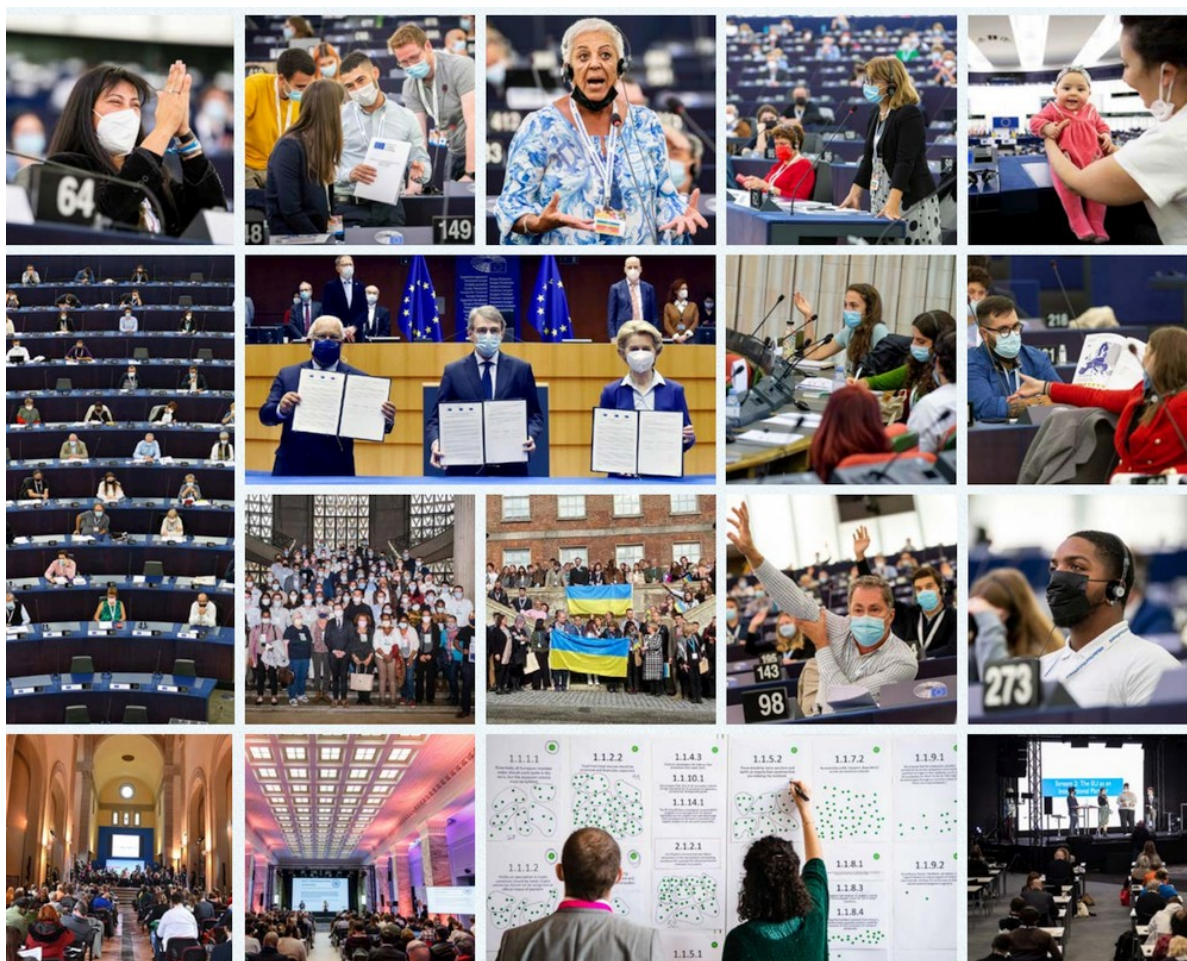


Conference on the future of Europe

FINAL RESULTS REPORT

May 2022



**The future is in your
hands**



Conference on
the future of
Europe

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



The aim of this ‘provisional’ document is to enable more people in the European Union to understand documents produced for the European Union (and funded by their contributions). The [original document in French in pdf format](#) was formatted using Libre Office software (this document has disappeared from the official website; on 26 November 2025, only [the English document remains](#). The [official languages of the European Union are translated into toutes](#) via <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 for the EU administration to take responsibility for the translation of important documents, so that all Europeans can understand what this is all about and discuss their common future together.**

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

On the Internet:

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

Association Europe-Démocratie-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.
- the layout has been harmonised, and all pages are properly numbered (the initial document was a juxtaposition of pdf files written separately, with independent numbering).
- the endnotes have been transformed into endnotes (at the bottom of the pages).
- documents initially in the form of images have been transformed into tables to be easily translatable.
- the document itself was made from the report in French available at the beginning of May 2022. The report available in November 2025 dates from June 2022, is only in English, and includes a table of those responsible at the end. This table has been added at the end of the document.

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Introduction

On 10 March 2021, the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, the 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. Their commitment was simple: through a citizens-centred exercise based on a bottom-up approach, ensuring that all Europeans have a say in what they expect from the European Union and that they play a greater role in shaping the future of the Union. Their task, on the other hand, has been extremely difficult: it 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 Rules of Procedure of the Conference.

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 outcome including 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 framework

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 (composed, on an equal footing, of representatives of the three institutions as well as observers from key 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 the 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 Conference Plenary Assemblies. It is the result of an unprecedented willingness on the part 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 swiftly consider how to effectively follow up on this report, each within its competence 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, examining Europe's priorities and challenges, with a view to underpinning the democratic legitimacy of the European project and fostering citizens' adherence to our common values and objectives. The conference was a citizens-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, the 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 places citizens at the centre.

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 assisted the work of the Executive Board. In particular, the team – led by three co-chairs from the three institutions – oversaw the organisation and preparations for the meetings of the Executive Board, the Conference Plenary Assemblies and the European Citizens' Panels. In cooperation with service providers, it was tasked with managing the multilingual digital platform and reporting on key milestones throughout the process.

The unique composition of this team allowed

for constant collegiality of work and ensured synergies and efficiency gains in all areas;

- a Conference Plenary (see Chapter III for more information), which allowed for a discussion of the recommendations made by the National and European Citizens' Panels, grouped by themes, in full respect of EU values and the Conference Charter,^{II} and without pre-determined outcomes of the debates or limiting their scope to pre-defined policy areas. Contributions collected on the multilingual digital platform were also discussed, where appropriate. Nine thematic working groups were set up to provide input to prepare plenary 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, drawn up 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 different structures of the Conference and their interactions.

3. Conference-related events

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 other contributions to the Conference (see Chapter II.C for more details).

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, involving some 650 000 participants.

4. Implementation of the multilingual digital platform

The multilingual digital platform (see Chapter II.A for more information) was 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 citizens' input and information on the different parts of the conference and an interactive tool for sharing and discussing the ideas and contributions of the multitude of events organised in the framework 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 prepared on the contributions presented on the platform.

The input gathered through the Platform was taken into account by the European Citizens' Panels and debated 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 details).

A total of 800 randomly selected citizens, representing the sociological and geographical diversity of the EU and grouped into four panels of 200 citizens, met in 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 thereof in advance.

The Executive Board was regularly informed about progress in the creation and organisation of the European Citizens' Panels.

6. National Citizens' Panels

According to the Joint Declaration, Member States could organise national panels. To support Member States planning to organise National Citizens' Panels, guidance was 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. That guidance included principles of good deliberation, based

on OECD principles.^{III} Each Member State could decide whether or not to organise a national citizens' panel. 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 debated at Conference Plenary Assemblies, alongside 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>.

II. Citizens' contributions to the conference

A. Multilingual digital platform

The Multilingual Digital Platform was launched on 19 April 2021 and was the central contact point of the Conference. Through him, everyone was able to participate in the conference: all citizens in the EU and beyond, civil society, social partners and various other stakeholders.

The platform was developed specifically for the conference, using Decidim, a European free software dedicated to citizen participation. 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 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', 'Education, culture, youth and sport', and 'Other ideas'.

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

Anyone who wanted to could share their ideas on 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 of contributing 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 the events.

The Platform has played a fundamental role in ensuring the transparency of the whole process of access to conference information for all. This was where everyone could find information on the working methods and the actual organisation of the Conference, for example on the Conference process itself

(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, for example by adding functionalities or visual media. Over time, the platform has also been made more accessible to people with disabilities.

All contributions on the platform were public: everyone could access it, as well as the 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 enabled multilingual interpretation and in-depth analysis of the platform's content. The analysis platform is a tool that has proven to be essential to provide 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 set 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 prepared reports, which were published on the platform itself.

A [first interim report](#) was published in September: it concerned contributions

submitted until 2 August 2021. In mid-October 2021, the [second interim report](#) was published, 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 entered its final phase, the last report to inspire the work of the Conference Plenary Assemblies was published in mid-March 2022, taking into account the contributions presented on the Digital Platform

until 20 February 2022. This timeline was clearly announced on the platform and elsewhere, leading to an increase in contributions in January and February 2022. Contributions received until 9 May will be dealt with in the additional report. Additional reports on contributions presented on the Platform, per Member State, were also made available together with the September and December 2021 and March 2022 reports.

These reports mainly focused on a qualitative analysis of the contributions published on the platform, in order to give a general overview of the breadth and diversity of ideas proposed on the platform and discussed at the events. To this end, a manual textual analysis and pooling of contributions was carried out by a research team, using analytical tools provided by the Commission's Joint Research Centre. This

high level of interest or debate generated by certain ideas. The reports also provided an overview of the socio-demographic data of the participants. Contributors were asked to provide information on their country of residence, level of education, age, gender and employment status; however, the optional nature of this information limits the insight that can be drawn into the profile of the participants. For example, 26.9% of all contributions came from participants who did not indicate their country of residence.



made it possible to identify common topics and sub-categories of topics, which were described in detail under each theme and summarised in conceptual diagrams allowing them to be quickly visualised. In order to complement this qualitative approach with quantitative elements, themes, sub-themes or ideas that often came up or were highly commented on 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

Since the launch of the platform, the topic "European Democracy" has been the one with the highest number of contributions (ideas, comments and events). The second theme was "Climate change and the 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 input reports collected on the Platform, including the conceptual blueprints, have made a valuable contribution to the work of the European Citizens' Panels. At the beginning of each of the three sessions of the panels, the main findings of the report and the conceptual outlines were presented to the panels, which were provided with links to the full reports. For example, many of the ideas that appeared on the platform can be found in the recommendations made by the European Citizens' Panels.

The reports were also discussed in the Conference's plenary sessions, as early as the plenary on 23 October 2021, as well as in previous working group meetings. The contributions of the Platform therefore continued to enrich the proposals developed in the Conference Plenary.

As of 20 April 2022, almost five million unique visitors had visited the multilingual digital platform, where more than 50,000 participants were active, 17,000 ideas debated and more than 6,000 events recorded. Behind these figures are thousands of engaged citizens who share and debate many ideas and organise a multitude of original and innovative events in

In order to ensure that the Platform is a space where citizens from all walks of life and from all over Europe feel comfortable and encouraged to contribute to the debate, every person using the Platform had to subscribe to the [Conference Charter](#) and 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 content took place. When a contribution was hidden, the user received a message from the moderation team explaining why. Details on the principles and process of moderation have been made available in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) section of the platform.

Between 19 April 2021 and 20 April 2022, 430 ideas (2.4%), 312 comments (1.4%) and 396 events (6.0%) were hidden. Around 71% of ideas were hidden because they did not contain proposals, were spam, were user requests, or contained personal information or an inappropriate associated image. About 17% of the hidden ideas were duplicates. Only 11% of the hidden ideas were hidden because of their offensive content. The vast majority of events, 76%, were hidden because they were duplicates or because information about the event was incomplete, at the request of the organisers or because they were not linked to the conference.

The possibility to make contributions on the Platform remained open until 9 May 2022. An additional report is planned after that date to

What is happening at the Conference on the Future of Europe?		
52 346	652 532	17671
Conference participants	participants in the event	ideas
21877	6465	72528
comments	events	approvals
Status of participation as of 20 April 2022 (source: Conference on the Future of Europe (europa.eu))		

the different Member States.

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 socio-demographic profiles of participants. Overall, the platform offered an innovative deliberative space, which allowed several

thousand citizens and various actors from across Europe and beyond to participate in an online multilingual debate on European issues in all Member States. This 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, together 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 have brought together some 800 citizens from all walks of life and all regions of the European Union. While the concept of panels or citizens' 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 such scale and ambition. The remarkable interpretation system that accompanied the process made it possible to establish an inclusive, respectful and effective dialogue between the speakers, thus 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 modalities 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, provided with updated practical arrangements and adapted the provisional calendar of sessions of the European Citizens' Panels during the process, as needed.

The participants of the European Citizens' Panels were selected in the summer of 2021. EU citizens were randomly selected (they were mainly contacted by telephone by the 27 national polling institutes, coordinated by an external service provider), with the aim of creating 'panels' that are representative of the diversity of the EU, based on five criteria: gender, age, geographical origin (nationality as well as urban/rural background), 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 had to include at least one citizen and one citizen per Member State. As the conference paid specific attention to young people, one third of the citizens making up each panel were between 16 and 24 years old. For each group of 200 people, 50 additional citizens were selected to form 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 the 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 SESSIONS OF PANELS

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

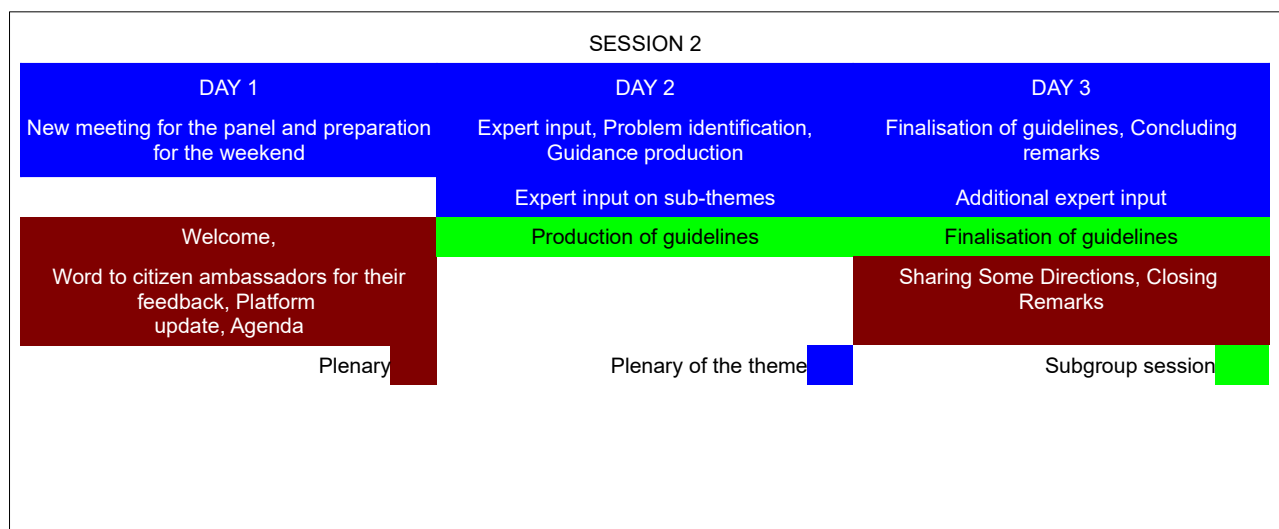
- in subgroups composed of 12 to 14 citizens. Four to five languages were spoken in each subgroup, where citizens could express themselves in their own language. The work of the sub-groups was guided by professional facilitators selected by the consortium of external service providers.
- in plenary, with all participants. Plenary sessions were led by two main moderators. The priority themes resulting from the discussions were subdivided into "axes" (corresponding to the thematic clusters) and "sub-axes", and served as the basis for the second round of sessions. To this end, participants received background information on the topics, as well as relevant inputs, including analyses and conceptual schematics, from the first interim report of the Multilingual Digital Platform and presentations by high-level external experts.

During the first sessions, the 20 people who

participating citizens from across the EU could intervene through a connection and interpretation system.

In the second round of sessions, with the support of experts and fact-checkers, citizens identified and discussed a range of specific issues and developed guidance for each of the thematic axes they had identified during the first session. Particular attention has been paid to gender balance and geographical diversity within the expert group, and to ensuring that each expert, through his or her contributions, informs citizens thoroughly by providing them with facts and/or the state of play of the debate and refraining from giving personal opinions. Citizens were also provided with the interim reports of the Multilingual Digital Platform.

This allowed them to identify and discuss issues related to the themes assigned to them, drawing on the input provided by the experts on the topics addressed and on their own



were asked to represent each of the panels at the plenary assembly were selected from among the volunteer citizens; in doing so, age and gender diversity were ensured.

SECOND SERIES OF PANELS SESSIONS

The European Citizens' Panels continued their work by meeting online throughout November. A special mechanism had been put in place for this purpose: a studio in Brussels hosted the main moderation and plenaries, while

knowledge and experience, during the deliberations held during the second round of sessions. Problems have been defined as problems calling for solutions or as situations calling for change.

Citizens then addressed these issues by developing guidance, the first step towards making recommendations, which was the objective of the third round of sessions. Citizens were also asked to justify these guidelines.

Discussions and collective work took place in three formats:

- in sub-groups. Each of the fifteen sub-groups 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.

SESSION 3		
DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
Reconnection, prioritization and Transformation of the guidelines start of work		
in final recommendations		Vote on final recommendations
Welcome and objectives of the weekend	Turning guidelines into recommendations	Vote on final recommendations
Open Forum, Reading and prioritisation of guidelines	Feedback to other groups, Finalisation of recommendations	
Turning guidelines into recommendations		
Plenary	Open Forum	Work en subgroup

- in plenary session devoted to a work stream. Each plenary session devoted to a workstream brought together the subgroups working on the same thematic axis. Plenary sessions on a work stream were moderated by professional facilitators, with interpretation covering all languages needed by participants.
- 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 into the 24 official EU languages.

