. "It is naturally very good for countries to consult each other," said one of the students. If many countries have their own approach, they can observe what others are doing and learn from each other.

The EU's role in the world

The world faces great challenges. The EU is convinced that issues such as climate change and pandemics can only be addressed through global cooperation. The EU wants to make its voice heard on the world stage in this respect, for example, alongside the US and China. What is the Netherlands' view on this?

Recommendations — Our vision of the EU's role in the world

56 % of the Dutch believe that the EU's role in the world is an important theme and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Harnessing the power of the EU mainly in the context of major international themes

The fact that its creation has contributed to Europeans living in peace for over 75 years is regarded by many Dutch as the main added value of the EU. The Dutch also believe that the power of the EU lies in the joint management of major international challenges. We are thinking, for example, of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and the refugee crisis. EU Member States can also have a greater impact on third countries, by collectively concluding EU international agreements. We believe that our country is too small to make a difference in these areas alone. That said, the Dutch want the Netherlands to continue to make their own choices, based on their own culture and interests. Cooperation in Europe must therefore also ensure efficiency and policy power above all.

It is easier to conclude cooperation agreements within the EU than as an isolated country.

2. Within and outside Europe, choose cooperation rather than struggle

66 % of Dutch consider that the EU must form a stronger bloc against other international blocs. We are witnessing a weakening of the balance in the world. Countries like China and Russia are constantly expanding their power in different areas. This worries us a lot. The EU must therefore pay more attention, for example, to international security and the protection of the European economy from unfair trading practices. We consider it important, in this regard, for Member States to coordinate better and faster. This will allow us to make our voice heard more clearly. The fact that we are stronger together as European countries does not mean that we want to go to conflict. We also want, as far as possible, good cooperation with third countries.

“Reducing internal disputes and conflicts will increase the EU's prestige and power of influence on the world stage.”

3. Offering, in a thoughtful way, help in the event of a conflict

As part of the strengthening of the EU's role in the international arena, 50 % of the Dutch believe that the approach to conflicts in the world is an important theme. The best way to respond to conflicts is, according to them, difficult to determine. The past has shown that military intervention in a country is not always beneficial. It can, for example, lead to unforeseen high costs and create additional refugee flows. Countries should, given this local impact, decide for themselves whether to take part in a war. We are generally interested in increased cooperation between the European armies: we consider it important that Europe can defend itself well. But we always prefer to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence.

During the evacuation of Afghanistan, each country acted in its own corner. We could still have done better, wouldn't we?

Online and on-site discussions and ideas

The EU must first put order in its own affairs before confronting others.

By massively buying Chinese products as Europeans, we support China itself.

The United States continues to play a very important role in defending Europe.

Being a member of the EU also means sitting at the negotiating table. This makes it possible to discuss important decisions.

The EU must stop seeing itself as an isolated entity, because it is not. It is an association of European Member States and should behave as such.

IDEA: Like the regular global climate conference, a conference on human rights should also be held.

IDEA: "Make European armies more efficient, for example by making greater use of the collective purchase of equipment."

Dutch-Moroccan women: Promoting human rights.

"Women forFreedom" is a Dutch foundation that fights forced marriages, sexual oppression and financial abuse of girls and women with bicultural backgrounds. In collaboration with this foundation, a meeting with a group of Dutch-Moroccan women was organised. Participants believe that the EU is currently too dependent on Russia and China. "We find that the EU generally dares not propose anything, for fear of sanctions," said one of them. Drug production, which can often be much cheaper, has been cited as an example. "In the event of a conflict, China can shut down the tap, and we will have nothing," said one participant. The issue of human rights was also raised. "We all act as if we find it very important, but we close our eyes on what China is doing to the Uighurs," someone exclaims.

Students from the Technasium of Alkmaar: No common army.

In their thematic dialogue, students from Technasium Jan Arentz in Alkmaar discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a common European army. Participants indicated that they were not supportive of it. When an EU country quarrels with a third country, we should be able to automatically take part in a war. I think countries need to be able to decide on their own," someone said. The possibility of a third world war was also discussed. This possibility is not considered very great by the students, but they think that if we got there, a solution could nevertheless be found quickly. Armies can also collaborate well. There is no need, in my view, for there to be a European army.

Methodology used in the survey

Vision of Europe consists of different forms of interlinked dialogues that gather the views and ideas of Dutch citizens on the future of Europe and the EU. This chapter describes how these closely related dialogues are conducted in accordance with the guidelines applicable to national citizens' panels in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Structure of closely related dialogues

The following forms of dialogue are organised:

6. Survey of a panel

Online survey of a representative part of the Dutch population.

7. Online thematic dialogues for deepening

Dialogues in which the results of the first interim report "Our vision for Europe: opinions, ideas and recommendations" (8 October 2021) are discussed in depth with a group of Dutch.