THIRD SESSIONS OF PANELS

The third and final round of panel sessions took place in-person at 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 (EU in the world; Migration) had to be postponed to February 2022, in consultation with national authorities and associated partners.

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 into the 24 official EU languages.
- Citizens started by reviewing all the guidance developed by the panel during Session 2 in an 'Open Forum'. Each citizen then gave priority to a maximum of ten orientations per axis of work. Once this prioritisation process at panel level was completed, citizens joined the subgroup where they had already worked during Session 2 and collectively took note of the orientations of their group that were prioritised by the rest of the panel – which was an opportunity to compare this choice with their own assessment. For the preparation of the recommendations, each subgroup received 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 the guidance to make recommendations. Citizens discussed which directions had received the most support (in their order of priority) and started the process of drafting the recommendations.

During the third round 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 made it possible to centralise all requests for information and fact-

checking on the spot and to send short and factual replies from experts and fact-checkers to the sub-groups. This system has been designed to ensure that contributions from experts and fact-checkers are prepared in accordance with the highest quality standards and in such a way as 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 work in subgroups, feedback sessions were organised to help participants understand the work done in the other subgroups and reinforce 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 previous day 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. The recommendations were, one after the other, put to the vote by the participants via an online form.

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

Therecommendations received 70% or more of the votes cast and were adopted by the panel; recommendations that did not reach 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.

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PANELS OF EUROPEAN CITIZENS 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 and 22 January 2022 (Pals 2 and 3) and on 11 and

12 March 2022 (Pals 1 and 4). The 80 representatives of the European Citizens' Panels (an average of 70 on-site 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 (25-26 March, 8-9 April and 29-30 April).

They also held regular exchanges of views at 'Citizens' Component' meetings (online preparatory meetings and plenary meetings, on-site), among themselves and with the 27 representatives of national events and/or panels. On 23 April, the representatives of the European Citizens' Panels met online with all their counterparts to explain how the recommendations had been discussed and then incorporated into the plenary proposals, and to receive feedback from the other panel participants. A group composed 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 full transparency. The plenary meetings of the European Citizens' Panels were streamed live, 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 panel session is available on the platform, along with the recommendations. These reports also contain information on all experts who supported the work of the panels.

As a true democratic innovation, the 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 their progress, in accordance with certain rules, in 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, with due attention to related social justice issues. He also addressed the opportunities and challenges of the digital transformation, one of the most important topics for discussion in 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 with the approval of the five work streams "Working in Europe", "An economy for the future", "A just society", "Learning in Europe" and "A safe and ethical 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 this second session, the speakers established "guidelines" to develop concrete recommendations (at their third session) for each of the five axes they had identified in the first session. In total, the citizens participating in Panel 1 produced 142 policy groups.

From 25 to 27 February 2022, the citizens



Photograph: European Citizens' Panel 1

guidance they had developed at Session 2 as a basis for their work, citizens developed and endorsed 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 topics related to democracy, such as elections, participation outside election periods, perceived distance between citizens and their elected representatives, media freedom 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 panellists were welcomed by Co-Chair Gašper Dovžan.

The work of this first session concluded with the approval of the five work streams "Ensuring respect for rights and non-discrimination", "Protecting democracy and the rule of law", "Reforming the EU", "Building European identity" and "Strengthening citizen 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 this second session, the panellists established "guidelines" to develop concrete recommendations (at their third session) for each of the five axes they had identified at the



Photograph: Panel 2 of European Citizens

had developed at Session 2 as a basis for their work, citizens developed and endorsed 39 final recommendations.

Panel 3 Climate change and environment; health

Panel on "Climate change and the environment; Health" held its first session from 1st 3 October in Strasbourg. This panel focused on the effects of climate change, environmental issues and new health challenges for the European Union. It also addressed 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 concluded with the approval of the five work streams "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 this second session, the panellists established "guidelines" to develop concrete recommendations (at their third session) for each of the five axes they had identified at the first session. In total, the citizens participating in Panel 3 produced 130 policy 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 at the Palace of Culture and Science, with the support of the City of Warsaw. It was possible to participate online. Based on the guidance they developed at Session 2 as a basis for their work, citizens developed and endorsed 51 final recommendations.

Panel 4 The EU in the world; migration



Photograph: 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, where participants discussed, among other things, the role of the EU on the international scene.



Photograph: Panel 4 of European Citizens

These included EU 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 address migration. Citizens were welcomed by Co-President Dubravka Šuica. The work of this first session concluded with the approval of the five work streams "Self-sufficiency and stability", "The EU as an international partner", "A strong EU in a peaceful world", "Migration from a human perspective" and "Responsibility and solidarity across 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 this second session, the panellists established "guidelines" to develop concrete recommendations (at their third session) for each of the five axes they had identified at the first session. In total, the citizens participating in Panel 4 produced 95 policy groups.

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

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

2. National Citizens' Panels

In line with the Joint Declaration, the Conference Plenary discussed the recommendations from the National and European Citizens' Panels, grouped by theme. To support Member States planning to organise national citizens' panels, guidance was agreed by the Co-Chairs and forwarded to the Executive Board on 26 May 2021. They followed the same principles as the European Citizens' Panels and included principles of good deliberation, based on an OECD report.^{IV}

Six Member States – Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania and the Netherlands – organised national citizens' panels in line with the principles set out in these guidelines. The recommendations issued by these national citizens' panels were presented and debated at the January and March plenary sessions, as well as in the plenary working groups, in parallel with the 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



Photograph: Belgian Citizens' Panel

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.

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

Citizens made recommendations around five themes they had chosen, namely:

- improving communication on the European Union,
- identifying and combating disinformation about the EU;
- Citizens' panels as a tool for participation;
- the referendum in European affairs,
- improve existing participatory instruments in the European Union.

The work of the Belgian Citizens' Panel resulted in 115 recommendations, which were drawn up, debated and voted on by the 50 randomly selected Belgian citizens.

2) GERMANY

In January 2022, the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised a national citizens' panel. One hundred randomly selected citizens,

representative of the population, participated in this online panel.

On 5 and 8 January 2022, five kick-off workshops were organised online, each with 20 participants on the following topics:

Europe's role in the world, climate and environment;

the rule of law and values;

a stronger economy and social justice.



Photograph: German Citizens' Panel

The 100 randomly selected citizens met on 15-16 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 Ms Annalena Baerbock, German Foreign Minister, and Ms Anna Lührmann, Deputy Minister for Europe and Climate.

3) FRANCE

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



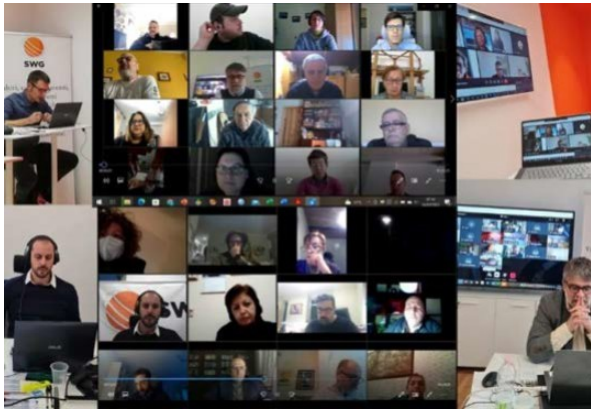
Photograph: French Citizens' Panel

Eighteen citizens' panels were organised in September and early October 2021 in all French, metropolitan and overseas regions. 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 resulted in 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 for European Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.



Photograph: Italian Citizens' Panel

A total of 55 randomly selected citizens, representative of Italian society and its regions, participated. Participants were randomly selected to ensure the presence of people of different genders, ages, social backgrounds, places of residence and employment status.

Citizens gathered online on 11 and 12 March 2022 to discuss two topics 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 verified and validated 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.



Photograph: Lithuanian Citizens' Panel

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

On 4 January 2022, an online opening session was organised 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, the participants met in person to formulate the main conclusions of their discussions. On 25 January 2022, they adopted 21 recommendations in a virtual session, 10 of which focused on the EU's role and competences in foreign policy and 11 on the EU's economic role.

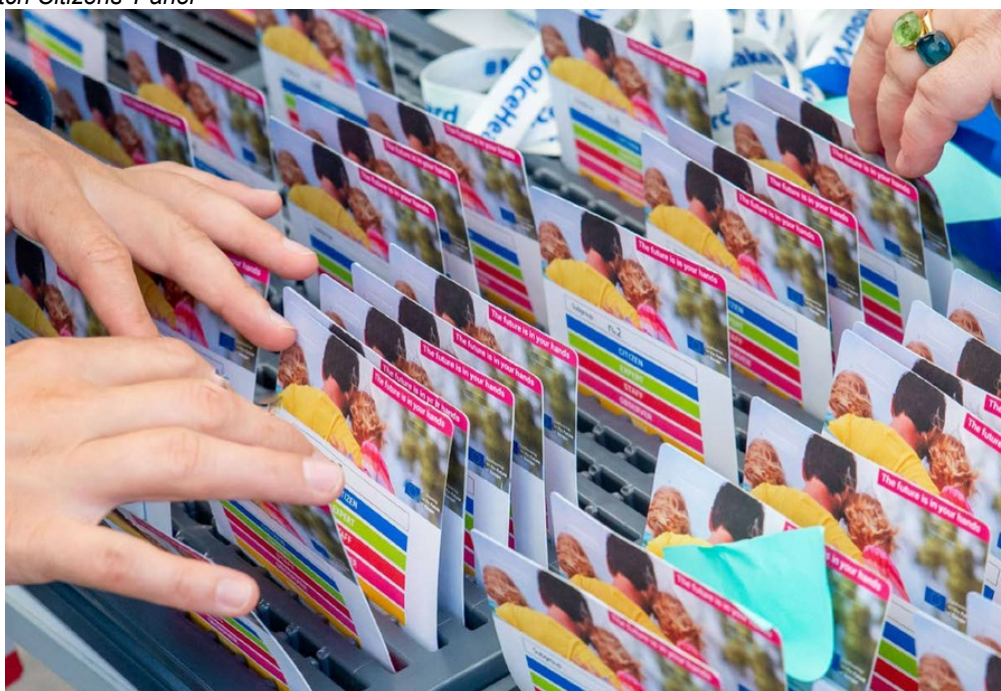
6) NETHERLANDS

The Citizens' Panel was organised by an independent third party, with the 'Visions of Europe' dialogues starting on¹ September. They were split into several parts.

Launched on¹ September 2021, the online part 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.



Dutch Citizens' Panel



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

Two reports were published, entitled 'Our vision for Europe; opinions, ideas and recommendations' ('Onze kijk op Europa; meningen, ideeën en aanbevelingen') and bringing together the 30 recommendations made by citizens on the nine themes of the conference.

C. Events organised as part 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 took part in these events. A [dedicated section](#) of the multilingual digital platform provides an overview of the main activities that Member State authorities have organised or supported. The events were presented at the Conference Plenaries 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 was also a priority, with efforts being made 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, particular 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 were organized 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" were also held.

In addition, an event on digitalisation and the sustainable economy was organised, and a series of debates between young people and policy-makers were held on the topic 'Europe listens 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 the 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. A number of regional debates took place across the country, as well as regional seminars for secondary school students on "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

allocated to a diverse group of organisations, including NGOs, 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 addressed to young people. In addition, the government and parliament organised a series of official events, such as citizens' 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 the 16 federal states of Germany and around 300 by civil society.

Cross-border events and dialogues with students and young people have been a central element of many initiatives, putting young people at the forefront of discussions to shape 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 held on key issues related to climate change, energy policies and the conference in general. A discussion on "Estonian diplomacy for the achievement of climate goals" was also launched.

7 Ireland

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

In cooperation with the European Movement Ireland (EMI), a regional and sectoral engagement programme 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 the regional events took the form of face-to-

face public meetings for the beginning of 2022. Since July, a programme of government-led events has been ongoing.

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 have taken 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 for the future of their regions and for the EU. At regional and local level, events have been 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 16 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 stakeholders (associations, local authorities, elected officials, representatives of civil society) to organise events.

11 Croatia

A working group for the coordination of activities had been established, and it had gathered ideas and plans for carrying out activities at the national level. Ministries, central state offices,

regional development agencies, universities, NGOs and institutes organised events in the form of conferences, citizens' dialogues and debates with citizens, public discussions and educational workshops, with a particular focus on young people.

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

12 Italy

Several events, with a particular focus 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 has been launched to publicize these events as much as possible. These activities include the EU-Balkan Youth Forum, organised with young people from the Western Balkans, the 'Med Dialogues' Youth Forum, involving young people from the Southern Neighbourhood, as well as competitions for secondary school and university students entitled 'Europe is in your hands'.

13 Cyprus

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

14 Latvia

Several events were 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 focus group discussions were set up to gather public opinion data on citizens' views on the future priorities of the European Union on all conference topics. 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 conducted with secondary school students.

15 Lithuania

The events were mainly organised in a decentralised approach and the focus was on the different regions of Lithuania and young people (e.g. in the context 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 future of Europe.

16 Luxembourg

A number of events were organised at national level following an open, inclusive and transparent approach. For example, Parliament organised a number of events in new formats, such as bistro talks. A hackathon for students and young entrepreneurs was also organised to discuss the Digital Compass and the EU Industrial Strategy.

In addition, a trilateral 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 enlargement and the EU Digital Agenda) and roundtables 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 demography, family, health, climate change and the environment.

18 Malta

Following a kick-off event, a National Coordinating Committee was created to promote the initiative across different communication channels and guided 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 relevant stakeholders and interactive sessions with children and students were held in physical or hybrid format.

19 Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the focus was on the organisation of the National Citizens' Panel "Visions of Europe – Kijk op Europa", which took place both online and in person. This was based on a two-stage approach: the first was to gather citizens' thoughts and opinions on the 'what', i.e. what they expected and wanted; The second phase aimed to then understand their underlying views (the 'why' and the 'how') through group dialogues.

20 Austria

Debates took place in different formats, at the federal, regional and local levels. "Laboratories of the future" and "dialogues on the future" provided an opportunity 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 responsible for European affairs. Several events were aimed directly at young people and students.

21 Poland

The events were mainly organised in 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 of discussion covered the thematic areas of the conference, such as solidarity in times of crisis, agriculture and new technologies.

A national debate was also organised 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 for the future of the regions of both countries and the EU. In addition, decentralised national events took place on different 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.

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

24 Slovenia

The idea was to encourage a broad debate in which civil society played a central role, as well as youth participation 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 enlargement and the Western Balkans. Other events

25

The events organised were structured around two main pillars. The first pillar was the 'WeAreEU' project,

26 Finland

A series of regional consultations, including the 'EU Northernmost Conference event', was organised by the government on various topics, such as sustainable growth, education and the rule of law. A survey was also set up to feed into the discussion.

Events were organised by the government in cooperation with Finnish 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 in a decentralised approach as a joint exercise between government, national parliament, political parties, social partners, local and regional representatives, civil society organisations and other relevant societal actors.

For example, the Swedish Minister for European Affairs discussed the future of Europe with pupils from different schools and participated in meetings at municipal level to discuss the future of Europe and democracy with citizens. Digital media have also been used to engage 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 dedicated 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 at 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 16-30 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 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 among those raised by the participants, i.e. two ideas per conference theme, were gathered in the [Report on Youth Ideas](#) 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 of the European Citizens' Panels who had also taken part in EYE 2021. All the ideas gathered are available on:

search.youthideas.eu.

3. Other events

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

Throughout the Conference on the Future of Europe, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has been promoting it and helping 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 attracted 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 promoted 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 the local language and provided information before and after each plenary 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 CEO 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 containing 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 framework 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 the plenary assembly. In addition, all promoted the conference, both internally and with external actors, and organised events and engaged with stakeholders in different fora. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) mobilised to contribute to the conference and participated in plenary and working group meetings. The ETUC defined proposals from trade unions for a fairer future for Europe and published them on the online platform (these proposals were

among the most supported). 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 Movement International](#) – 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 common and comprehensive proposals in [various policy areas covered by the Conference](#). The ideas fed into the conference through the Platform, working groups, plenary meetings and in direct contact with the Executive Board, the Co-Chairs and the Joint Secretariat.

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

local, in order to increase the outreach of the conference. The European Documentation Centres reported more than 120 actions related to the communication of the conference.

The 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 Conference Plenary

A. Role and functioning of the Plenary Assembly

A Conference Plenary was set up to discuss the recommendations made by the National and European Citizens' Panels, grouped by themes, and without the outcome of the debates being determined in advance or their scope being limited to pre-defined policy areas.

Contributions collected on the multilingual platform were also discussed, where appropriate. The plenary assembly had a single 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; then the Plenary 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 Conference Plenary was composed of 108 representatives of the European Parliament, 54 of the Council and three of the European Commission,^{VII} as well as 108 representatives of

all national parliaments on an equal footing, and citizens.

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

Eighteen representatives of the Committee of the Regions and eighteen representatives of the Economic and Social Committee, six elected representatives of regional authorities and six elected representatives of local authorities, twelve 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 address the international role of the EU.

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

Plenary meetings were co-chaired by the Co-Presidents of the Conference. The Conference's plenary sessions took place in the European Parliament's buildings in Strasbourg. Due to the applicable health and safety rules, 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 At a minimum, a consensus had to be reached between the representatives of the European Parliament, the Council, the European Commission and the representatives of the national parliaments on an equal footing. If the position of citizens' representatives of national events and/or European or national citizens' panels was clearly divergent, 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 portfolio were discussed.

VIII One per Member State.