8. Dialogues with specific groups

Meetings with Dutch people who are not used to participating in surveys or panels (online).

9. Dialogues with young people

Meetings where the European themes that are most relevant to these young people are discussed.

10. Online public survey: Questionnaire and "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper to the future)

The panel survey questionnaire could also be completed by all Dutch, including those residing abroad. This questionnaire was available from 1 September 2021 to 14 November 2021. In addition, during the same period, each Dutchman was able to participate in the action "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper to the future), an online tool presenting 20 claims.

1. Survey of a panel

The Dutch Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe" started on 1 September with a panel survey. In this description of the survey methodology, we briefly explain the design and implementation of this survey to a panel.

Target and target population

The survey "Vision of Europe" started with an online questionnaire on how Dutch people see the future of Europe. This questionnaire has been submitted to a representative panel and is also open to all Dutch (including those residing abroad). In addition, each person was able to participate in the action "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper to the future), an online tool presenting 20 claims. The results of the panel survey fed several thematic dialogues organised as a follow-up to the "Vision of Europe" citizen dialogue process.

The target population of the panel survey includes all Dutch people aged 18 or older who were registered as residents in the population register at the time the fieldwork began. According to the Dutch National Statistical Office (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek — CBS), this target group had 14,190,874 people as of 1 January 2021. The lower limit of 18 years corresponds to the electoral majority. We call it the population of the panel survey.

Fieldwork

A panel of more than 100,000 participants from all over the country (ISO certified, Research Keurmerk groep, Nederlandse marktonderzoek Associatie) was used to obtain a digital image of the “Medium Dutch”. These participants enrolled in the survey panel to provide their views on a wide range of topics on a regular basis. In addition to their intrinsic motivation to contribute, they are paid to answer the questionnaires. Several scientific studies show that respondents who receive compensation for completing a questionnaire do not give significantly different answers (source: *Does use of survey incentives degrade data quality?*, Cole, J. S., Sarraf, S.A., Wang, X., 2015).

Fieldwork started on 11 August 2021 and ended on 19 September 2021. For implementation, only one method of data collection was used, i.e. the Internet survey. Survey panel members received an email with a personal link to the online questionnaire. After two weeks, panel participants received a reminder. Invitations to participate were sent in batches and stratified (by ensuring an equal distribution of subgroups) until the required number of respondents was reached.

Sampling and distribution

The design of the survey is based on the principle that a minimum of 3,600 respondents must participate in the survey in order to ensure good statistical reliability. In addition, this number allows a good distribution between the different general characteristics of the population. There’s not just one type of Dutchman. We have therefore ensured in advance that the sample is distributed well over a number of characteristics. The Netherlands is a relatively small country, but opinions may differ by region. The positioning and importance given to the themes can be (in part) determined by the region in which you live. For example, people living in rural areas can understand a topic such as security differently from those in urban areas. Research by the Dutch Office of Social and Cultural Planning also shows that people with a higher level of study are more often supporters of the EU than those with a lower level of study and that young people are more supportive of the EU than older people (source: *Wat willen Nederlanders van de Europese Unie?*, Dutch Office for Social and Cultural Planning, The Hague, 2019).

This is why we have previously allocated the following three characteristics proportionally in order to ensure the representativeness of the sample: (1) residence through COROP regions, (2) age and (3) education level. The distribution of the sample was also presented according to the following general characteristics: gender, origin, main occupation, political orientation.

COROP regions have been developed on the basis of the nodal principle (a “heart” with an area of attraction or a regional function), based on the flow of people who commute. A few breaches of the nodal principle have been conceded so that the regions follow provincial boundaries. After the reorganisation of the municipalities beyond COROP limits, the distribution was adjusted (source: Dutch National Statistical Office). Within the COROP regions, we have ensured a good distribution among the age groups, with the following breakdown: ages 18-34, 35-54, 55-75 and over 75.

Finally, we ensured a representative distribution of educational levels. In the sample, the distribution of respondents corresponds to the distribution at national level of the highest level of education, which is as follows:

Highest level of education

Low: primary education, preparatory vocational education, 1st to 3 rd grade of general upper secondary education/pre-university education, secondary vocational education level 1	32.1 %
Intermediate: general upper secondary education/pre-university education, secondary vocational education level 2 to 4	44.6 %
High: higher vocational education or university education	22.9 %
Unknown	0.4 %

Response rate

A total of 4,086 people participated in the survey per panel. The objective of 3 600 fully completed questionnaires is therefore achieved.