B. Working groups

In accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference, the Co-Presidents proposed to the Conference Plenary that nine thematic working groups be established, based on the topics of the Multilingual Digital Platform, to provide input to prepare the debates and proposals of the

Conference Plenary, in line 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 topics: 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 topics gathered in the framework of the Conference. The members of the Conference Plenary 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, as well as representatives of European citizens' panels. The representatives of the European Citizens' Panels participated in the work of the relevant working group 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 portfolio.

The Working Groups held lively debates and worked on draft proposals prepared under the leadership of the Chair and the 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 Rules of Procedure of the Conference. The Chair and the Spokesperson then presented the outcome of the Working Group to the Plenary. The Chair of the Working Group was assisted by the Joint Secretariat. The joint secretariat of the Conference prepared the summary 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 in 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 meetings of the working groups were webstreamed as of 20 January 2022. Their synthesis reports were duly published in the Conference Plenary 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 the members of the plenary assembly to listen to a presentation and hold a general debate on the objective of the conference and the expectations of the conference. The Co-Presidents underlined the unprecedented nature of this exercise in deliberative democracy at EU level, which has strengthened representative democracy, placing citizens at the heart of policy-making in the European Union. The Co-Presidents 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, plenary members were informed about 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 to 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 citizens' component.

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

The second plenary meeting 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. Plenary members had the opportunity to listen to a presentation on the state of play of the work of the four European Citizens' Panels and to 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 contained an overview of the 20

concrete ideas selected by the young citizens who participated in this meeting.

In the ensuing debate, the focus was on the innovative nature of the multilingual digital platform, which gave citizens a voice and a place to debate in all official EU languages. 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 session of the Conference, held on 21-22 January 2022, was the first dedicated to the official presentation of recommendations from the European Citizens' Panels, as well as related national citizens' panels. This plenary was the first to take place after the finalisation of the recommendations of certain 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 assembly 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 in 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 dedicated to citizens' feedback as well as a special blue card question system that allowed for spontaneous and lively exchanges on citizens' recommendations.

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

The fourth plenary session of the conference was also dedicated to presenting recommendations from the European Citizens' Panels, as well as related national citizens' panels. This plenary took place after the

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

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 (EU in the world; migration).

As in the January plenary, the debates in this plenary were organised by theme. The topics covered this time were those of European Citizens' Panels 1 and 4. Discussions on citizens' recommendations have again led 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 to define the proposals of the Plenary Assembly on the basis of the recommendations made by citizens.

Consequently, the members of the plenary, having prepared themselves within the narrower 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. The plenary also provided an opportunity for representatives of national events 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 session of the Conference, the finalisation of the draft proposals of the plenary was completed.

After the last meetings of the thematic working groups were completed, all plenary members, through nine substantive debates, expressed one last time their views and comments on the draft proposals they had prepared in recent months. The exchange was also an opportunity for them to reflect on the unique process of drafting plenary proposals, based on citizens' recommendations, and the work carried out since their formulation. Citizens, in particular, highlighted the unique human experience and added value of this deliberative process, which united them around this common project. This debate fed into the final draft proposals to be submitted to the Conference's most recent plenary.

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, closing 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 Assembly 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 citizens' component presented its final position on the proposals (see key messages below).

At the closing plenary (29-30 April 2022), the 108 citizens members 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 start by thanking the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission for giving us the opportunity to help shape the future of Europe. We met with European colleagues from across the EU, from different panels and events, with political representatives and social actors, and broadened our horizons. We grew up as Europeans. For this, we have all made sacrifices: we have been taken out of our daily lives, taken days

off and spent nine weekends away from our families for the members of the European Citizens' Panels. But we had an incredible and unique experience. For us, it was not 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 confident that you will do what it takes to achieve this, out of respect for our common work. If we, the citizens, have been able to overcome our differences, the 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 major concern of citizens is to find equal conditions and rights in different areas: health care, social services, education and lifelong learning, equal opportunities for people living in rural and urban areas, taking demographic considerations into account. In the future, Europeans in all Member States and regions should no longer be discriminated against on the basis of their age, place of residence, nationality, gender, 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.

Second, the EU must dare and act swiftly to become an environmental and climate leader, accelerating the transition to green energy, improving its rail network, promoting sustainable transport and a truly circular economy. There is 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.

Third, 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 asked us: What should European democracy look like in the future? And we answered: We, the citizens, want a Europe in which decisions are taken in a transparent and timely manner, where the principle of unanimity is reconsidered and in which we, the citizens, are regularly and seriously involved.

Fourth, the EU needs more harmonisation in some areas, and to move closer as a Union. The war is knocking on our door in the East, calling on us to be more united than ever and to give the EU more competence in foreign affairs. This conference can serve as a basis for creating a more united and politically coherent Europe. It all comes down to this word: Union. We cannot describe ourselves as such if we do not succeed in the collaboration that this conference has illustrated.

Fifth, the EU must become more autonomous and secure its global competitiveness. Throughout this process, we talked about reaching this goal in key strategic sectors: 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 know the EU better. This is a cross-cutting issue that underpinned the work of all panels. Digital transformation, education, mobility and exchanges can give substance to this European identity, which complements, but does not call into question, our national identities. Many of us did not feel European before this Conference: it emerged here, slowly, exchanging with each other. We were fortunate to have this opportunity, but many did not. That is why information, communication and awareness-raising are so important.

Finally, an **eighth** cross-cutting theme, which is extremely important to us, is education and 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 abstention rate of young people shows us that the link between youth and politics needs to be re-established. They must also be made economically and socially responsible: 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 on 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 also need to train citizens in democracy, civic participation and media literacy. We need a truly holistic approach.

**

No one knew what the outcome 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 on the EU or any 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 suburbs, we work at night, we study, we have children, we take public transport. We can build 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, as it does not emanate from the European or national panels and has not been sufficiently discussed in the Working Group of the Whole. For this reason, we do not comment on the substance or 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 the most and that are easily applicable. Do it transparently. We have worked on these proposals with dedication and passion, we are proud of our work: respect it.

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 eventful 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, let us conclude by sending you a simple message: we feel European, we feel engaged 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 your heart, read the proposals well and implement them, for the sake of Europe's future.

Representatives of the Council component of the plenary 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 the environment"

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

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

Measures:

1. Bringing the notions of green and blue economies to the forefront by promoting efficient and environmentally and climate-friendly agriculture and fisheries in the EU and globally, including organic farming as well as other innovative and sustainable forms of agriculture, such as vertical farming, which make it possible to produce more with fewer inputs while reducing emissions and environmental impacts, but continuing to ensure productivity and food security (panel 3 – recommendations 1, 2 and 10; Panel 2 – recommendation 4).
2. Reorient subsidies and strengthen incentives for organic and sustainable agriculture that respects specific environmental standards and contributes 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 – MNP).
4. Significantly reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers, in line with existing objectives, while continuing to ensure food security, and support research to develop more sustainable and nature-based alternatives (panel 3 – recommendation 10, WG debate).
5. Introduce carbon removal certification based on robust, robust and transparent carbon accounting (plenary debate).
6. Increase research and innovation, including in technological solutions related to sustainable production, pest resistance and precision farming, as well as communication, advisory systems and training of farmers and by farmers (panel 3 – recommendation 10, WG debate, 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 rearing and production of meat focused on animal welfare and sustainability through measures such as clear labelling, high quality and common standards for animal husbandry and transport, strengthening the link between animal husbandry and food (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. Create, restore, better manage and expand protected areas for biodiversity conservation (FR recommendation, panel 3 – recommendation 11).
2. Establish a coercion and reward system to tackle pollution that applies the polluter pays principle, which should also be integrated into tax measures and accompanied by better awareness-raising and incentives (panel 3 – recommendation 32, recommendation FR, debate in plenary).
3. Expanding the role of municipalities in urban planning and the construction of new buildings favourable to blue and green infrastructure, avoiding and ending further land sealing, mandatory green spaces for new constructions to promote biodiversity and urban forests (panel 3 – recommendation 5, panel 1 – recommendation 18, recommendation FR).
4. Protecting 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 (SUPs).
7. Protecting water sources and tackling river and ocean pollution, including through research and tackling microplastic pollution, and promoting environmentally friendly transport using the best available technologies and developing EU research and funding for alternative maritime fuels and technologies (NMP, WG debate).
8. Limiting 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 Europeans with sufficient sustainable and affordable energy. 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 dependency, 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, notably in terms of human rights, ecology, good governance and the rule of law (debate in the WG).
3. Reducing dependencies on oil and gas imports through energy efficiency projects, support for affordable public transport, a high-speed rail freight network and expanding the supply of clean and renewable energy (panel 4 – recommendation 2, panel 1 – recommendation 10, FR and DE recommendations).
4. Improve quality and interconnectivity, maintain and transform electricity infrastructure and grids to enhance security and enable the transition to renewable energy sources (panel 1 – recommendation 10, WG debate).
5. Investing in renewable energy technologies, such as efficient production of green hydrogen, especially in hard-to-electrify sectors (panel 3 – recommendation 31, WG debate).
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 solutions for energy production and storage (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 sufficient funding for the transition and further research, reforming the tax system through fairer taxation and measures to combat tax fraud and ensuring an inclusive approach to governance in policy-making at all levels (e.g. ambitious reskilling and upskilling measures, strong social protection, keeping public services in the hands of the state, maintaining health and safety rules at work) (plenary debate, WG debate, NMP).
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. After 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. Increase the EU's leadership and role and responsibility to promote ambitious climate action and a just transition and contribute to addressing 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, green 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, in particular in rural and island areas, through additional incentives for the use of public transport (panel 3 – recommendation 36, panel 4 – recommendation 2).
2. Investing in high-speed night trains and defining a single standard of environmentally friendly rail technology in Europe in order to provide a credible alternative and facilitate the possibility of replacing and discouraging short-haul flights (debate in the WG, NMP).
3. Encourage the purchase, taking into account their affordability for households, and the (shared) use of electric vehicles with a good battery life standard as well as investments in the necessary recharging infrastructure and investments in the development of other clean technologies for vehicles that are difficult to electrify (Panel 3 – Recommendation 38).
4. Develop high-speed internet and mobile connectivity in rural and island areas (Panel 3 – Recommendation 36).
5. Improving existing transport infrastructure from an ecological point of view (panel 3 – recommendation 37).
6. Require urban development programmes for "greener" cities with less emissions, with specific car-free areas in cities, without harming commercial areas (panel 3 – recommendation 6).
7. Improve cycling infrastructure and give more rights and better legal protection to cyclists and pedestrians, in particular in the event of an accident with a motor vehicle, by ensuring road safety and by providing road code training (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 EU in order to foster the circular economy, become more autonomous and less dependent. Building a circular economy by promoting sustainable production and products in the EU. Ensure that all products placed on the EU market comply with common EU environmental standards.

Measures:

1. Stricter and harmonised production standards in the Union and transparent labelling system for all products sold on the Union market with regard to their durability/environmental footprint and longevity by means of 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. Reviewing global supply chains, including in agricultural production, to reduce EU dependency and shorten circuits (MCPs).
3. Further prevent waste generation by setting prevention and reuse targets and setting quality standards for waste sorting systems (debate in WG, recommendation FR).
4. Phasing out unsustainable forms of packaging, regulating environmentally friendly packaging and avoiding waste of materials in packaging through financial incentives and sanctions as well as investment in finding alternatives (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, PNM).
6. Launch an EU knowledge platform on how to ensure 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 guarantees, promote the right to repair and ensure the availability and accessibility of compatible spare parts (panel 3 – recommendation 20, recommendation FR, 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. Rapid 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, WG debate).
10. EU measures to enable and encourage consumers to use products for longer (panel 3 – recommendation 20).
11. Strengthen environmental standards and enforce regulations on the export of waste to the EU and to third countries (Panel 4 – Recommendation 15, MNP).
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. Implement stricter manufacturing standards and fair working conditions throughout the production and value chain (Panel 3 – Recommendation 21).

6. Proposal: Information, awareness, dialogue and lifestyle

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

Measures:

1. Create a fact-checked interactive platform to provide diverse and regularly updated scientific information in the field of the environment (panel 3 – recommendation 33).
2. Support green awareness campaigns, including a long-term European campaign for sustainable consumption and lifestyle (DE, NL and FR recommendations, 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 (recommendations DE, NL and FR, panel 3 – recommendations 27 and 35, debate in plenary).
4. Definition, by the EU, with the support of the Member States, of a common European Charter targeting environmental issues and promoting environmental awareness among all citizens (Panel 3 – Recommendation 7).
5. Offer training courses and teaching materials for all to improve knowledge on climate and sustainability and 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 increase public awareness of biodiversity through media campaigns and 'competitions' promoted across the EU (local authority 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 climate change and environmental education and by extending qualified majority decision-making to topics identified as being of 'European interest', such as the environment (NL and FR Recommendations).
8. Promote a plant-based diet for reasons of climate protection and preservation of the environment (PNM).



"Health"

7.Proposal: Healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle

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

Measures:¹

1. Establish minimum food quality and traceability standards, in particular by limiting the use of antibiotics and other veterinary medicinal products to what is strictly necessary to protect animal health and welfare, instead of using them preventively, and 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 processed and making food health information easily accessible; To this end, establish an EU-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. 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, within the framework 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 care facilities, including through dedicated funding. [#3, plenary, WG]
5. Invest in research on the consequences of antibiotic use and on the effects of hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors on human health. [#17, #18]²

1 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: #3, #17, #18, #19

2 # = Recommendation of the European Citizens' Panels.

8. Proposal: Strengthening the health care system

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

Measures:³

1. The creation of a European Health Data Space, which would facilitate the exchange of health data; Individual health records could be made available – on a voluntary basis – using an individual EU electronic health passport, in compliance with data protection rules. [#41, GT]
 2. Adequate working conditions, in particular through strong social dialogue, including on 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 significantly contribute to skills development. In order to retain talent in Europe and enable young professionals to expand 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. Ensuring strategic autonomy at Union level 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 innovative medicines and treatments (such as biotechnological solutions) should be established at EU level, building on existing EU agencies and HERA, to ensure their availability for citizens. Consider organising coordinated strategic storage across the EU. 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 medical care networks for highly specialised and complex treatments. [#42, #43, GT]
 5. Invest in health systems, in particular in the public and non-profit domain, infrastructure and digital health and ensure that healthcare providers respect the principles of full accessibility, affordability and quality of services, thereby ensuring that resources are not drained by health professionals with little or no regard for the public interest. [#51, GT]
 6. Make strong recommendations to Member States to invest in effective, accessible, affordable, high-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 to further develop resilient health systems and solidarity mechanisms. [#51, GT]
-
- 3 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: #39, #40, #41, #42, #43, NL1, NL2, #51
- 4 National Citizens' Panel Recommendation

9. Proposal: A broader vision 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 and disabled people, in line with the One Health approach, which should be emphasised as a cross-cutting and fundamental principle encompassing all Union policies.

Measures:⁵

1. Improve understanding of mental health issues and ways to address them, including from early childhood and through early diagnosis, building on best practices established across the Union, which should be easily accessible through the Public Health Best Practices Portal. To raise public awareness, the EU institutions and relevant stakeholders should organise events for the exchange of best practices and help their members to disseminate them in their own constituencies. An EU action plan on mental health should be developed, which would provide a long-term strategy on mental health, including research, and which would also address the availability of professionals, including minors, and the establishment of a European Year of Mental Health in the near future.
2. Develop at EU level a standard educational curriculum on healthy lifestyles, which also covers sex education. This programme should also include actions aimed at both a healthy lifestyle and the protection of the environment, and indicate how they can help prevent many diseases, for example cycling as a healthy means of daily travel. It would be available free of charge to Member States and schools that could, where appropriate, use it in their curricula. Such a programme would tackle stereotypes about sick or disabled people. [#46, GT]
3. Develop first aid training with a practical component, 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 across the EU in the same week and during which all health issues should be addressed and debated. Also consider Year of Health initiatives, starting with the Year of Mental Health. [#44, GT]
5. Recognise as regular medical treatment for taxation purposes hormonal contraception products used for medical reasons, for example in cases of fibromyalgia and endometriosis, as well as feminine sanitary products. Ensure access to reproductive treatments for all people with fertility problems. [#45, GT]
- 5 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: #44, #45, #46, #47, #50

10. Proposal: Equal access to health for all

Objective: Establish a 'right to health' by ensuring equal and universal access to affordable, preventive, curative and quality healthcare for all Europeans.

Measures:⁶

1. Establish common minimum health standards at Union level, which also address prevention and accessibility of care as well as proximity of care, and provide support for the establishment of such standards. [#39, GT]
2. Recognise the need to take full account of the principle of subsidiarity and the key role of local, regional and national health actors [NL3], ensure that action can be taken at Union level where the right to health is better addressed. Enable faster and firmer decision-making on key topics and improve the effectiveness of European governance for the development of the European Health Union (e.g. in the event of a pandemic or for rare diseases). [#49, FRsouhait11, digital platform]
3. Strengthen the European Health Union by exploiting the full potential of the current framework and include health and healthcare among the shared competences between the Union and its Member States by amending Article 4 TFEU. [#49, FRsouhait11, digital platform, GT]⁷.
4. Ensure that everyone has access to existing treatments in the first EU country where they are available; to this end, improve cross-border cooperation, in particular on rare diseases, cancer, cardiovascular diseases and highly specialised treatments, such as organ transplants and the treatment of severe burns. A European transplantation and organ donation network should be established for all European patients in need of transplantation. [Plenary and WG]
5. Ensure affordability of care, through increased investments in healthcare, in particular dental care, including prophylaxis and ensure that affordable dental care is available to all within 15-20 years. [#48, GT]
6. Ensure that treatments and medicines across the EU are of equal quality and have a fair local cost, including by tackling the current fragmentation of the internal market. [#40, NL3, WG, Plenary]
7. Address health insecurity by promoting free dental care for children, low-income groups and other vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities. Also consider the impact of poor quality housing on health. [#48, GT]
8. Take into account the international dimension of health and recognize that medicines should be universally available, including in the poorest countries. [NL2]

6 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: #39, #40, #45, #48, #50, FRchangement8, FRsouhait11, #51

7 The recommendations of the Dutch Citizens' Panel differ from the recommendations of the European Citizens' Panel: it states that health and healthcare should be primarily a national responsibility [NL3].



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 remains 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 are calling for stronger EU action. Unresolved transnational challenges, such as inequalities, 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 the different aspects of their lives. Some elements of this strategy are contained 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 to improve well-being and not as ends in themselves. It is both possible and necessary to redefine the Union in such a way as to ensure its strategic autonomy, sustainable growth, better living and working conditions and human progress, without depleting 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 in light of the fact that citizens across Europe have come up with a variety of views and recommendations. It is this diversity of views that is one of Europe's unparalleled strengths.

11. Proposal: Sustainable growth and innovation

Objective: We propose that the EU supports 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 better reflect the green and digital transitions as well as people's well-being. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures:⁸

1. Promote greener production processes by companies, help companies find the best solutions and provide positive and negative incentives. (ECP 11 and 12), and increase local production and consumption (discussions).
2. Work towards a more sustainable and circular economy by addressing the problem of planned obsolescence and ensuring the right to repair (ECP 14).
3. Examine the EU's economic governance 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 fiscal 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 (online platform, discussions).
4. Combat the use of single-use plastic packaging/containers (PCE 12).
5. Expanding the use of European technology and making it a viable alternative to foreign technology (discussions).
6. Promote research into new materials and technologies, as well as the innovative use of existing materials, while avoiding duplication of research efforts (ECP 9, NL 1).
7. Address the issue of sustainability, affordability and accessibility of energy, taking into account energy poverty and dependence on third countries, by increasing the share of energy produced sustainably (ECP 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 (ECP 12 and online platform).
9. Include ambitious social, labour and health standards, including occupational health and safety, in new EU trade agreements. (LT8)

8 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 9, 10, 11, 12, 14; Netherlands: 1; Italy: 1.1; Lithuania: 3, 8.

12. Proposal: Strengthening the EU'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 address strategic dependencies. We need to promote an entrepreneurial culture in the EU, where 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 cohesive societies. A strong and functioning market economy is needed to facilitate the vision of a more social Europe. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures:⁹

1. Develop a clear vision of the European economy and capitalise on Europe's strengths, quality and diversity, while taking into account economic and other differences between Member States, and promote cooperation and competition between companies. (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 product standardisation 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 in the Single Market, by 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 'think small first' principle must be respected in all EU legislative proposals and the SME test should be strengthened 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, tenders and networks, with the least possible administrative effort. 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 R&I investments, in order to develop more sustainable and biodiversity-rich business models (ECPs 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. (FR 3 & 9)
11. Investing in the economy of tourism and culture, also valuing the many small destinations in Europe. (IT 1.2)
12. Ensure security of supply by diversifying sources of inputs/raw materials and increasing the manufacturing of essential goods in Europe, such as health, food, energy, defence and transport. (FR 9, LT 1, IT 1.4)
13. Promote the digitalisation of European businesses, for example through a dedicated scoreboard allowing businesses to compare their degree of digitalisation, with the overall aim of increasing their competitiveness. (DE 2.1)
14. Promoting 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 to strengthen cohesion and resilience within and outside regions, by promoting the European Cross-Border Mechanism and similar tools (discussions).
 16. Strengthen and promote cross-border training opportunities to upgrade the skills of the European workforce and increase competitiveness, while strengthening citizens' skills in the economic field. (DE 2.2, LT7). Promote exchanges 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. Fighting 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 (online platform, discussions).
 20. Consolidation and protection of the single market should remain a priority; measures and initiatives taken at national and Union level should be without prejudice to 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" to analyse their impact on businesses and their business environment (cost of economic activity, innovation capacity, international competitiveness, level playing field, etc.). Such monitoring shall be in line with the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, including gender equality, and shall be without prejudice to the protection of human, social and labour rights, and 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 companies. This body should include organised civil society and the social partners in its governance; (discussions)
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- 9 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly 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.

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 must work to end in-work poverty, strengthen the rights of platform workers, ban unpaid traineeships and ensure fair labour mobility in the EU. 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 headline targets for 2030, at European, national, regional and local level in the areas of 'equal opportunities and access to the labour market' and 'fair working conditions', while respecting competences and the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, and include a protocol on social progress in the Treaties. In doing so, national traditions and the autonomy of the social partners should be respected and cooperation with civil society should be ensured. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures:¹⁰

1. Ensure that statutory minimum wages guarantee every 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 wage at national level) should be defined to be taken into account when setting the level of minimum wages. Statutory minimum wage levels should be reviewed regularly in the light of these criteria to ensure their adequacy. Particular attention should be paid to the effective implementation of these rules and to the monitoring and follow-up of the improvement of the standard of living. At the same time, collective bargaining should be strengthened and encouraged across the EU (ECP 1 and 30; DE 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 ensures a healthy work-life balance, while considering new national policies in this area (ECP 2).
3. Introduce or strengthen existing legislation on "smart work" and encourage companies to promote this new way of working. (ECP 7) The EU should ensure the right to disconnect, do more to address 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. Integrate employment policies at EU level, where active labour market policies remain central and increasingly coordinated (IT 6.2), while Member States focus on pursuing their reform efforts to create favourable conditions for the creation of quality jobs (discussions).
5. Take measures to ensure that social rights are fully protected and take precedence over economic freedoms in case 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 EU should continue to measure gender equality through a gender equality index (attitudes, pay gap, employment, leadership, etc.), ensure annual monitoring of the strategy, be transparent about the results achieved, encourage the sharing of expertise and best practices, and put in place a possible direct feedback mechanism from citizens (e.g. an ombudsman) (ECP 28; IT 5.a.1). There is a need to address the gender pay gap and introduce quotas for senior management positions. Women entrepreneurs should receive more 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 employers and workers with additional support (NL 4) and support

to young entrepreneurs and young self-employed workers, for example through educational tools and courses (discussions).

8. Promoting the employment of disadvantaged groups (NL 4), in particular for people with disabilities (online platform).
9. Promote employment and social mobility so that people have every opportunity for self-fulfilment and self-determination. (IT 5.a.4 and IT 6.1) There could be a long-term strategy to ensure that everyone 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 ensure the right to lifelong learning and the right to training. (FR 6; DE 4.1) To this end, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between enterprises, trade unions and providers of vocational education and training services (discussions).

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- 10 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly 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.

14. Proposal: Stronger social policies

Objective: We propose to reduce inequalities, combat 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 headline targets for 2030, at European, national, regional and local level in the areas of 'social protection and inclusion', while respecting the 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:

Measures:¹¹

1. Strengthen the Union's competences in social policies and propose harmonised Union-wide legislation to promote social policies and ensure equal rights, including health, taking into account adopted regulations and minimum requirements across the territory. (ECP 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 agreed by 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.) (ECP 20).
 4. Grant access to medical services to all people 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 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, housing beneficiaries, Member State governments at central and local level and the European Union (ECP 25).
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- 11 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 19, 20, 21, 25; Italy: 4.a.1.

15. Proposal: Demographic transition

Objective: we propose to address the challenges arising from the demographic transition, which is a critical component of Europe's overall resilience, in particular low birth rates and the constant ageing of the population, by ensuring support for people throughout their lives. It should be a comprehensive action for all generations, from children and young people to families, the working-age population, older people still ready to work and people in retirement or in need of care. This could be achieved through the following measures:

Measures:¹²

1. Ensure quality, affordable and accessible childcare across the EU, so that mothers and fathers can confidently reconcile their working and family lives. Where appropriate, this could include childcare opportunities in or near the workplace. In some Member States, childcare at night 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 by children. Preventing child poverty and social exclusion is essential. (ECP 22 and 26) Strengthening the Child Guarantee, ensuring access for children in need to services such as education and childcare, healthcare, nutrition and housing, could be an instrument to achieve this (online platform, discussions).
2. Establish specific support and labour protection for young people. Measures targeting the working-age population should include access to knowledge for mothers and fathers upon their return to work (ECP 22). Strengthening the Youth Guarantee could be an instrument to improve the access of young people under 30 to a good quality offer of employment, continuing education, apprenticeship or traineeship. (discussions)
3. Promote the right to free movement of education within the Union, including through the mutual recognition of diplomas, degrees, competences and qualifications. (discussions)
4. Improve legislation and its implementation to provide support to families in all Member States, for example in relation to parental leave and childbirth and childcare allowances. (ECP 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. (ECP 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 particularly demanding work, both mental and physical. (ECP 21 and IT 5.a.1)
7. Preventing old-age poverty 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. (ECP 21)
8. Ensure appropriate social assistance and health care for the elderly. In doing so, it is important to address both community-based care services and residential care. Similarly, measures must take into account both care recipients and care providers. (ECP 23)
9. Ensure the sustainable development and demographic resilience of regions lagging behind 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 support Member States in developing and implementing adequate policies, including by setting up an EU body specialised in this area. (online platform and discussions).

16. Proposal: Fiscal and fiscal policies

Objective: we propose that the EU encourage future-oriented investments focusing on the 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 an Emergency (SURE). The EU 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 evaders, 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 should be achieved through the following measures:

Measures:¹³

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 the Citizens' Panels that taxation falls under the competence of the different countries, which have their own objectives and circumstances. (ECP 13 and 31, IT 4.b.3, NL 2.3)
2. Promote cooperation between EU Member States 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. (ECP 13)
4. Ensure that tax policy supports European industry and prevents job losses in Europe. (ECP 13 and 31)
5. Examine in more detail the possibility of common borrowing at EU level, with a view to creating more favourable borrowing conditions, while maintaining responsible fiscal policies at Member State level. (LT 9)
6. Strengthen monitoring of the absorption and use of Union funds, including at local and municipal level. (LT 10)

13 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel 1: 13, 31; Netherlands: 2.3; Italy: 4.b.3, 4.b.6; Lithuania: 9, 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 measures 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 of trade negotiations that can help strengthen the resilience and diversification of supply chains, in particular for raw materials, while sharing the benefits of trade more equitably and with more partners, thereby limiting our exposure and dependence on a small number of suppliers that may pose a risk.¹⁴
3. Greater resilience of EU supply chains by fostering investment in strategic sectors in the EU, storing critical productions 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 in the European Union more attractive.
5. Support that makes these products available and affordable to European consumers and helps reduce external dependencies, for example through structural and regional policies, tax breaks, subsidies, investments in infrastructure and research, boosting the competitiveness of SMEs, as well as education programmes to maintain relevant skills and jobs in Europe, which are relevant to ensuring basic needs.¹⁵
6. A European programme to support small local producers in strategic sectors in all Member States,¹⁶ 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

¹⁴ Based on the discussions of the working group and the plenary session.

¹⁵ See Recommendation 1 of the ECP4, Recommendation 2 of the NCP Germany, Panel 1 'EU in the World', and of the NCP Italy, Group 2, Rec. 1, developed in the Working Group.

¹⁶ See Recommendation 4 of the ECP4 and Recommendations 5 and 6 of the Italy NCP, Group 2, developed in the Working Group.

¹⁷ See Digital Platform and NCP Italy Group 2 Recommendations 2 and 3 developed in the Working Group, <https://futureu.europa.eu/processes/EUInTheWorld/f/16/proposals/197870?local=en>.

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

Objective: We propose that the EU achieve greater autonomy in energy production and supply, in the context of the ongoing green 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 sharing.¹⁸
 2. Active support for public transport and energy efficiency projects, a European high-speed rail network for freight transport, the expansion of the supply of clean and renewable energy (including solar and wind energy), alternative technologies (such as hydrogen or waste-to-energy), as well as the shift in urban areas from a culture of individual cars to a culture of public transport, electric car sharing and cycling.¹⁹
 3. Ensuring a just and fair transition, supporting in particular vulnerable citizens, who face the biggest 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 on assessing the use of nuclear energy as part of the ongoing green transition to renewable energy in Europe, looking at collective issues it could solve or create, as it is still used by many Member States.²⁰
 5. Cooperation with international partners to commit them to more ambitious climate change targets in various international fora, including the G7 and G20.
 6. Linking external trade with climate change policy measures (e.g. by launching an investment package for climate-friendly technologies and innovations, including financing programmes).²¹
 7. Joint purchases of imported energy and sustainable energy partnerships, to reduce Europe's dependence on energy imports, notably in the area of gas and oil, and to develop the EU's domestic energy sources.
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- 18 See Recommendation 14 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.
- 19 See Recommendation 2 of the ECP4 and Recommendation 4 of the Italy NCP, Group 2, developed in the Working Group.
- 20 See Recommendation 17 of the ECP4 and Recommendation 4 of the Italy NCP, Group 2, developed in the Working Group.
- 21 See Recommendation 1 of the NCP Germany, Panel 1 'EU in the World', developed in the Working Group.

19. Proposal: Setting standards inside 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 by:

Measures:

1. Preserving and reforming our rules-based multilateral international trade architecture, and partnering 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 ethical quality standards, sustainable development and human rights standards, including labour and trade union rights, by offering certification for products that comply with this EU legislation²² and engaging in an EU-wide dialogue process that aims to inform and educate 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 and child labour, a regularly updated blacklist of companies and raising consumer awareness of child labour through information published through official EU channels.²³
4. Monitoring and enforcement of enforceable TSD 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 strong conditionality provisions and effective and adequate 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.

²² See Recommendation 3 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

²³ See Recommendation 11 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

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 by:

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 and on the basis of 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.²⁴
2. Higher environmental standards for the export of waste as well as stricter controls and sanctions to stop illegal exports. The EU should encourage Member States to recycle their own waste and use it to produce energy.²⁵
3. Setting a target for the elimination of polluting packaging by promoting less polluting packaging or more environmentally friendly packaging²⁶ and building partnerships with developing countries, supporting their infrastructure and considering mutually beneficial trade agreements, in order to assist them in their transition to green energy sources.²⁷
4. The possibility to reward countries with high sustainability standards by offering them additional access to the EU market for their sustainable goods and services, either unilaterally through the GSP+ Generalised System of Preferences, bilaterally through negotiated trade agreements, or multilaterally through initiatives in the World Trade Organisation.

24 See Recommendation 13 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

25 See recommendation 15 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

26 See recommendation 16 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

27 See recommendation 12 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

21. Proposal: Decision-making and cohesion in the EU

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

Measures:

1. Ensuring that, in particular as regards the CFSP, matters currently taken unanimously are normally taken by qualified majority.²⁸
2. By basing 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 to ensure that the EU speaks with one voice.³⁰
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 enlargements.³¹
5. By speeding up the ratification of recently concluded trade agreements, without abandoning proper scrutiny and discussion.

28 See recommendation 21 of ECP4, 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 ECP4, developed in

the Working Group.

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

Objective: We propose that the EU, in particular through its actions at international level, including its trade negotiations, enhance its accessibility for citizens by improving information, education, citizen participation and transparency of its action, in particular by:

Measures:

1. Strengthening links with citizens and local institutions to improve transparency, reach out to citizens and better communicate and liaise with them on concrete EU initiatives at international level.³²
2. Stronger citizen participation in EU international policy and direct citizen participation events, such as the Conference on the Future of Europe, organised at national, local and European level³³ and with the active participation of organised civil society.³⁴
3. Full support from all relevant stakeholders to citizens who choose to participate in organised civil society organisations, as was 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 that wish to do so, so that they can integrate them into their curricula (primary, secondary and university). In addition, a specific course on the EU and how it works could be offered to students who wish to study in another European country through the Erasmus programme. Students who choose this course would be given priority to benefit from these Erasmus programmes.

5. Improving the EU's media strategy by increasing social media visibility and actively promoting its content; promoting innovation by improving the accessibility of the EU's social media presence.³⁵

32 See recommendation 18 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

33 See recommendation 19 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

34 See recommendation 19 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

35 See ECP4 Recommendation 25.

23. Proposal: The EU as a global 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:

Measures:^{36 37}

1. Joint armed forces, used for self-defence purposes and intended to prevent any aggressive military action of any kind, with the capacity to provide assistance in times of crisis, including natural disasters. Outside European borders, they could be deployed in exceptional circumstances, preferably under a legal mandate from the United Nations Security Council and thus in compliance with international law,³⁸ without competing with 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 establishing the global security order after the war 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 environment.³⁹
4. Strengthening 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 ensures adequate protection of the EU for any Member State attacked by a third country.
5. A reflection on how to combat disinformation and propaganda in an objective and factual way.

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 NCP, Group 2,

developed in the Working Group.

39 See change 2 of the French national citizen

panel.