Responses by COROP regions and age	18 to 34 years old	35 to 54 years old	55 to 75 years old	more than 75 years old
Northern Drenthe	11	14	17	5
South-East of Drenthe	10	12	14	4
Southwest of Drenthe	7	10	11	3
Flevoland	29	33	28	6
Northern Friesland	20	22	25	8
South East of Friesland	12	13	14	3
Southwest of Friesland	8	11	11	4
Achterhoek	22	27	34	11
Arnhem/Nijmegen	52	53	55	15
Veluwe	44	48	51	17
South-West of Gelderland	16	18	20	5
Grand Delfzijl	2	4	5	1
Eastern Groningen	7	10	12	3
Rest of Groningen	36	26	28	8

Central Limburg	13	17	21	7
Northern Limburg	17	20	23	7
Southern Limburg	38	40	52	17
Centre of North Brabant	34	35	35	11
Northeast of North Brabant	41	43	51	14
West of North Brabant	40	47	49	15
South East of North Brabant	55	56	58	18
Haarlem agglomeration	13	18	18	7
Alkmaar and its surroundings	14	19	19	6
Great Amsterdam	116	104	88	23
The Gooi and Vechtstreek	13	21	19	7
IJmond	12	14	15	4
Tip of Northern Holland	22	27	30	9
Zaan Region	11	13	12	3
Northern Overijssel	25	28	25	8
Twente	41	44	46	14
Southwest of Overijssel	10	11	12	3
Utrecht	96	100	89	27
Rest of Zeeland	16	21	23	8
Zeeland Flanders	6	8	9	3
Agglomeration of Leiden and region of bulbs	30	31	31	10
Agglomeration of The Hague	63	70	57	18
Delft and Westland	19	15	15	4
Grand Rijnmond	103	107	99	31
East of Southern Holland	22	24	25	8

South East of South Holland	24	26	26	9
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Responses by level of education

Low	1382	34 %
Intermediary	1747	43 %
High	915	22 %
Unknown	42	1 %

Reliability and representativeness

The number of respondents of 4,086 makes it possible to make observations for the population as a whole with a 95 % confidence level and a margin of error of 1.53 %. The confidence level and margin of error of the results are determined by the sample size. The larger the sample, the more reliable and accurate the results can be extrapolated to the entire population.

The confidence level is defined as 1 (100 %) minus the level of meaning. It is common to be based on a 5 % meaning level. We are talking about a 95 % confidence level. In other words, if the survey were repeated in the same way and under the same conditions, the results would be the same in 95 % of cases.

Accuracy (expressed by margin of error) indicates the range of values within which the actual value in the population is located. In other words: what would be the maximum difference between the results of the sample and the results that would be obtained from the population as a whole? A margin of error of 1.53 % means that the actual value within the total population may be 1.53 % higher or lower than the sample value. For example, if a survey of a sample of people indicates that 50 % of respondents consider a particular theme to be important, the actual percentage is 1.53 % higher or lower than that 50 %, i.e. between 48.47 and 51.53 %. A maximum margin of error of 5 % is common and generally accepted in quantitative studies (statistics).

In addition to reliability, the representativeness of the sample is important. Since the invitations to participate have been sent in batches and stratified, the results are representative in terms of the characteristics of the COROP region and the age groups by COROP region. The responses are also representative from the point of view of the level of education compared to the highest level of education achieved at the national level.

Other general characteristics

A number of additional contextual questions were asked to survey participants by panel. These include gender, EU positioning, origin, main occupation and the political party for which the person would vote in the event of elections.

49 % of respondents are men, 50 % are women and 1 % prefer not to answer this question.

51 % of respondents believe it is a good thing for the Netherlands to be a member of the EU, 13 % think it is a bad thing and 36 % are neutral or have no opinion.

95 % of respondents were born in the Netherlands. 89 % of respondents indicated that both parents were born in the Netherlands. 5 % were born to two parents themselves born abroad.

Current political orientation of respondents

Party	%
VVD (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy)	14 %
PVV (Party for Freedom)	13 %
SP (Socialist Party)	8 %
D66 (Democrats 66)	6 %
CDA (Christian Democratic Call)	6 %
PvdA (Labour Party)	6 %
Partij voor de Dieren (Animal Party)	4 %
GroenLinks (Green Left)	4 %
ChristenUnie (Christian Union)	3 %
JA21	3 %
BoerBurgerBeweging (Farmer-citizen Movement)	2 %
Forum voor Democratie (Forum for Democracy)	2 %
GSP (Reformed Political Party)	2 %
Volt	2 %
DENK	1 %
Groep Van Haga	1 %
BIJ1	1 %
Fractie Den Haan	0 %
Other	2 %
White vote	3 %
I prefer not to answer	13 %
I don't vote	5 %

What is currently your main occupation?

Occupation	%
Student/Student	6 %
Part-time employee	16 %
Full-time employee	31 %
Independent contractor	3 %
Person at home	5 %
Jobseeker	2 %
Volunteer	2 %
Incapacity for work	6 %
Retired	27 %
Other	1 %
I prefer not to answer	1 %

Questionnaire

The questionnaire and this report were prepared by an independent external organisation at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The questionnaire presents a modular structure and includes the following blocks of questions, in line with the themes identified for the Conference on the Future of Europe:

- Important themes and the role of Europe
- Climate change and environment
- Health
- Economy and employment
- Role of the European Union in the world
- Security and rule of law
- The virtual world
- European democracy
- Migration and refugees
- Education/culture/youth/sport

During the preparation of the questionnaire, great attention was paid to the quality, reliability and validity of the questions. For this reason, a neutral, non-guided formulation of questions, assertions and response options was sought, and it was verified that the questions were formulated in comprehensible language (level B1).

The questionnaire was subjected to quality tests through face-to-face interviews with test participants belonging to the target group. This allowed us to study how questions are understood by different types of respondents. If a question seemed to represent an overly large (too complex) cognitive load, it was appropriate.

Methods of analysis

Two methods of analysis were used in this survey:

Univariate analyses

Descriptive statistics are used to describe the variables of a survey. Frequencies and averages are used in this survey.

Bivariate analyses

The bivariate analyses make it possible to examine the relationship between two variables, in this case the relationship between the importance of the different themes and the question of whether the EU should intervene in this area and the general characteristic of age. A review was carried out to determine whether different age groups attach different importance to a subject and whether there are differing views on the extent to which these are issues in which the EU should be involved.

Publication of information and completeness

This report incorporates the results of all questions asked to survey panel respondents. For some questions, the respondent was given the opportunity to provide “open” (i.e. not predetermined) answers. Open responses were then categorised and included in the publication. The ideas shared by respondents in the free comments are used to feed into the various thematic dialogues organised as a follow-up to the Citizen Dialogue process “Vision of Europe”.

2. Online thematic dialogues for deepening

The themes at the heart of the Conference on the Future of Europe have been deepened through eight online thematic dialogues. The purpose of these dialogues was to discover the *reasons* for the opinions expressed, as well as the motivations and feelings behind them. What are the perceived concerns and opportunities? The discussion sessions also allowed participants to formulate suggestions and ideas on these topics, as well as to raise issues that are not part of the conference but remain important to them.

The thematic dialogues took place on 12-14 October and 9-11 November. Four online thematic dialogues were organised in October on the themes “Economics” and “Democracy”.

Four online thematic dialogues were held in November on the themes “Climate” and “The EU in the world”. On average, 29 people participated in each discussion session (231 in total). Participants were recruited from among the panel members (see point 1) and via social media.

3. Dialogues with specific groups

Some Dutch groups are known to be less accustomed to participating in surveys and panels (online). In order to obtain a representative image of “the voice of the Netherlands”, it was important that these citizens should also be able to express their ideas and opinions. That is why we also organised a number of on-the-spot dialogues for the “Vision of Europe” survey. The opinions and ideas that we were able to gather were used as a basis (among others) to formulate the recommendations.

Target groups

Hard-to-reach target groups cannot be defined unambiguously. Studies and experience allow us to know that Dutch people with **non-Western origins** participate significantly less of themselves in investigations and discussions. Since this represents a large group (14 % of the Dutch¹), they were selected to participate in the Vision of Europe dialogue. The same reasoning was followed with regard to **persons with little education**. It is also a large group (2.5 million Dutch²), which overlaps in part with the migrant group (39 %). Finally, a dialogue has been held with a group of people who are rarely found in surveys and discussions, **who are critical of Europe, but for whom Europe plays an important role in the professional sphere**. Entrepreneurs from the agricultural sector were selected.

The above-mentioned groups have been approached through organisations of which they are members, such as migrant organisations, advocacy associations and professional organisations. Since we limited the number of dialogues to eight, we couldn't be completely “exhaustive”. This makes the choice of participants somewhat arbitrary. To make this choice, we also took into account the enthusiasm to participate and help mobilise their base, as well as practical issues such as availability according to dates and location.

On-site dialogues were held with members of the following organisations:

- Hakder Foundation, Alevi community, Schiedam
- Asha Foundation, Hindu community, Utrecht (two discussion sessions)
- Piëzo, civil society organisation, Zoetermeer
- Taal doet Meer, an organisation for low-educated people, Utrecht
- BoerenNatuur, association of agricultural groups
- Marokkanen Dialoog Overvecht, Moroccan community, Utrecht
- Women for Freedom, advocacy organisation for women with a migrant background, The Hague

A total of 110 people participated in these discussion meetings.

4. Dialogues with young people

Young people are a priority target group of the Conference on the Future of Europe. In order to actively encourage their participation in the Citizens’ Dialogue “Vision of Europe” and to make the opinions and ideas of this group well heard, six physical discussion meetings were organised specifically for young people.