24. Proposal: The EU as a global leader 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 interventions.⁴⁰
2. Strengthens its capacity to sanction States, governments, entities, groups or organizations, as well as individuals who do not respect its fundamental principles, agreements and laws, and ensures that existing sanctions are swiftly implemented and enforced. Sanctions imposed on third countries should be proportionate to the action that triggered them, be effective and be applied in a timely manner.⁴¹
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. Concludes key international cooperation agreements by representing the EU rather than individual countries.⁴²
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 labour and trade union rights, preserving the environment and biodiversity as well as 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 a deep reform based on democracy and peace, solidarity and respect for human, social and environmental rights, as well as 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. Establish partnerships with developing countries to support their infrastructure and consider mutually beneficial trade agreements to assist them in their transition to green energy sources.⁴³
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 resources for EU Election Observation Missions.
10. Offers a credible accession perspective to candidate and potential candidate countries in order to foster peace and stability in Europe and bring prosperity to millions of Europeans.⁴⁴

40 See Recommendation 24 of the ECP4 and Recommendation 7 of the Italy NCP, Group 2, developed in the Working Group.

41 See recommendation 22 of ECP4, developed in the Working Group.

42 See Recommendation 1 on '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.

NOTE: Several members of the Working Group consider that the proposals 'Reducing the EU's dependence on foreign energy actors' and 'Transparency of the EU and its relations with citizens', in particular, fall under the remit of other Working Groups. Some members wished to refer, in addition to qualified majority voting, to alternatives to unanimity in the Council, such as variable

geometry, opt-outs and enhanced cooperation. Some members of the Working Group argued for the use of the term 'sustainable' rather than 'ethics' in the proposal 'Defining standards inside 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 have emerged as to the desirable degree of establishment of joint armed forces. Two members referred to the prospect of Irish unity in the event that Northern Ireland voted to do so in accordance with the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement and the need for the EU 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:

Measures:⁴⁵

1. Ensuring that the values and principles enshrined in the EU Treaties and in 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 a pole of attraction through diplomacy and dialogue. Enlargement of the Union should not undermine the Union acquis as regards fundamental values and citizens' rights.⁴⁶
2. By making European values a tangible reality for EU citizens, in particular through more interactive and direct participation. To this end, European citizenship should be strengthened, for example through a status of Union citizen with citizens' specific rights and freedoms, as well as a status for European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations. Similarly, European values should be promoted through an "integration toolkit" with educational materials and information material for citizens. Finally, a European public sphere bringing together audiovisual and online media should be created through new EU investments, the improvement of existing media platforms and increased support to the more than 500 local European Liaison Offices.⁴⁷
3. It is important that the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union is 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. There is also a need for more support for organisations, including civil society organisations, that promote the rule of law on the ground.⁴⁸
4. By effectively implementing the Conditionality Regulation, assessing the scope of the Conditionality Regulation and other rule of law instruments, as well as considering extensions of their scope to new areas, regardless of their relevance for the EU budget. All necessary legal avenues, including Treaty amendments, should be considered to sanction breaches of the rule of law.⁴⁹
5. Promoting educational and media programmes that put EU values at the heart of the migrant integration process and encourage interactions between EU citizens and migrants, with the aim of enabling their successful integration into EU societies and raising awareness of migration-related issues among EU citizens.⁵⁰

45 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel 2 (ECP 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 ECP2 Recommendation 14. Recommendations 1.3.1, 1.4.2 and 1.4.3 of the Belgian NCP and 1.2 of the Dutch NCP.

47 ECP2 Recommendation 11. Recommendations 5.1 and 5.2 of the German NCP. Discussion in the WG.

48 ECP2 Recommendation 11. Discussion in the WG. Debate in plenary.

49 ECP2 Recommendation 10.

50 ECP2 Recommendation 30.

26. Proposal: Data protection

Objective: Ensure a more protective and citizen-friendly data processing policy, in particular:

Measures:⁵¹

1. Fully implementing and reviewing existing data protection legislation to assess the need for enhanced enforcement mechanisms for entities processing personal data, which currently fall under the competence of independent national data protection authorities respecting the principle of subsidiarity. Those entities should be sanctioned more strictly than under the current application of the rules, in proportion to their annual turnover (up to 4%), or even by a ban on their activities, and be subject to an independent annual audit.^{52 53}
2. By giving greater effect to the principle of privacy by design or by default, for example by assessing and developing data consent forms that are easy to understand, concise and intuitive, and clearly indicate what is necessary 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. Evaluating and introducing clearer and more protective rules on the processing of data relating to minors, possibly in the EU GDPR, including by creating a special category for sensitive data of minors and harmonising the minimum age of consent within Member States. While most of the

implementation of privacy and awareness-raising rules should remain within the competence of the Member States, including 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 protection.⁵⁶

4. Enhancing compliance with the eligibility criteria for European and national data protection authorities, in terms of qualifications and suitability, in order to ensure maximum independence of their members.^{57 58}

51 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: ECP2: 7, 8, 9; Dutch NCP: 1.3, 4.3.

52 ECP2 Recommendation 7. Discussion in the WG.

53 This issue was also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.

54 ECP2 Recommendation 9.

55 This issue was also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.

56 ECP2 Recommendation 8. Recommendations 1.3 and 4.3 of the Dutch NCP.

57 ECP2 Recommendations 7 and 8.

58 This issue was also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.

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

Objective: Tackling disinformation through increased promotion of media independence and pluralism as well as media literacy, in particular:

Measures:⁵⁹

1. By introducing legislation to address threats to media independence through minimum standards applicable across the Union, including a revision of the media business model to ensure the integrity and independence of the European media market.⁶⁰

2. By rigorously applying EU competition rules in the media sector to prevent the creation of major media monopolies and to ensure media pluralism and independence from unwanted interference from the political, business and/or foreign spheres. Quality journalism with recognised and high standards of ethics and self-regulation should also be encouraged.⁶¹

3. Establishing an EU body to combat targeted disinformation and interference, improving situational awareness 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 supported and promoted more actively.^{62 63}

4. Encouraging media literacy and raising citizens' awareness of disinformation and the unintentional spread of infox, including through compulsory school education. Member States should also be encouraged

to allocate adequate human and financial resources for this purpose.⁶⁴

5. Building on existing initiatives, such as the Code of Practice on Disinformation and the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO), to oblige online platforms to publish clear information on the algorithms they use (with or without user consent) and on the risks of disinformation to which users are exposed, while safeguarding the right to freedom of speech and the right to privacy.⁶⁵

59 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: ECP2: 5, 12, 13, 17, 28; Belgian NCP: 1.5.1, 2.1.1 to 2.4.3; Dutch NCP: 3.1.

60 ECP2 Recommendation 5. Recommendation 2.1.1 of the Belgian NCP. Recommendation 3.1 of the Dutch NCP.

61 ECP2 Recommendation 12. Recommendation 2.1.4 of the Belgian NCP.

62 ECP2 Recommendations 17 and 28. Recommendations 1.5.1, 2.1.3, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 of the Belgian NCP.

63 This issue was also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.

64 ECP2 Recommendations 5 and 28. Recommendations 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 of the Belgian NCP.

65 ECP2 Recommendation 28. Recommendations 2.3.1, 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 of the Belgian NCP.

66 This issue was also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.

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

Objective: Strengthening the EU's role in countering cybersecurity threats, in particular by:

Measures:

1. Strengthening the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) to better protect individuals, organisations and institutions from cybersecurity 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}

67 ECP2 Recommendation 13.

68 This issue was also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.

69 ECP2 Recommendation 13.

70 This issue was also discussed by the Working Group on Digital Transformation.

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

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

Measures:⁷¹

1. Developing transparent quality of life indicators including economic, social and rule of law criteria, in consultation with experts and social partners, so as to establish a clear and realistic timeline 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 process.^{72 73}
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 to ensure a satisfactory work-life balance for citizens. Such investments should be made in a fully transparent manner that allows the whole process to be monitored.⁷⁴
3. By encouraging the taxation of large companies, fighting access to tax havens and abolishing their existence in the EU with a view to increasing public investment in priority areas such as education (scholarships, Erasmus) and research. The

fight against tax avoidance at EU level should also be a means of raising funds for publicly funded initiatives.^{75 76}

4. Establishing EU-wide criteria to combat discrimination in the labour market, and encouraging the hiring by private companies of people who are generally most affected by discrimination (including young people, older people, women and people from minorities), including through subsidies, and, as a second step, through 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 encouraged.⁷⁷

5. Ensuring the creation and facilitating of affordable public and private kindergartens and free childcare for those in need.⁷⁸

71 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: ECP2: 1, 2, 21, 22, 23; Dutch NCP: 1.1.

72 ECP2 Recommendation 22. Discussion in the WG.

73 Issue also considered by the Working Group on A Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment.

74 ECP2 Recommendation 21. Recommendation 1.1 of the Dutch NCP.

75 ECP2 Recommendation 23.

30. Proposal: Animal rights, agriculture

Objective: Take decisive action to promote and ensure greener and climate-friendly agriculture, in particular by:

Measures:⁷⁹

1. By setting 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 objectives and based on an integrated approach to the food system.^{80 81}
2. By introducing financial penalties for negative effects induced by agricultural activity (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions, pesticide use, excessive water consumption, long-distance transport, etc.) according to their impact on the environment. Agricultural products imported into the Union should also be assessed on that basis, including through customs duties, in order to eliminate any competitive advantage stemming from lower environmental standards.⁸²

76 Issue also considered by the Working Group on A Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment.

77 ECP2 Recommendation 1. Discussion in the WG.

78 ECP2 Recommendation 2. Discussion in the WG.

3. By reducing subsidies to mass agricultural production where 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}

79 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: ECP2: 3, 4, 6.

80 ECP2 Recommendation 3.

81 Issue also considered by the Working Group on Climate Change and the Environment.

82 ECP2 Recommendation 4.

83 ECP2 Recommendation 6.

84 Issue also considered by the Working Group on Climate Change and the Environment.



"Digital transformation"

Europe needs to be at the global forefront and set the standards for digital transformation, and it needs to chart a European path towards an ethical, human-centred, transparent and secure society. Europe needs to take 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 it.

Digitalisation concerns all areas of our society and must be systematically taken into account. In this regard, reference was made to the European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade and it was suggested to consider the possible future development of a Digital Bill of Rights.

The Russian aggression in Ukraine only confirms many of the 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 that 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 should have effective access to the internet and digital services and that the sovereignty of the EU's digital infrastructure should be strengthened, by applying the following measures:

Measures:⁸⁵

1. Investing in high-quality and innovative European digital infrastructures (including the development of 5G and 6G in Europe) (Recommendations 40 and 47 of ECP 1 and 1 of the Dutch NCP).
2. Ensure fast, affordable, secure and stable internet access throughout the Union, including roaming, with priority given to establishing internet connections in 'white/dead areas', rural areas 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 ECP 1 and 1 of the Dutch NCP).
3. Advancing the deployment of digital and electric infrastructure in public and private spaces that enable 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 dependence on third countries for infrastructure and services; Improving markets from a consumer perspective (ECP 1 Recommendation 17).
5. Make children, families, the elderly and vulnerable groups a priority when it comes to access to the internet and IT equipment, including access to education, public services and health (ECP1 Recommendation 17 and WG debate).
6. Improve digital access, in full accessibility, to essential public and private services for citizens and businesses, e.g. administrative procedures, and ensure access to and support for all such services, e.g. through support services (debate in WG, multilingual digital platform).

7. Harmonise high-quality digital standards and improve the secure mobility of data 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).

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- 85 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel 1 (ECP 1): 17, 40, 47; Dutch National Citizens' Panel (NCP) No 1.
 - 86 See link to ECP3 Recommendation 38, as regards infrastructure for electric vehicles.

32. Proposal: Digital knowledge and skills that empower people

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

Measures:⁸⁷

1. Ensure access to training and education, including at school, formal and non-formal level, to digital skills and knowledge throughout life, building 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 that is compatible with their good development and to tackling digital inequalities, including the digital gender divide (ECP Recommendation 8 1, Italian NCP Recommendation 5.2 and WG debate).
2. Ensure smart use of the internet by encouraging Member States to introduce digital skills training for all age groups, with harmonised programmes and content at European level, such as on internet risks and opportunities, users' online rights and netiquette (ECP 1 Recommendation 47 and WG debate).
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 programmes and initiatives in this area, 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 way (ECP 1 Recommendations 34 and 47).

4. Introduce a European digital skills certification in schools that will prepare young people for the future labour market (ECP 1 Recommendation 8).
5. Implement coordinated training initiatives at EU level with a view to reskilling and upskilling workers to remain competitive in the labour market, taking into account also and above all the skills and qualifications needed in small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as with a view to training digital specialists (ECP 1 Recommendation 8 and WG debate).
6. Promote existing digital platforms that connect citizens with employers and help them find jobs in the EU, such as EURES (ECP 1 Recommendation 8).
7. Increase investments and efforts to boost the digitalisation of education, including higher education (debate in WG/multilingual digital platform).

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- 87 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel 1 (ECP 1): 8, 34 and 47; Italian National Citizens' Panel (NCP) 5.2.

33. Proposal: A safe 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 swift implementation of existing legislation and have more powers to strengthen cybersecurity, combat illegal content and cybercrime, counter cyber threats from non-state actors and authoritarian states and address their consequences, as well as counter disinformation, by applying the following measures:

Measures:⁸⁸

1. Strengthen the capacity of Europol/European Cybercrime Centre in terms of financial and human resources, to enable a more proactive approach to the fight against cybercrime and to strengthen common European cyber defence capabilities against large-scale attacks, including through better cooperation (ECP Recommendation 39 1, Lithuanian NCP Recommendation 2.6 and Dutch NCP Recommendation 1 and WG debate).
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 resilient infrastructure and alternative communication channels (debate in the WG).
3. Ensure similar sanctions and their swift and effective enforcement in Member States in case of cybercrime through improved coordination of local, regional and national cybersecurity centres and authorities (ECP 1 Recommendation 39).
4. Improving digital knowledge and critical thinking as a means to tackle disinformation, online threats and hate speech, as well as fake 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. Where algorithms are used, ultimate control in decision-making processes should be the responsibility of humans (ECP1 Recommendation 46 and WG debate).
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 (ECP 1 Recommendation 46).

⁸⁸ Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: Recommendations Nos 39 and 46 of the European Citizens' Panel No 1 (ECP 1) and Recommendations No 2.6 of the National Citizens' Panel (NCP) of Lithuania and No 1 of the NCP of the Netherlands.

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) to strengthen people's control over their data and limit data misuse, by applying the following measures:

Measures:⁸⁹

1. Better explain data protection rules (GDPR), increase transparency and improve communication by developing guiding principles for informed consent texts that use simple, clear and comprehensible language for all, including a more visual presentation to consent to the use of data,

accompanied by an information campaign, as well as ensure that data controllers have the necessary skills and advise those in need of assistance (Recommendations 42 and 45 of ECP 1 and 2 of the Dutch NCP).

2. Ensure the enforcement of the current prohibition of default consent for re-use or resale of data (ECP 1 Recommendation 42).
3. Ensure that users' requests for the definitive deletion of data are met within a specified timeframe (ECP 1 Recommendation 42).
4. Provide users with clear and concise information on how and by whom the data will be used (ECP 1 Recommendation 42).
5. Ensure that non-EU companies comply with EU data protection rules (ECP 1 Recommendations 42 and 43).
6. Encouraging the establishment of a certification scheme at Union level that certifies 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 be a disproportionate burden for small and

medium-sized enterprises (ECP1 Recommendation 44 and WG debate).

7. Ensure effective and timely assistance to citizens who encounter difficulties in opposing the processing of their data or withdrawing their consent. To this end, there is a need at European level to better define intrusive behaviour and to develop guiding principles and mechanisms allowing citizens to object to the processing of their data and obtain its erasure as well as to identify and sanction fraudsters (ECP 1 Recommendation 43 and WG debate).
8. Provide for sanctions, including a fine proportional to companies' turnover and limitations on their activities, e.g. temporary or definitive bans on unwanted data processing, and help the European Data Protection Supervisor and national agencies to ensure their implementation (ECP 1 Recommendations 42 and 43 and WG debate).

89 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: Recommendations 42, 43, 44 and 45 of the European Citizens' Panel 1 (ECP 1) and Recommendation 2 of the National Citizens' Panel (NCP) of the Netherlands.

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 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-centric digitalisation, by applying the following measures:

Measures:⁹⁰

1. Introduce or strengthen existing legislation on 'mobile (human-centred) work', taking into account its impact on workers' physical and mental health, for example by ensuring a right to disconnect. A 'human-centred' approach presupposes the principle of 'human control' (ECP 1 Recommendation 7 and WG debate).⁹¹
2. Legislate at EU level to incentivise companies to be socially responsible and maintain high-quality 'mobile jobs' in Europe, thus avoiding the relocation of

these jobs to lower-cost countries.

Incentives may be financial in nature and/or affect the image of the company 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 (ECP 1 Recommendation 7).

3. Ensure human control over decision-making processes using artificial intelligence in the workplace and the 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 affect working conditions; ensure that new forms of employment, such as platform work, are in line with workers' rights and offer adequate working conditions (debate in the WG).

4. Take initiatives to help support remote working, for example by creating office spaces with access to a fast and reliable internet connection, organising digital training and providing resources for ergonomic equipment for working from home (ECP 1 Recommendation 17 and WG debate).
5. Establish a publicly accessible digital scoreboard, which creates a ranking system that shows and compares the current level of digitalisation of EU businesses (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, fostering cutting-edge transformation-oriented research, as well as providing space for innovation ecosystems in all regions by improving the operational environment for 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 first' and 'single transmission of information' and facilitate digital and secure access to data for innovation and businesses; encouraging the digitalisation of public services (debate in the WG and multilingual digital platform). Make full use of the potential of trustworthy and responsible use of artificial intelligence and take advantage of the potential of blockchain technology and cloud services, by defining safeguards and standards that ensure transparency and interoperability, create trust, facilitate use and rule out discriminatory or biased algorithms (debate in the WG and multilingual digital platform).

9. Promote FOSS, its use in education and training and free access to publicly funded research and software (WG debate 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 digitalise information on consumer and food products through a standardised European application that would allow access to information in a more user-friendly way and provide additional information on products and the production chain (ECP 1 Recommendation 16).

90 Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel No 1 (ECP 1) Nos 7, 16 and 17 and

National Citizens' Panels (NCPs) of Germany
and Italy No 1.3.