The meetings took place in the following institutions:

- Association of History Students, University of Leiden
- Dr. Knippenberg College, High School, Helmond
- Coalitie-Y, Economic and Social Council Youth Platform
- Graafschap College, vocational secondary education, Doetinchem

- CSG Jan Arentsz, secondary education focusing on technological subjects, Alkmaar
- National Youth Council (the meeting took place off-site)

A total of 110 young people participated in the discussion meetings.

Maintenance techniques used

Online thematic dialogues, dialogues with specific groups and dialogues with young people were conducted using the so-called “socratic” interview method. This method has been used for many years on Dialogue Day, where people across the Netherlands interact on issues that affect them. In the context of the Socratic maintenance method, the moderator shall take into account the following principles:

- Let the other tell their story
- Don't answer it immediately with another story
- Treat yourself with respect
- Talk about one's own point of view (“I find” rather than “they say”)
- Ask for more explanations if the views expressed are limited to generalities
- Avoid judgments and analyse them
- Grant moments of silence if people need to think for a moment

During the dialogues, the following rhythm shall be used: divergence — convergence — divergence. The principle is that you must first diverge (directly express individual feelings and opinions), before you can converge (talk possible avenues) and then finally diverge again (for example, collect individual recommendations). Experience and theory show that this rhythm ensures an optimal flow of dialogue.

All dialogues were conducted by professional facilitators.

5. Online public survey: Questionnaire and “Swipen naar de toekomst” (Swiper to the future)

The panel survey questionnaire was also open to all Dutch, including those residing abroad. That questionnaire was available from¹ September 2021 to 14 November 2021. In addition, during the same period, each Dutchman was able to participate in the action “Swipen naar de toekomst” (Swiper to the future), an online tool presenting 20 claims.

Answers and use

A total of 1,967 participants completed the questionnaire and 6,968 were to the end of the screen scanning tool. Both the questionnaire and the screen scan tool were open to everyone: there were no prerequisites or selection criteria to participate. In the questionnaire, it was possible to pass questions (there were no mandatory questions) in order to maximise the response rate. Participants chose “I prefer not to respond” much more often than in the representative panel survey.

The general characteristics of the participants in the open questionnaire and screen scanning tool differ in several respects from those of the participants in the representative panel. Unlike the panel survey, the results of the open questionnaire and screen scanning tool are not representative. The results of the online open survey were used to complement the panel survey. They give an overview of the feelings and ideas circulating in the Netherlands. The suggestions for improvement mentioned in the input fields were used in the section “Discussions and ideas online and on site”. The screen scanning tool has been used to better understand some of the feelings circulating in the Netherlands. These results were taken into account in the preparation of the recommendations. Due to the requirement of representativeness, the results of the investigation opened online have been limitedly taken into account in this report.

This report is published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. www.kijkopeuropa.nl

III — References to the results of national events

- [Belgium](#)
- [Bulgaria](#)
- [CzechRepublic](#)
- [Denmark](#)
- [InLlemagne](#)
- [Estonia](#)
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IV — Reference to the report of the multilingual digital platform

[PLmultilingualnumeform of the Conference on the Future of Europe —February 2022 report](#)



PDF ISBN 978-92-824-8655-9 doi:10.2860/25889 QC-05-22-131-EN-N Print ISBN 978-92-824-8729-7 doi:10.2860/533066 QC-05-22-131-EN-C

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- 1 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: #3, #17, #18, #19
- 2 # = recommendation of the European Citizens' Panels.
- 3 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: #39, #40, #41, #42, #43, NL1, NL2, #51
- 4 Recommendation of a National Citizens' Panel
- 5 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: #44, #45, #46, #47, #50
- 6 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: #39, #40, #45, #48, #50, FRchangement8, FRswait11, #51
- 7 The recommendations of the Dutch Citizens' Panel differ from the recommendations of the European Citizens' Panel: he argues that health and health care should be primarily a national responsibility [NL3].
- 8 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 9, 10, 11, 12, 14; Netherlands: 1; Italy: 1.1; Lithuania: 3, 8.
- 9 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 10, 11 & 14; Germany: 2.1, 2.2; Netherlands: 1, 2; France: 3, 9; Italy: 1,2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 4.a.2, 6.1; Lithuania: 1, 7.
- 10 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 1, 2, 7, 28, 30; Germany: 4.1, 4.2; Netherlands: 4; France: 6; Italy: 5.a.1, 5.a.4, 6.1, 6.2.
- 11 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 19, 20, 21, 25; Italy: 4.a.1.
- 12 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 21, 22, 23, 26, 27; Italy: 5.a.1.
- 13 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 13, 31; Netherlands: 2.3; Italy: 4.b.3, 4.b.6; Lithuania: 9, 10.
- 14 Based on the discussions of the working group and the plenary session.
- 15 See Recommendation No 1 of the ECP4, Recommendation No 2 of the NCP Germany, Panel 1 'The EU in the world', and of the Italy NCP, Group 2, rec. 1, developed within the Working Group.
- 16 See Recommendation 4 of the ECP4 and Recommendations 5 and 6 of the Italy NCP, Group 2, developed within the Working Group.
- 17 See the digital platform and recommendations 2 and 3 of the Italy NCP, Group 2, developed within the working group, <https://futureu.europa.eu/processes/EUInTheWorld/f/16/proposals/197870?locale=fr>.
- 18 See Recommendation 14 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 19 See Recommendation No 2 of the ECP4 and Recommendation No 4 of the Italy NCP, Group 2, developed within the Working Group.
- 20 See Recommendation No 17 of the ECP4 and Recommendation No 4 of the Italy NCP, Group 2, developed within the Working Group.
- 21 See recommendation 1 of the NCP Germany, panel 1 "The EU in the world", developed in the working group.
- 22 See Recommendation 3 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 23 See Recommendation 11 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 24 See Recommendation 13 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 25 See recommendation 15 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 26 See recommendation 16 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 27 See Recommendation 12 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 28 See Recommendation 21 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 29 See the digital platform, developed within the working group.
- 30 See the digital platform, developed within the working group.
- 31 See recommendation 26 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 32 See recommendation 18 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 33 See recommendation 19 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 34 See recommendation 19 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 35 See recommendation 25 of the ECP 4.
- 36 Based on the discussions of the working group and the plenary session.
- 37 See change 2 of the French national panel/events.