91 To be discussed in connection with the proposals
of the Working Group on a Stronger Economy.



"European Democracy"

36. Proposal: Information for citizens, participation and youth

Objective: Increasing citizens' participation and youth involvement in democracy at EU level, in order to create a 'full citizen experience' for Europeans; ensure that their views are taken into account, including outside election periods, and that their participation is genuine. It is therefore necessary to determine which form of participation is most appropriate for each theme, for example:

1. By developing new mechanisms for citizen 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 comprehensive official website with various functionalities.⁹³ A mechanism should be developed to monitor political and legislative initiatives stemming from participatory democracy processes.⁹⁴ Participatory mechanisms should all reach out to the whole population in order to reach a variety of audiences. Attention should be paid to the content, topics and skills of the moderators. Such mechanisms should be based on an analysis of the effects of the measures in question, in particular for women and vulnerable persons.⁹⁵
2. Increasing the frequency of online and offline interactions between the EU institutions and citizens through various means, to ensure that citizens can participate in the EU policy-making process, express their views and obtain feedback, and drafting a Charter on Citizen Participation for EU officials.⁹⁶
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 on legislative proposals. Provision should also be made for the possibility of organising online surveys on that platform.⁹⁷
4. Improving and harmonising existing mechanisms at European, national and local level to make them safer, more accessible, more visible and more inclusive.⁹⁸
5. By 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 (CoR)⁹⁹ in citizen participation processes.¹⁰⁰
6. By creating a system of EU local councillors, in order to bring the European institutions closer to European citizens.¹⁰¹
7. By periodically convening citizens' assemblies, 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 relevant information for their deliberations. If the institutions do not take account of the conclusions of those assemblies, they must state the reasons for their decision.¹⁰² It is important that elected representatives consult citizens and civil society before taking 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 policies.¹⁰³

8. providing reinforced structural support, financial or otherwise, to civil society, in particular youth, and local authorities to set up local youth councils;¹⁰⁴ the involvement of civil society and social partners could be a fully-fledged pillar of the European Democracy Action Plan, and a specific strategy could be dedicated to civil society¹⁰⁵.
 9. Establishing 'youth scrutiny' of legislation, which would include an impact assessment and a mechanism for consulting youth representatives, where legislation is likely to have an impact on young people.¹⁰⁶
 10. By strengthening cooperation between EU legislators and civil society organisations, in order to take advantage of their links between decision-makers and citizens.¹⁰⁷
 11. Summarising the points on citizens' participation in a European Charter for citizens' contribution to European affairs.
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- 92 Amendments Nos 3A and 3B of the Working Party (WG).
 - 93 Recommendations 32 and 37 of the European Citizens' Panel 2 (ECP 2); National Panels BE, FR and NL.
 - 94 National Panel FR.
 - 95 Amendment No. 8 of the WG, more concise wording.
 - 96 ECP Recommendation 29 2.
 - 97 ECP2 Recommendations 19 and 32; BE and FR national 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 ECP2 Recommendation 39; No 3 of the BE National Panel.
 - 103 WG Amendment No. 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.

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

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

1. ¹⁰⁸Ensuring a minimum amount of teaching about 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 such programmes, which should be designed in an attractive and age-appropriate manner, for example by developing specific curricula and teaching materials for children, schools¹⁰⁹ and civil society organisations active in non-formal education.¹¹⁰

2. By ensuring, in an inclusive manner, that all citizens have easy access to reliable information about the Union. The European institutions should use more accessible language and avoid using 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 Union policies in clear language.¹¹² Special efforts should be made to reach out to young people on social media, but also through youth movements and various 'ambassadors' (organisations and individuals) explaining¹¹³ the European project.¹¹⁴
3. Increasing the use of artificial intelligence and machine translation technologies to overcome¹¹⁵ the language barrier,¹¹⁶ ensuring that all digital tools are accessible to persons with disabilities¹¹⁷ and easy to use.
4. Defending and supporting media freedom, pluralism and independence, and 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 EU Member States,¹¹⁸ stepping up efforts to combat disinformation and foreign interference, and protecting journalists.¹¹⁹
5. Bringing Europe closer to citizens by strengthening local contact¹²⁰ points and specialised hubs ('Houses of Europe'), 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 back to the European level.¹²¹
6. By taking further steps 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 lengths between EU citizens, by organising European sports events, by creating joint teams, or by making 9 May (Europe Day) an additional public holiday¹²² for all European citizens.¹²³

108WG Amendment No. 15A, compromise wording.

109ECP2 Recommendations 24, 36 and 38; BE National Panel.

110Amendment No. 16C of the WG.

111 ECP2 Recommendation 33; National Panels BE, FR and NL.

112ECP Recommendation 26 2.

113Amendment No. 17 of the WG.

114National Panel BE.

115Amendment No. 18A of the WG.

116ECP2 Recommendation 25.

117Amendment No. 18B of the WG.

118ECP2 Recommendation 31; National Panels BE and NL.

119WG Amendments No. 19A, redrafting to produce more adequate text.

120Amendment No 21 of the WG, compromise.

121National Panels BE and FR.

122Amendment No. 23B of the WG.

123ECP2 Recommendation 27; BE National Panel.

38. Proposal: Democracy and elections

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

1. Ensuring the safeguarding of European values enshrined in the Treaties, including the rule of law and a robust social model,¹²⁴ which form the core of European democracy. In its relations with the rest of the world, the EU should prioritise common

democratic values in border countries. It is only after achieving this goal that she will be able to become the ambassador of our democratic model in countries that have the capacity and the will to achieve it, through diplomacy and dialogue.¹²⁵

2. By introducing the possibility of convening a referendum across the Union, at the initiative of the European Parliament, on an exceptional basis, if a topic proves to be particularly important for all European citizens.¹²⁶
 3. By amending the electoral law of the European Union in order to harmonise the arrangements for European elections (age of electoral majority, date of elections, requirements for electoral districts, candidates, political parties and their funding), as well as by moving towards pan-European or transnational lists^x including candidates from different Member States, after taking into account¹²⁷ the views expressed by the citizens of the Member States on this issue.¹²⁸
- Some Members of the European Parliament should be elected on pan-European lists, while others would be chosen at Member State level.¹²⁹
 - The reform should also aim to facilitate digital voting arrangements¹³⁰ and ensure the real right of persons with disabilities to vote.¹³¹
 - 4. By strengthening the links between citizens and their elected representatives, taking into account national specificities: citizens want to feel that Members of the European Parliament and national parliamentarians are close to them and address their concerns with specific measures.¹³² This is a universal problem and people of all ages should get involved.¹³³
 - European citizens should have more weight in the election of the President of the Commission. This could be achieved through the direct election of the President of the

Commission¹³⁴ or through the system of lead candidates.^{x1}

- The European Parliament should have the right of legislative initiative to propose topics¹³⁵ for debate and then adopt the texts necessary to follow up on the recommendations resulting from the deliberations.¹³⁶
- The European Parliament should decide on the EU budget, as parliaments do at national level.^{x1137}
- Political parties, civil society organisations and trade unions should be more dynamic and accessible, so that citizens engage and invest more in European democracy.¹³⁸ It would also promote the inclusion of European issues in public debates organised

XI Parliament's position: the leader of the European political party with the highest number of votes in the European elections and the support of a majority of Members of the European Parliament should be elected as President of the European Commission. In the event that no coalition-based majority emerges, the position should return to the next top of the list. To this end, European political parties could nominate candidates for the presidency of the Commission. Paulo Rangel: to strengthen the lead candidate process, the roles of the European Parliament and the European Council should be reversed, implying Treaty changes: the President of the Commission would be proposed by Parliament and approved by the European Council. MNP (Kantar Final Report: "a group of contributions deals with the election of the President of the Commission and the appointment of Commissioners, including the system of lead candidates.") EYE, p. 23: Candidates for President of the Commission 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 the majority. By actively participating in the campaign and interacting directly with European citizens, the future President could be closer to them'; discussion in WG.

X The representatives of the European Commission explained that a transition period would be necessary in order to avoid too abrupt a development.

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

by political parties, civil society organisations and social partners, whether in the run-up to the European elections or in view of national, regional or local elections.¹³⁹

5. Democracy is embodied in institutions and society in general, including in the workplace through the social partners.¹⁴⁰

component expressed on page 42.

124Amendment No. 25C of the WG.

125ECP Recommendation 14.

126ECP Recommendation 18. NB: Citizens' representatives explained that this mechanism should be designed and used with caution.

127Amendments Nos 28E, 28G and 28H of the WG.

128ECP2 Recommendation 16; NL National Panel No. 20, divided on transnational lists.

129Based on ECP2 Recommendation 16; discussion in WG.

130ECP2 Recommendation 19 and Multilingual Digital Platform (MDP).

131EESC.

132Amendment No. 32B of the WG.

133ECP2 Recommendation 36; BE and FR National Panels.

134National Panel FR ('Election of the President of the European Commission by universal suffrage'); MNP (Kantar Final Report: a group of contributions deals with the direct election of the President of the Commission by citizens).

135Amendment No. 34C of the WG.

136BE National Panel (3.2), FR National Panel (11) MNP (Kantar Final Report: "As far as the European Parliament is concerned, contributors most often ask that it be given a real power of legislative initiative").

137MNP (Kantar Final Report: "Regarding the European Parliament, (...) There are also requests to grant it budgetary powers").

138MNP (Kantar Final Report: "According to another contribution, parties should become more accessible to people from different cultural or socio-economic backgrounds").

139CoR in WG.

140Amendment No. 38 of the WG, compromise wording.

39. Proposal: The EU decision-making process

Objective: Improve the decision-making process of the Union 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 by:

1. Reviewing the rules on decision-making and voting in the European institutions. The issue of unanimity voting deserves special attention, as it makes it very difficult to reach an agreement. Fairness in the weighting of votes should be ensured, so as to protect the interests of small countries.¹⁴¹
 - All decisions currently taken by unanimity should in future be adopted by qualified majority. The only exceptions should be the admission of new Member States to 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 Union.¹⁴²
2. By ensuring transparency in the decision-making process, by allowing independent citizen observers to closely monitor this process, by applying a broader right of access to documents¹⁴³ and by establishing closer links and enhanced dialogue between citizens and the European institutions on this basis.¹⁴⁴
 - The EU needs to improve the transparency of its decision-making process and institutions. For example, meetings of the Council and the European Parliament, including voting sessions, should be disseminated online in the same way. This would allow interested citizens to monitor EU policy-making and hold policy-makers to account.¹⁴⁵ The European Parliament's right of inquiry should also be strengthened.¹⁴⁶ Amendment No. 44A of the WG.
 - The EU decision-making process should be further developed so as to involve more national, regional and local representatives,

social partners and civil society organisations.¹⁴⁷ 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 hearings.¹⁴⁸ In addition, it would be useful to get a stronger involvement of subnational authorities and the CoR, in order to better take into account their experience in implementing EU legislation.¹⁴⁹

3. By considering changing the name of the European institutions, in order to clarify the function and role of each in the EU decision-making process in the eyes of citizens.¹⁵⁰
 - The Union's 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 States.¹⁵²
 - 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. By strengthening the Union's capacity to deliver results in key areas¹⁵⁴.
5. Ensuring the existence of mechanisms for social dialogue and consultation of citizens at all stages of the EU decision-making process, from impact assessment to the design and implementation of measures.¹⁵⁵
6. Reforming the functioning of the European Union, including by involving the 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 be given the means to play a more important institutional role as guarantor and facilitator of participatory democracy activities, such as structured dialogue with civil society organisations and citizens' panels. A vibrant civil society is essential to the democratic life of the Union.¹⁵⁶

7. By reopening the debate on the constitution, if relevant, in order to clearly define our values. A constitution could bring more clarity, mobilise citizens and agree on the rules of the decision-making process.¹⁵⁷

141ECP Recommendation 20 2.

142ECP Recommendation No 21 4.

143Amendment No. 43 of the WG.

144ECP2 Recommendation 34; NL National Panel.

145WG discussion based on ECP2 Recommendation 34; NL National Panel; MNP (Kantar Final Report: "More transparency and citizen participation 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.

150ECP2 Recommendation 15.

151WG debate based on the need expressed in ECP2 Recommendation 15 to "clarify the

functions of the European institutions"; MNP (Kantar Final Report: "There are also [...] suggestions to deepen the bicameral legislative power in the EU.")

152Amendment No. 48B of the WG.

153ECP2 Recommendation 15.

154Discussions in the WG.

155Amendment No. 52A of the WG.

156EESC, compromise formulation.

157ECP Recommendation 35, FR National Panel and WG Combined Amendments 51C and 51D.

40. Proposal: Subsidiarity

1. Active subsidiarity and multilevel governance are essential principles if the European Union is to function democratically and responsibly;¹⁵⁸

2. The EU must review the mechanism by which national parliaments examine whether or not European legislative proposals impinge 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 powers.¹⁵⁹

3. The CoR should be reformed to open up adequate channels of dialogue with regions, cities and municipalities. It should play a more important role¹⁶⁰ in the institutional architecture when it comes to topics with territorial consequences.¹⁶¹

4. The systematic use of a common definition of subsidiarity, endorsed by all European institutions, could define more clearly at

which level (European, national or regional) decisions should be taken.¹⁶²

5. Social partners and civil society organisations, which are central to European democracy, should be better involved in the decision-making process. A vibrant society is essential for the democratic life of the Union.¹⁶³

6. We call on 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 Convention.¹⁶⁴

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.

164WG amendment No. 63A, compromise wording.



‘Migrations’

41. Proposal: Legal migration

Objective: Strengthening the EU’s role on legal migration

Measures:¹⁶⁵

1. Launch a communication campaign at European level to make EURES (the European Network of Employment Services), the EU Immigration Portal and the European Skills Profiling Tool for third-country nationals better known to European citizens and used more frequently by EU companies when recruiting (Recommendation 6).
2. Create a European entity for migrants’ access to the EU labour market or, failing that, expand the competences of the European Network of Employment Services (EURES), e.g. improve projects under the Talent Partnership (Recommendation 7 and WG debate), with the possibility to meet online the supply and demand of skills, in the country of departure, based on evaluation criteria (Recommendation 9 and WG debate). The EU should encourage Member States to simplify the process of reception and integration of legal migrants and their access to the EU 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 7 and discussion in the WG), with due regard to the risk of brain drain (according to measure 1 of proposal 42).
4. Promote upward convergence on working conditions in a harmonious way across the Union in order to tackle inequalities in working conditions, ensure an effective European labour migration policy and defend workers’ rights. In this context, strengthen the role of trade unions at national and transnational level (recommendation 28 and WG debate), in cooperation with employers’ organisations (plenary debate).
5. Step up efforts to inform and educate citizens of the Member States on migration and integration issues (Recommendation 30, Recommendation 9 of the LT Panel and discussion in the WG).

¹⁶⁵Citizens’ recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens’ Panel No 4 (ECP 4) Nos⁶ 7, 9, 28 and 30, Lithuania No 9.

42. Proposal: Irregular migration

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

Measures:¹⁶⁶

1. Actively participate, for example through partnership agreements, in the economic and social development of countries outside the European Union from which there is a significant 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 WG debate).
2. Ensure the protection of all external borders by improving the transparency and

accountability of Frontex and strengthening its role (recommendation 8 and WG debate) and adapt EU legislation to better address the current challenges of irregular migration such as trafficking in human beings, trafficking in human beings, sexual exploitation, hybrid attacks perpetrated by states instrumentalising migrants and human rights violations (LT recommendation 10 and WG debate).

¹⁶⁶Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (ECP 4) Nos⁸ and 27, Lithuania No 10, Netherlands No 3.

43. Proposal: Irregular migration (a)

Objective: Apply common rules uniformly in all Member States as regards the first reception of migrants

Measures:¹⁶⁷

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 discussion 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 legal migrants in the EU and the repatriation of irregular migrants (recommendation 35 and discussion in the WG).

¹⁶⁷Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (ECP 4) Nos¹⁰, 35 and 38.

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

Measures:¹⁶⁸

1. Adopt common Union rules on procedures for examining applications for international protection in the Member States, applied uniformly to all asylum seekers. These procedures should respect human dignity and international law (Recommendation 29, IT Recommendations 3.8 and 4.4, p. 15 and discussion in the WG). As reception of asylum seekers involves different actors at national level, the EU 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 (one-stop shop or single entry point) for asylum seekers in order to streamline national administrative procedures (recommendation 37 and discussion in the WG).
2. Review the Dublin system to ensure solidarity and fair sharing of responsibilities, including the distribution of migrants between Member States; other forms of support could also be considered (recommendations 33, 36, 37, 40; LT Recommendation 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 (ECP Recommendation No 31, IT Recommendation No 5.6, p. 11, and debate in the WG).
4. Particular attention should be paid to pregnant women, children, including unaccompanied minors (recommendation 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 relocation of asylum seekers within EU Member States with a view to achieving a fair distribution (recommendations 36 and 37, LT recommendation 3 and WG debate).

¹⁶⁸Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (ECP 4) No²⁹, 31, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40, Italy No^{3,8}, 4.4 (p. 15) and 5.6 (p. 11), Lithuania No² and 3, Netherlands No 1 and 2.

45. Proposal: Asylum, integration(bis)

Objective: Improving integration policies in all Member States

Measures:¹⁶⁹

1. The EU ensures, also 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 32,
2. Asylum seekers with the right qualifications should have access to the labour market, if possible with the aim of strengthening their autonomy, across the EU (Recommendation 7 and discussion in the WG).

recommendation FR No 13, debate in the WG and debate in plenary).

¹⁶⁹Citizens' recommendations on which the proposal is mainly based: European Citizens' Panel No 4 (ECP 4) Nos⁷ and 32, France No 13.