- 38 See Recommendation 20 of the ECP4 and Recommendation 7 of the Italy, Group 2 NCP, developed within the Working Group.
- 39 See change 2 of the French national citizen panel.
- 40 See Recommendation 24 of the ECP4 and Recommendation 7 of the Italy, Group 2 NCP, developed within the Working Group.
- 41 See Recommendation 22 of the ECP 4, developed in the Working Group.
- 42 See Recommendation 1 on “The EU in the world” of the Dutch National Citizens Panel, developed in the Working Group.
- 43 See the digital platform and plenary debates, developed in the Working Group.
- 44 See the digital platform, developed within the working group.
- 45 Citizens’ recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens’ Panel 2 (CEP 2) 10, 11, 14, 30; Belgian National Citizens’ Panel (NCP): 1.3.1, 1.4.2, 1.4.3; German NCP: 5.1, 5.2; Dutch NCP: 1.2.
- 46 Recommendation 14 of the ECP2. Recommendations 1.3.1, 1.4.2 and 1.4.3 of the Belgian NCP and 1.2 of the Dutch NCP.
- 47 ECP Recommendation No 112. Recommendations 5.1 and 5.2 of the German NCP. Debate in the WG.
- 48 ECP Recommendation No 112. Debate in the WG. Debate in plenary.
- 49 Recommendation 10 of the ECP2.
- 50 ECP Recommendation No 302.
- 51 Citizens’ recommendations on which the proposal is based: PCE2: 7, 8, 9; Dutch NCP: 1.3, 4.3.
- 52 Recommendation 7 of the ECP2. Debate in the WG.
- 53 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.
- 54 Recommendation 9 of the ECP2.
- 55 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.
- 56 Recommendation 8 of the ECP2. Recommendations 1.3 and 4.3 of the Dutch NCP.
- 57 Recommendations Nos. 7 and 8 of the ECP2.
- 58 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.
- 59 Citizens’ recommendations on which the proposal is based: PCE2: 5, 12, 13, 17, 28; Belgian NCP: 1.5.1, 2.1.1 to 2.4.3; Dutch NCP: 3.1.
- 60 Recommendation 5 of the ECP2. Recommendation 2.1.1 of the Belgian NCP. Recommendation 3.1 of the Dutch NCP.
- 61 ECP Recommendation No 122. Recommendation 2.1.4 of the Belgian NCP.
- 62 PCE2 Recommendations Nos. 17 and 28. Recommendations 1.5.1, 2.1.3, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 of the Belgian NCP.
- 63 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.
- 64 PCE2 Recommendations Nos. 5 and 28. Recommendations 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 of the Belgian NCP.
- 65 ECP Recommendation No 282. Recommendations 2.3.1, 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 of the Belgian NCP.
- 66 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.
- 67 ECP Recommendation No 132.
- 68 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.
- 69 ECP Recommendation No 132.
- 70 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.
- 71 Citizens’ recommendations on which the proposal is based: PCE2: 1, 2, 21, 22, 23; Dutch NCP: 1.1.
- 72 ECP Recommendation No 222. Debate in the WG.
- 73 Question also discussed by the Working Group on a Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment.
- 74 ECP Recommendation No 212. Recommendation 1.1 of the Dutch NCP.
- 75 ECP Recommendation No 232.
- 76 Question also discussed by the Working Group on a Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment.
- 77 Recommendation 1 of the ECP2. Debate in the WG.
- 78 Recommendation 2 of the ECP2. Debate in the WG.
- 79 Citizens’ recommendations on which the proposal is based: PCE2: 3, 4, 6.
- 80 Recommendation 3 of the ECP2.