Education, Culture, Youth and Sport

46. Proposal: Education

Objective: The EU and its Member States should strive for an inclusive European Education Area by 2025 where all citizens have equal access to quality education and lifelong learning, 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, including through the equivalence of diplomas.¹⁷⁰ A certified minimum standard of education in essential subjects should be adopted as early as primary school¹⁷¹ 171. Shared competences should be established in the field of education, at least as regards civic education, and the exercise of this 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 EU Member States.¹⁷² The EU should also exploit the recognition of non-formal and informal learning¹⁷³ and youth organisations offering it, as well as learning periods abroad.
 - Entrepreneurship and research.
 - Development of critical thinking. Media literacy should be improved to ensure online safety and allow citizens in all Member States to independently assess whether information is credible or not and to identify fake news while taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the internet. Such education should involve the organisation of specific courses at the level of basic education 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 their intended purpose¹⁷⁸.
 - integration of soft skills in all courses into school curricula. ‘Non-technical skills’ means: mutual listening, dialogue, resilience, understanding, respect and appreciation of others, critical thinking, self-learning, as well as being curious and results-oriented;¹⁷⁹ – Giving everyone the opportunity to learn more about environmental sustainability and its links to health. Biodiversity should be a compulsory subject at school. It should start at school with specific topics addressing all environmental issues and include excursions to present relevant real-life examples, all with the help of a funding programme.¹⁸⁰
 - Combating bullying in schools and racism.
2. Develop future-proof education and lifelong learning in Europe – in line with the right to workplace training for all – with a focus on the following aspects:
 - Civic education on democratic processes as well as EU values and European history.¹⁷⁴ 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

3. Support teacher training¹⁸¹, in order to learn from best practices and use up-to-date innovative and creative teaching techniques that reflect the evolution of teaching methods, including practical activities, also building on the lessons to be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and other types of crises, as well as promote mobility opportunities¹⁸².
4. In order to meet the educational needs of all children and families, prioritise access to equipment and efficient broadband connectivity.¹⁸³
5. Establish an information platform for an exchange of knowledge and experience at Union level, by sharing information on transnational education and training courses in the Union, presenting examples of good practice and offering citizens the opportunity to present new ideas for cross-border exchanges. It should offer educational material on climate change, environmental issues and digitalisation and provide information on existing specialised fora on key topics¹⁸⁴. - This could be accompanied by a funding programme to support the use and exploitation of platform information.

170French NCP, change 6.

171ECP Recommendation 37 1.

172 ECP Recommendation 3. French NCP, change 6.

173 ECP Recommendation 41 1.

174 Aspect discussed in more detail by the Working Group on European Democracy. See Recommendation 24 of ECP2, Recommendations 1.1, 1.2 and 2.12 of the Belgian NCP and the Recommendation of the Italian NCP on 'Inclusion Policies'.

175 Italian NCP Recommendation on "Inclusion Policies".

176 Aspect discussed in more detail by the working group on digital transformation. See recommendations 8 and 34 of ECP 1.

177 Recommendation of the Italian NCP on "Encouraging young people to study scientific subjects".

178 ECP Recommendations Nos 33 and 48 1.

Aspect also addressed by the working group on digital transformation. See Recommendation 47 of ECP1 on healthy use of the internet.

179 ECP Recommendation 5 1.

180 ECP Recommendations 15 and 18 1.

181 Italian NCP Recommendation on "Global Europe"

182 Recommendations¹⁸ and 41 of ECP1 and Recommendation of the Italian NCP on "Investing in the training of trainers".

183 ECP1 Recommendation 17 addressed in full to the Digital Working Group.

184 ECP Recommendation 15 1. Recommendation of the German NCP on an 'information platform for an EU-wide exchange of knowledge and experience'.

47. Proposal: Questions concerning European youth

Objective: The EU and its Member States must 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 to study and work and start 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 citizens' panels with children (e.g. aged 10-16) in schools. European representatives could meet schoolchildren in their schools in order to strengthen the proximity and understanding of Europe by citizens from an early age.¹⁸⁵ For all EU policy decisions to be analysed through a youth lens, a 'youth test' should be developed at European level 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 and EU education, should be discussed and considered. National political

parties should also ensure that younger candidates are placed on their lists for elections to the European Parliament.¹⁸⁶

3. Better prepare young people for working life, give high school students (from 12) 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 businesses.¹⁸⁷ These visits should be seen as part of a wider process of career guidance in formal education to enable young people to have a first contact with the world of work so that they can guide their career choices and/or consider becoming an entrepreneur.
4. More EU funding under NextGenerationEU should also be dedicated to the implementation of the reinforced European Youth Guarantee, including greater engagement, awareness raising, improving the quality of supply, funding and action of all Member States and relevant levels of

relevant authorities. As youth organisations are better able to identify the needs of young people, national governments should work with these organisations, through close dialogue, to ensure the most effective implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

5. Ensure that traineeships and jobs for young people comply with quality standards, in particular as regards remuneration, by ending minimum wages for young people and any other discriminatory labour law provisions specific to young people, as well as by prohibiting, through a legal instrument, unpaid traineeships on the labour market and outside formal education.¹⁸⁸
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 avoid brain drain from certain regions and countries within the Union due to insufficient opportunities for young people, while at the same time making Europe more attractive to prevent the flight of European talent and workforce to third countries in order to avoid undermining territorial cohesion, in particular as regards regions experiencing a significant loss of young talent, including through EU funding.¹⁹⁰
8. In the event of a serious crisis (e.g. health crisis, war), well-designed plans with detailed scenarios should be prepared 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 people.¹⁹¹

185Recommendation 6.1 of the Belgian NCP. French NCP, change 7.

186Recommendation 7.2 of the Belgian NCP.

187ECP Recommendation 4 1.

188Proposal to complement ECP1 recommendations 1 and 30 covered by the Working Group on a Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment.

189Proposal to complement ECP1

Recommendation 25 covered by the Working Group on a Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment.

190ECP Recommendation 28 4. Dutch NCP ('Our vision for culture, youth and sport'), Recommendation 1. French NCP, change 6.

191ECP Recommendation 6 1.

48. Proposal: Culture and exchanges

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

Measures:¹⁹²

1. Promote European exchanges in different fields, both physically and digitally, including educational exchanges, twinning, travel and professional mobility (notably for teachers and local elected representatives). Such exchanges should be made accessible to all in all Member States, irrespective of age, level of education, origin and financial means.¹⁹³ To that end, the Union should notably strengthen existing exchange and mobility programmes at Union level, such as the European Solidarity Corps, Erasmus+ and DiscoverEU, ensure wider and diversified participation in those programmes, and consider adding new elements, such as an additional civic service objective encouraged by volunteering (for the European Solidarity Corps) and 'cultural access passes' (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 obliged from primary school onwards 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 border regions and acquiring a certified level of English should be encouraged by Member States.¹⁹⁴
3. Create opportunities to share European cultures, bring people together and promote a common European identity, for example through events and rallies involving all target groups and taking place in different locations. Examples include the organisation of World Art Days,^{195a} European exhibition with educational events or the transformation of Europe Day (9 May) into an official European day off for all EU citizens.¹⁹⁶
4. Protecting European cultural heritage and European culture,¹⁹⁷ including by recognising local and regional cultural and production specificities,¹⁹⁸ through new initiatives to preserve and celebrate it, through mobility to encourage the exchange of cultural heritage, and through the promotion of existing measures such as Creative Europe, the New European Bauhaus, city twinning programmes 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 status at European level.

¹⁹²Dutch NCP ('Our vision of culture, youth and sport'), Recommendation 2.

¹⁹³ECP Recommendation 36 1. French NCP, change 6. Recommendations 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), Recommendations 1 and 3. Italian NCP, Recommendation on "To act as a confluence between East and West, promoting cultural exchanges and joint cultural initiatives".

194ECP Recommendations 32 and 38 1. Dutch NCP ('Our vision of culture, youth and sport'), Recommendation 3.

195Italian NCP Recommendation on "Global Europe"

196French NCP, change 7. Recommendations²⁵. 6.1 and 8.7 of the Belgian NCP. Italian NCP,

Recommendation on "Strengthening European cultural values and characteristics and regional specificities".

197Dutch NCP ('Our vision of culture, youth and sport'), Recommendation 2.

198Recommendation of the Italian NCP on "Exceeding the production model of the past century"

49. Proposal: Sport

Objective: Sport is essential for our societies – to uphold our values, lead a healthy lifestyle and age, promote a culture of exchange and celebrate the diversity of Europe's heritage. For this reason, Member States should aim, with the support of the European Union, to:

Measures:

1. Emphasise values, in particular gender equality, equity and inclusion, that can be concretely reflected in the practice of a sport throughout the educational pathway.
2. Raising awareness of the health benefits of sport and physical activity¹⁹⁹.
3. Integrate sport activities into exchange and mobility programmes at EU level²⁰⁰.
4. Improve the focus not only on professional and commercial sports, but also on local and traditional sports, which are witnesses of European cultural diversity, in order to promote cultural heritage, and support sports champions in a non-professional setting.
5. Encourage, in parallel, the promotion of European identity by organising more inter-European sporting events, creating 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 jointly benefit from top-notch opportunities.

199ECP Recommendation 29 1.

200ECP Recommendation 36 1.

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, together with representatives of the three institutions, national parliaments and other stakeholders, to provide guidance for the future. To achieve this objective, 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 develop an overview of what citizens expect from the European Union.

The conference was indeed able to play this role. European citizens from all walks of life and across the EU participated in the conference and formulated the recommendations of the citizens' panels as well as proposals for the future of Europe, in collaboration with the subsequent plenary assembly comprising 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 stakeholders. 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, the 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 manner during this year, as well as the proposals put forward 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 correcting inequalities and ensuring that the European Union is a fair, sustainable, innovative and competitive economy that leaves no one behind.

The geopolitical developments during the Conference, and in particular the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, also showed that the EU needs to become more assertive, playing a leading role on the global stage in promoting its values and standards in an increasingly turbulent world.

The Conference provided clear guidance in these areas and the three EU institutions now need to 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 outcomes of the Conference, which are included in this final report. The EU institutions will therefore now examine this report and its follow-up, each within its remit and in accordance with the Treaties. A follow-up event will take place in autumn 2022 to inform citizens on how the institutions will deliver on their commitment to ensure that they are listened to and hold the future of Europe in their hands.



Annex I – Recommendations of the four European Citizens' Panels



Conference on the future of Europe

European Citizens' Panel 1: A stronger economy, social justice and employment/Education, culture, youth and sport/Digital transformation

Recommendations

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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 SUBMITTED TO THE 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 not all Member States currently apply workers' protection correctly;**
- **special attention should be paid to monitoring the improvement of the standard of living;**
- **the minimum wage must take into account the purchasing power in the different countries. A periodic review procedure is needed 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 digital shift.

2. There is already an EU legislative act (EU Working Time Directive 2003/88/EC), but it is not sufficient to ensure a healthy work-life balance. As a first step, we recommend that the existing framework be reviewed 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 burdens, 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 helps to create a level playing field for 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 the different educational programmes in the EU, accepting national content. Therefore, we recommend that all professional degrees 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 be able to get an idea of the different opportunities offered by the labour market so that they can better choose their education and their professional future 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, which would provide benefits for all.

5. We recommend incorporating the practice of soft skills into all curriculum courses. Non-technical skills include: mutual listening, dialogue, resilience, understanding, respect and appreciation of others, critical thinking, self-learning, as well as remaining 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 pupil exchange programmes between schools, participation in inter-school sports and cultural events, etc.

We make this recommendation because soft 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's 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 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 prepared to be deployed flexibly in order to minimise the impact on the 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 carrying out traineeships, 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 in a highly vulnerable situation 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. working online and remotely, for example, at home or from another online connected place. We also recommend that the EU legislate to encourage companies to be socially responsible and maintain quality mobile jobs in the EU. Incentives may be financial in nature and/or affect the image of the company 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 lower-cost third countries. The COVID-19 pandemic and global economic trends increase the urgency to protect jobs in the EU and regulate mobile work.

8. We recommend that the EU guarantee the right to digital training for all EU citizens. In particular, young people's digital skills could be strengthened by introducing an EU certificate in schools, which would prepare them for the future labour market. We also recommend specific training at EU level for reskilling and upskilling 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, such as EURES.

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

Axis 2 A forward-looking economy

Sub-axis 2.1 Innovation and European competitiveness

9. We recommend that the EU create investment opportunities in research and innovation for various entities (universities, companies, 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 state-of-the-art 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 want to have a future, we need to protect the climate and look for planet-friendly alternatives. 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 widely applied and implemented in various areas and countries. It would also have positive effects 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 insofar as the current means of production, based on exploitation, would be replaced by others, more ethical.

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

We make this recommendation for the following reasons:

- diversifying 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 (particularly in regions hitherto dependent on fossil fuels);
- it could encourage the scientific development of innovative energy supply techniques;
- The quality of the electricity infrastructure and grid is as important as energy sources, as it enables smooth, efficient and affordable distribution and transmission of energy.

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 re-cultivate post-industrial sites and create protected green areas around existing sites. Companies should be required to finance these efforts, at least in part, from their own funds.

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 they manufacture their products (including replanting and environmental protection measures). Greening production processes also prepares companies 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 generalizing reusable packaging. Incentives should be given to consumers and businesses so that it is not more expensive for a consumer to buy products in bulk than packaged products. Companies that contribute to this transition should benefit from tax advantages 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 institution or a 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, addressing both businesses and consumers in order to change their behaviour in the long term. Companies

(e.g. construction companies) should be encouraged and helped to find the best solutions for their waste.

We make this recommendation because we must all be accountable 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 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 taxation 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 levied on commercial transactions where they take place: When a company sells in a country, it would have to 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 an end to. 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 occur at both the individual and commercial level, to ensure that the devices can be repaired and upgraded in the long term and can be kept for a long time. We recommend promoting refurbished devices. Regulation 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 and consumerism.

15. We recommend helping everyone learn more about our environment and its links to individual health through education. The educational paths will help everyone to define their own personal strategies to integrate these themes into their daily lives. This education should begin in 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, protect the environment and human health, and promote local consumption of healthy, unprocessed products from local producers. Those who do nothing to reduce their waste will have to undergo 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. That is why education for all in this area must be established. In addition, local and healthy products tend to be unaffordable for many people. We must ensure that local products are more widely available 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. indicating allergens, country of origin, etc.); we recommend the transparency of ongoing authorisation processes and the digitalisation of product information through a standardised European application that would allow more user-friendly access to information and provide additional information on products and the production chain. 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 count on the same quality of food products. The integrity of food products is necessary to ensure the safety of citizens. These recommendations have been formulated to improve, in a harmonised way, the control of authorisation processes and the transparency of food production.

17. We recommend that the 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 zones/dead zones" (zones without internet access) should be a priority. When it comes to accessing 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 working, for example by creating office spaces with access to a fast and reliable internet connection or by organising digital training.

We are making this recommendation because we need to ensure that the digital transformation is done in a fair way. 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 urbanization 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 as well as "competitions" promoted across the EU (local community level competitions). 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, 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 harmonised social policies, including health policies, across the EU, taking into account adopted regulations and minimum requirements across the territory.

We make this recommendation because there are wide disparities between Member States in terms of social policies, which need to be reduced to ensure a decent life for all citizens and to provide the necessary care and support to 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 with 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 in which we need to advance and deepen our knowledge. The experience of the pandemic provides us with an example that research is essential to improving life, that public-private and government-to-government collaboration is essential, and that financial support is needed.

21. We recommend that the EU should have increased competences in social policies in order to harmonise minimum rules and pension benefits across the EU and to establish new ones, based on an in-depth diagnosis. The minimum pension must be above the country's poverty line. The retirement age should vary according to the categories of occupations 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 working 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 additional measures to avoid the risk of marginalisation of older people and to 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 childcare solutions. Such measures should cover, inter alia, affordable and accessible childcare services (in the workplace, at night, VAT reduction on children's equipment), housing, job stability, maternity support, specific support and labour 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 characterised by low birth rates, which also contribute to the ageing of the European population and require immediate action. The proposed package aims to ensure that young families have the necessary stability to care for children.

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

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 additional measures to avoid the risk of marginalisation of older people 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 to life.

Sub-axis 3.2 Equal rights

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

We make this recommendation because improving access to housing would ensure that EU citizens enjoy tangible equal rights and contribute to alleviating social tensions. The EU's main role is to oversee the support mechanism; National and local authorities should do more 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. Such measures shall include, in particular: an increase in the duration of parental leave, the amount of the childbirth allowance and the amount of the childcare allowance.

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

27. We recommend that the EU take measures 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 citizens of the Union should enjoy equal rights, including family rights. The family is the basic form of social organization. A happy family contributes to a healthy society. The recommendation aims to ensure that all citizens enjoy the rights of the family, regardless of their gender, adulthood, ethnicity 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 encouraged and given high priority as an urgent issue addressed effectively 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) set up an ombudsman to obtain direct feedback from citizens.

We make this recommendation because we believe that the gender equality situation in the EU is far from satisfactory. There should be harmony in terms of gender equality and civil rights at European level, so as to achieve gender equality objectives in all countries, and not only in 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 are well educated/have a higher education degree 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 because of their health benefits. Sport and physical activity should be included in social policies, mental and physical health policies, as well as in education and labour policies (i.e. promoting the prescription of sport and/or physical activity by doctors and, where this is 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 costs and burdens on health services. For example, sport 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 on its territory and considered as a fair wage allowing for minimum living conditions, above the poverty line. Each Member State must follow up on this.

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

31. We recommend tax harmonisation in 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 are making 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 in kindergarten. From primary school onwards, it should be compulsory for children to reach level C1 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, in that it makes 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 help to create a common European identity and to understand 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, extended Erasmus+ programmes, etc.) to exclusively promote multilingualism. The current European Schools can serve as a model in this regard. The EU should create more such schools and actively promote them.

33. We recommend that the EU raise young people's awareness of 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 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 towards making 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 for those who want it and offer alternatives for those who do not.