- 81 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Climate Change and the Environment.
- 82 Recommendation 4 of the ECP2.
- 83 Recommendation 6 of the ECP2.
- 84 Issue also discussed by the Working Group on Climate Change and the Environment.
- 85 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel 1 (ECP 1): 17, 40, 47; Dutch National Citizens' Panel (NCP) No. 1.
- 86 See link to ECP 3 Recommendation 38 as regards infrastructure for electric vehicles.
- 87 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel 1 (ECP 1): 8, 34 and 47; Italian National Citizens' Panel (NCP) 5.2.
- 88 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: recommendations 39 and 46 of the European Citizens' Panel 1 (CEP 1) and recommendations 2.6 of the Lithuanian National Citizens' Panel (NCP) and NCP of the Netherlands.
- 89 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: recommendations 42, 43, 44 and 45 of the European Citizens' Panel No 1 (PCE 1) and Recommendation No 2 of the Netherlands' National Citizens' Panel (NCP).
- 90 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel No 1 (PCE 1) Nos 7, 16 and 17 and National Citizens' Panels (NCPs) of Germany and Italy 1.3.
- 91 To be considered in connection with the proposals of the Working Group on a Stronger Economy.
- 92 Amendments Nos 3A and 3B of the Working Group (WG).
- 93 Recommendations 32 and 37 of the European Citizens' Panel 2 (PCE 2); national panels BE, FR and NL.
- 94 National panel FR.
- 95 Amendment No 8 of the WG, more concise wording.
- 96 ECP Recommendation No 29 2.
- 97 ECP 2 Recommendations 19 and 32; national BE and FR panels and DK representative of national events.
- 98 National panel BE.
- 99 Amendment No 7B of the WG.
- 100 National panel BE.
- 101 Kantar Final Report, p. 85.
- 102 Recommendation 39 of the ECP 2; national panel number 3 BE.
- 103 WG Amendment 10A, more concise wording.
- 104 DK representative of national events.
- 105 Amendment No 54C of the WG.
- 106 DK representative of national events.
- 107 DK representative of national events.
- 108 Amendment No 15A of the WG, compromise wording.
- 109 PCE 2 Recommendations 24, 36 and 38; national panel BE.
- 110 Amendment No 16C of the WG.
- 111 Recommendation 33 of the ECP 2; national panels BE, FR and NL.
- 112 ECP Recommendation No 26 2.
- 113 Amendment No 17 of the WG.
- 114 National panel BE.
- 115 WG Amendment No. 18A.
- 116 ECP Recommendation No 252.
- 117 Amendment No. 18B of the WG.
- 118 Recommendation 31 of the ECP 2; national panels BE and NL.
- 119 Amendments No. 19A of the WG, redrafting to produce more adequate text.
- 120 Amendment No 21 of the WG, compromise.
- 121 National panels BE and FR.
- 122 Amendment No. 23B of the WG.
- 123 Recommendation 27 of the ECP 2; national panel BE.

124Amendment No. 25C of the WG.
125Recommendation 14 of the ECP.
126ECP Recommendation No 18. NB: Citizens' representatives explained that this mechanism should be designed and used with caution.
127Amendments Nos. 28E, 28G and 28H of the WG.
128Recommendation 16 of the ECP 2; NL National Panel No 20, divided on transnational lists.
129Based on Recommendation 16 of the ECP 2; discussion in GT.
130ECP 2 Recommendation 19 and Multilingual Digital Platform (MNP).
131EESC.
132Amendment No 32B of the WG.
133Recommendation 36 of the ECP 2; national panels BE and FR.
134National panel FR ("election of the President of the European Commission by universal suffrage"); PNM (Final Kantar Report: a group of contributions concerns the direct election of the President of the Commission by citizens).
135Amendment No. 34C of the WG.
136National panel BE (3.2), national panel FR (11) PNM (final report Kantar: "As far as the European Parliament is concerned, contributors most often demand that it be given real power of legislative initiative").
137PNM (Final Kantar Report: "Concerning the European Parliament, (...) there are also requests to grant it budgetary powers").
138PNM (Final Kantar Report: According to another contribution, parties should become more accessible to people from different cultural or socio-economic backgrounds.
139CoR in WG.
140Amendment 38 of the WG, compromise wording.
141ECP Recommendation No 20 2.
142ECP Recommendation No 21 4.
143Amendment No 43 of the WG.
144Recommendation 34 of the ECP 2; national Panel NL.
145WG debate based on recommendation 34 of the ECP 2; national panel NL; PNM (Final Kantar Report: "Increasing transparency and greater participation of citizens in the EU decision-making process are also supported".
146Amendment No. 44A of the WG.
147WG debate (presentation by national parliaments and CoR).
148Amendment No. 45C of the WG.
149Amendment No 46B of the WG.
150ECP Recommendation No 15 2.
151WG debate based on the need expressed in Recommendation 15 of the ECP 2 to "clarify the functions of the European institutions"; PNM (Final Kantar Report: "There are also suggestions to deepen bicameral legislative power in the EU.")
152Amendment No 48B of the WG.
153ECP Recommendation No 15 2.
154Discussions in the WG.
155Amendment No. 52A of the WG.
156EESC, compromise formulation.
157ECP Recommendation 35, FR National Panel and combined WG 51C and 51D amendments.
158Amendment No. 53D of the WG.
159Discussion in WG; national Parliaments.
160Discussion in WG; CoR and EESC; Kantar Final Report, p. 85.
161Amendment No 58B of the WG.
162Amendment No 59B of the WG.
163Discussion in WG; social partners and other members.
164Amendment 63A of the WG, compromise wording.

- 165 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (ECP 4) No⁶, 7, 9, 28 and 30, Lithuania No 9.
- 166 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (ECP 4) No⁸ and 27, Lithuania No 10, Netherlands No 3.
- 167 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (PCE 4) No¹⁰, 35 and 38.
- 168 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (ECP 4) No²⁹, 31, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40, Italy Nos 3.8, 4.4 (p. 15) and 5.6 (p. 11), Lithuania Nos 2 and 3, Netherlands Nos 1 and 2.
- 169 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (PCE 4) No⁷ and 32, France No 13.
- 170 French PCN, change 6.
- 171 ECP Recommendation 37 1.
- 172 Recommendation 3 of the ECP. French PCN, change 6.
- 173 ECP Recommendation 41 1.
- 174 This is discussed in more detail by the Working Group on European Democracy. See Recommendation No 24 of the ECP 2, Recommendations 1.1, 1.2 and 2.12 of the Belgian NCP and the Italian NCP Recommendation on "Inclusion Policies".
- 175 Recommendation of the Italian NCP on "inclusion policies".
- 176 This is discussed in more detail by the Digital Transformation Working Group. See Recommendations Nos. 8 and 34 of the ECP 1.
- 177 Recommendation of the Italian NCP "Encouraging young people to study scientific subjects".
- 178 PCE Recommendations 33 and 48 1. Also addressed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation. See Recommendation 47 of the ECP 1 on healthy use of the Internet.
- 179 Recommendation 5 of the ECP 1.
- 180 Recommendations Nos 15 and 18 of the ECP 1.
- 181 Recommendation of the Italian NCP on "Europe in the world"
- 182 Recommendations Nos¹⁸ and 41 of the ECP 1 and recommendation of the Italian NCP on "Investing in the training of trainers".
- 183 PCE 1 Recommendation No 17 addressed in full to the Digital Working Group.
- 184 ECP Recommendation No. 15 1. Recommendation of the German NCP on an "information platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience at EU level".
- 185 Recommendation 6.1 of the Belgian NCP. French PCN, change 7.
- 186 Recommendation 7.2 of the Belgian NCP.
- 187 Recommendation 4 of the ECP 1.
- 188 Proposal to complement Recommendations Nos 1 and 30 of the ECP 1 covered by the Working Party on a Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment.
- 189 Proposal to complement Recommendation 25 of the ECP 1 covered by the Working Party on a Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment.
- 190 ECP Recommendation No 28 4. Dutch NCP ("Our Vision for Culture, Youth and Sport"), Recommendation 1. French PCN, change 6.
- 191 Recommendation 6 of the ECP 1.
- 192 Dutch NCP ("Our Vision for Culture, Youth and Sport"), Recommendation No. 2.
- 193 ECP Recommendation 36 1. French PCN, change 6. Recommendations Nos 2.10 and 2.11 of the Belgian NCP. German NCP, "Creating more exchange opportunities for students in Europe". Dutch NCP ("Our Vision for Culture, Youth and Sport"), Recommendations¹ and 3. Italian NCP, recommendation to "Make an office of confluence between East or West, promoting cultural exchanges and joint cultural initiatives".
- 194 ECP Recommendations 32 and 38 1. Dutch NCP ("Our Vision for Culture, Youth and Sport"), Recommendation 3.
- 195 Recommendation of the Italian NCP on "Europe in the world"
- 196 French PCN, change 7. Recommendations^{2,5}, 6.1 and 8.7 of the Belgian NCP. Italian NCP, Recommendation on "Strengthening European cultural values and characteristics as well as regional specificities".
- 197 Dutch NCP ("Our Vision for Culture, Youth and Sport"), Recommendation No. 2.

198 Recommendation of the Italian NCP to "Exceed the production model of the past century"

199ECP Recommendation No 29 1.

200ECP Recommendation 36 1.