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 that existing initiatives be better promoted 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 accessory, 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 on which educational material on climate change, sustainability and environmental issues will be made available for educational purposes. Such information should be fact-based, verified by experts and tailored to each Member State. The Platform shall:

- **should include lessons for various target groups, for example, for people living in urban or rural areas, all age groups and all levels of prior knowledge;**
- **should be made available to all Member States and be easily accessible;**
- **should include, in its implementation, a promotion plan that should involve the companies concerned;**
- **could be made available together with 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 to have access to evidence-based information on how to address climate change, sustainability and environmental issues. Important concepts, such as the ecological footprint, must be understood by everyone, especially by young people, because what we learn as children accompanies us throughout our lives. These topics are complex and misinformation 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 prioritise ensuring that exchange programmes are accessible to all (age groups, Member States, levels of education and financial capacity) and allow traineeships or exchanges between sectors, countries, educational institutions, cities and businesses. The EU should be responsible for launching, mediating and financing cultural and social exchanges across the EU, both physical and digital. The EU must actively promote these initiatives and target those 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 different 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, finance 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 strengthen 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 enhance 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 core 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 citizens' ability to communicate with each other and would support a stronger common European identity;
- this would widen 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 opportunities.
- such an approach would make it possible to disseminate a common European language within a very short period of time;
- the use of a common language speeds up the sharing of information, which would be beneficial for cooperation, joint crisis response, humanitarian aid and rapprochement between Europe and Europeans.

Axis 5 An ethical and secure digital transformation

Sub-axis 5.1 Democratization of Digital Transformation/Sub-axis 5.2 Cybersecurity

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

- increasing financial resources and staffing
- ensuring similar sanctions in each country • ensuring swift and effective legality control

We make this recommendation in order to guarantee 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 the content distributed, but we want to make sure that it is not their interests that take precedence. The regulation of content and the prosecution of those responsible must be swift and effective, so that they also have a deterrent effect on malicious persons.

40. We recommend that the EU invest in innovative and high-quality digital infrastructure (such as 5G under development in Europe) to ensure Europe's autonomy and prevent dependence on third countries or private companies. The EU should also pay particular attention to investments in its lagging regions.

We make this recommendation because digital infrastructures play an essential 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 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 the European Schools. It should draw on examples of good practice from across the EU. The EU should set up a dedicated organisation to promote this work and provide 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 these types of threats. Schools can also communicate with parents to promote good practices. These courses can be inspired by 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 improving compliance with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), creating more standardised mechanisms across the EU, and ensuring that even non-EU companies operating in the EU comply with this Regulation. Such improvement should provide for a clear and succinct explanation of the conditions of use of the data in order to avoid ambiguity and the provision of additional information on how and by whom the data will be used, and to avoid consent to the re-use and resale of the data being the default option. It should ensure that data is permanently erased when a citizen requests it. It should also increase the consistency of enforcement in relation to profiling of persons based on their online activities. We propose two types of sanctions: a fine proportional to the turnover of the undertaking and limitations on the activities of the undertaking.

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 give their informed consent to the processing of their data.

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 object to the processing of their data and obtain its erasure, in particular from third parties. This agency must have the mandate to identify and sanction fraudsters and organizations 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 be composed 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 limitations on the activities 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. Sanctions are either not enforced or have a negligible impact on businesses.

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

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

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 that everyone can understand. This text should present a key message and/or fundamental principles. The consent procedure should be more visual (for

example, a request for explicit permission to access the phone through an application). It should be accompanied by an information campaign (especially television) and, systematically, compulsory courses (at least for those working with data) and advice for 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" in two ways:

- **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 checked by experts to ensure their proper functioning;**
- **setting up a digital platform to assign a rating to information from traditional media (e.g. television, print, radio) regardless of political and economic interests, and to inform citizens about the quality of information without applying any form of censorship. The platform should be subject to public scrutiny and the highest standards of transparency, and the EU should ensure that the funds allocated to it are used for their intended purpose.**

We make this recommendation because different types of media are involved and we believe that sanctions or removal of content could lead to censorship and undermine freedom of expression and freedom of the press. 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 get rid of fake news completely, making these tools available to citizens will help to reduce their impact in Europe.

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

- **first, the EU needs to address the lack of infrastructure and equipment that prevents citizens from accessing the internet;**
- **Second, 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 young people and by 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.**

- **The EU should ensure that funds specifically allocated to these activities are used for their intended purpose.**

We make this recommendation, because of the lack of infrastructure and equipment (e.g. devices) in some places in Europe and the need to ensure connection before educating citizens, because we know that access to the internet is limited in certain regions and for certain profiles. We recommend organizing classes to help children acquire digital literacy, providing other programs to help older people go digital, and taking steps to reassure them that digital transformation does not undermine older people's rights.

48. We recommend that the EU promote the education of citizens 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 the level of basic education and should be offered, in other public spaces, to citizens of all ages who wish to benefit from it. The EU should ensure that funds specifically allocated to these activities are used for their intended purpose.

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

Annex: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS EXAMINED BY THE PANEL WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN ADOPTED

Axis 3 A just society

Sub-axis 3.2 Equal rights

We recommend that the EU put in place a mechanism to monitor and enforce minority rights (e.g. a portal or office where people could lodge complaints).

We make this recommendation because we believe that each individual can express their opinion and has the right to seek and receive help. Such an office is needed 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 modelling', involving public figures (e.g. 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 mobilizing 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 identifier that will store personal and sensitive data, but will only make it available to authorities and police. Online platforms and sellers will use the online code associated with this web identifier and the data necessary for a given activity. The default setting for sharing data 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 object easily. The data should only be available for a limited time or for a specific transaction. Authorization to use the data should be limited in time or clearly define what companies can do with the 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 how and why exactly. Operators therefore 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 IN 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 for combating discrimination in the labour market (quotas for young people, older people, women, minorities). If companies meet these criteria, they receive subsidies or tax breaks."

We recommend that employees be made more aware 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 a two-stage piece of EU legislation. Firstly, subsidies should be provided for the hiring of employees from certain categories who may be discriminated against. Secondly, the legislative act should require employers to employ these groups for a minimum period."

Indeed, the Union 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 provide an additional incentive to companies.

2. "We recommend that the EU create an incentive scheme 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 create kindergartens in proportion to the number of employees."

We recommend this measure because reconciling family and working life improves work performance, reduces unemployment and puts parents, especially women, in a position to pursue their careers. Focused on the social dimension, the proposed solution guarantees 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 of farming by amending Directive 98/58/EC on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes. More detailed minimum criteria need to be defined. They must be accurate, measurable and limited in time. Minimum criteria must be set in such a way as to lead to higher animal welfare standards and at the same time enable a transition to a sustainable climate and environment and green agriculture."

As citizens, we believe that it is important to have more stringent minimum standards to be harmonised within the Union in the field of livestock farming. We recognize that the transition could pose challenges in some subsidized agricultural sectors, and for those in transition to green and sustainable agriculture. Nevertheless, we believe that 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, based on their impact on the environment. Customs duties on all agricultural products imported into the Union must make it possible to 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 long-distance transport of animals."

By setting up such a system, we believe that it is possible to support the transition to climate- 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: 1. develop an EU directive setting minimum standards for media independence; 2. promote at Union level the development of media skills for each citizen."

The Union must draw up a directive to guarantee the independence of the media and freedom of expression.

6. "We recommend to 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 mass farming sector, subsidies should be redirected to farms that are in transition to comply with 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 Union level. These entities will also have to be subject to an annual external and independent data protection audit. These entities will be sanctioned for data protection violations in proportion to their annual turnover, in a stricter manner than under the current regulation. The authorisation should be withdrawn after two consecutive infringements, and immediately after a serious infringement."

We recommend such measures because the current regulations (GDPR) are not sufficient and entities need to be better controlled and sanctioned to ensure they do not violate data protection and privacy rights.

8. "We recommend strengthening the EU's competences in the following areas: 1) data protection education, 2) data protection awareness and 3) the 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 a special category in the GDPR 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 currently 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 how to protect children's right to privacy. In addition, legal guardians can often consent to the processing of children's data without being fully aware or informed and children can falsify parental consent. Finally, this recommendation is necessary because there is no genuine EU-wide data protection awareness campaign targeting in particular minors, legal guardians and teachers, although such a campaign is indispensable.

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

We recommend this measure because the current EU rules are not precise enough, 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 Conditionality Regulation (2020/2092, adopted on 16 December 2020) be amended so that it applies to all breaches of the rule of law rather than only to breaches having an impact on the EU budget."

The Conditionality 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 only applies to infringements which have or are likely to have an impact on the Union budget. Moreover, the current wording of the Conditionality 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 breaches of the rule of law.

11. "We recommend that the EU organises annual rule of law conferences after the publication of the annual rule of law report (the Commission's mechanism for monitoring Member States' compliance with the rule of law). Member States should be obliged to send to the Conference socially diverse national delegations, including both citizens and officials."

This conference would foster dialogue between EU citizens on rule of law issues as well as dialogue between citizens and experts drafting the annual rule of law reports. We believe that, in a climate of mutual appreciation and sharing, participants will be able to bring 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 underpinning 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 enforces 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 major media monopolies and political appointments to media boards. We also recommend that the future EU Media Freedom Act include rules to prevent politicians from owning or having a strong influence on media content."

We recommend this measure because the application of EU competition rules promotes a pluralistic media landscape in which citizens have a choice. As the Commission is currently drafting legislation (on media freedom) for the integrity of the EU media market, provision should also be made for media not to be owned or influenced by politicians.

Sub-axis 2.3 Security

13. "We recommend that the EU institutions play a stronger 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 against new threats from cybersecurity breaches and the use of artificial intelligence for criminal purposes. We also recommend that the directives emanating from Europe and its agencies be properly implemented and disseminated in all Member States."

We recommend this measure because citizens feel powerless and unaware of what the European Union is doing to combat these threats. We recommend this measure because these threats constitute a serious problem of national and European security. We recommend this measure because Europe should be a real driver of innovation in this area.

14. "We recommend that, in its relations with external countries, the Union should first strengthen the democratic values common to its borders. It is only after achieving this objective that we recommend that the Union should become the ambassador of our democratic model in those countries that are willing and willing to apply this model, 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 leading by 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 in order 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 measure because 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 for 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 transition period, citizens could still vote for national and transnational parties."

We recommend this measure because the Union needs to develop a sense of unity, which could be achieved through a truly unified election of the European Parliament. This joint election will make it possible to empower 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 fact-checked information. The platform should be clearly associated with the Union institutions, structured by themes 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."

Open access to factual information is of the utmost importance for 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 Union.

18. "We recommend that an EU-wide referendum be held in exceptional cases on issues that are extremely important for 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 EU issues. However, referenda 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 to 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 politics and to facilitate citizens' access to consultation and voting. Existing tools and processes are not visible enough, which is why we need a new integrated tool for these different functions. Greater participation leads to better decisions, greater trust between 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 voting is an important challenge for decision-making in the Union. Given the large number of Member States, it is very difficult to reach an agreement. If necessary, the European Treaties should be amended to address 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 to 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 oversight, transparency and effective communication towards citizens in the implementation of public investments and to allow citizens to monitor the entire investment process. For a better quality of life, investment should be made in areas such as education, health, housing, physical infrastructure, care for the elderly and people with disabilities, taking into account the needs of each Member State. The additional investments should aim to strike a good balance between an appropriate work 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 throughout the Union, leading to a unified European Union. It is a fundamental indicator for the further integration of the Union. Although some of these mechanisms are already in place, we believe that there is still room for improvement.

22. "We recommend establishing a common basis, based on a set of economic indicators and quality of life indicators, for all Member States, so as to offer the same opportunities and put everyone on an equal footing to achieve a common economic structure. It is important that this common basis is 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 such a common economic structure should take. It is also important that the indicators on which this common basis is based are further defined with the assistance of experts."

We recommend this measure because, if we have a just 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 basis is established.

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

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

Axis 4: Building European identity

Sub-axis 4.1 Education for democracy

24. We recommend ensuring that democracy education in the EU improves and achieves a minimum level of knowledge in all Member States. Such education should cover, but not be limited to, democratic processes and general information about the Union, which should be taught in all Member States of the Union. 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; such education could limit populism and disinformation in public debate; it could reduce discrimination; and, lastly, it would make it possible to educate and mobilise citizens in favour of democracy beyond their mere 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 Union."

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 an app for mobile devices, in order to improve transparency, public debate and democracy. This application could be used to disseminate information on, for example, legislation, discussions within the Union, changes to the Treaties, etc."

This recommendation and the reasons for it are important because, if implemented, it will facilitate communication as it will allow for a more informed debate between citizens of 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 is able to increase curiosity and make technical information more accessible and attractive. The application should be seen as a complementary source, disseminating information officially verified directly by the Union in order to improve trust and transparency in 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 create 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 the European identity. Participants should be representative of society in the Union and should be drawn in particular from groups chosen in a targeted manner on the basis of various criteria, namely demographic, socio-economic and occupational criteria. The objectives of this fund must be clearly stated in order to foster European identity, and this fund must be evaluated at regular intervals."

We recommend this measure, 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: fact-checking, raising awareness of disinformation, producing easily accessible statistics, imposing appropriate sanctions under a legal framework on those disseminating disinformation, and combating sources of disinformation."

This recommendation is important because misinformation and disinformation, both inside and outside the Union, have the effect of creating conflicts between Union citizens, polarising society, jeopardising democracy and damaging the economy. Given the complexity of the topic, significant human and financial resources are required.

29. "We recommend 1) increasing the frequency of online and offline interactions between the EU and its citizens (i.e. directly interviewing citizens on EU issues and creating an easy-to-use platform to ensure that every citizen can interact with the EU institutions and leaders), and 2) ensuring that citizens can participate in the EU policy-making process, express their views and get feedback, and we recommend creating a charter or code of conduct or guidelines for EU leaders. Different means of interaction should exist so that every citizen can participate."

We recommend this measure, as there are several ways to get in touch with the European institutions (online platforms, representative bodies), but they are not known, 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. rule of law, democracy and solidarity) have a special place in the process of integration of migrants. Various measures can 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 the awareness of Union citizens on migration-related issues."

This recommendation is important because social interaction programmes 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 either at national or EU level. A common policy is needed, because once migrants enter the territory of the Union, they can go to all the countries of the Union. Local initiatives should be supported, as local governments will use the funds more effectively than at national level.

Sub-axis 4.3 Information on the EU

31. "We recommend that the EU informs European citizens more. To this end, the Union should use all necessary means while respecting the freedom and independence of the media. It should provide the media with resources as well as general and reliable information on the activities and policies of the Union. The Union should ensure that information is disseminated equally in all Member States by national and European media and ensure that Member States encourage public broadcasters and public press agencies to deal with European issues."

We recommend this measure because, according to our personal experience and according to Eurobarometer data, the majority of European citizens are informed by the traditional media (press, radio and television) and these channels currently offer very little information about the Union. The media, including 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 information on the Union disseminated in the different Member States should 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 less expensive to use already 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 be able to access different content (national or European).

32. "We recommend that the EU create and promote multilingual online forums and offline meetings allowing citizens to launch a debate with EU representatives, regardless of the topic and geographical scope of the issue raised. Answers to questions asked in these online forums and offline meetings should be provided within a short, well-defined timeframe. 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 receive the most support. In any case, access to this site should be easy and non-bureaucratic language should be used."

We recommend this measure because it is a way to create a direct bridge between European citizens and European representatives to talk and engage together, to give citizens easy access to information about the Union and to bring to their attention the information already available. This

will create a more transparent and open Union and help citizens to share their problems and thoughts and receive political answers and solutions, and allow citizens to engage and share perspectives and experiences with other citizens.

33. "We recommend that the 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.  EU should also adapt the information it provides to citizens using different communication channels and different audiences (e.g. newspapers, television, social media). The Union 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, because 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 have a better understanding of EU activities and policies, in particular young people who do not feel close to or attached to the EU.

Axis 5: Enhancing citizen participation

Sub-axis 5.1 Citizen participation

34. "We recommend that independent citizen 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 useful and important information to all citizens of the Union defined as such. These citizens would engage with all other European citizens in a top-down/bottom-up approach, which would further develop the dialogue between citizens and the EU institutions."

Citizens obviously deserve to be kept informed of all issues, and it is important to ensure that politicians cannot hide from citizens certain issues that they would prefer them 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 in favour of drawing up such a constitution. In order to avoid any conflict with the Member States, the values of human rights and democracy should be incorporated into this Constitution as a matter of priority. In drawing up such a constitution, account should be taken of previous efforts which have never resulted in a constitution."

Because this constitution would engage young people in politics at Union level and thwart the forces of nationalism that are gaining ground. Because it would provide a common definition of what democracy is in Europe and would be implemented equally in all Member States. Because

the Union shares common values on democracy and human rights. Because citizens would thus have the opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process and to identify more with the Union by having participated in that process.

36. "We recommend that politicians be more accountable in the way 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 needs to be updated. We must remember what democracy really is. Because young people have had enough and are disillusioned with politicians they see as elites who do not share their opinions. That is why we need to mobilise citizens more, 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 existing platform needs to be strengthened and made more efficient: there must be more feedback from citizens to the Union and vice versa. There is not enough debate within the Union, 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 EU create and implement programmes for schools on what is being done in the EU with regard to participation mechanisms. Such programmes should be integrated into school curricula on European citizenship and ethics, with age-appropriate content. There should also be programmes for adults. Lifelong learning programmes should be made available to citizens in order to increase their knowledge of opportunities for citizen participation in the Union."

We recommend this measure because it is important for the future of our children. 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 binding law or regulation. These citizens' assemblies should be held every 12 to 18 months. Citizen participation should not be mandatory, but encouraged, while being organised on the basis of limited mandates. Participants must be selected randomly, according to representativeness criteria. They must not represent organizations of any kind and must 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 so that the members of the assembly have sufficient information to deliberate. Decision-making will be in the hands of citizens. The Union must ensure that politicians are committed to the decisions taken by citizens in citizens' assemblies. If citizens' proposals are ignored or explicitly rejected, the European institutions must account for them, giving the reasons why this decision was taken."

We recommend the establishment 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, so as to strengthen the sense of belonging and direct effectiveness. In addition, we want political parties to be held accountable to citizens, including on their electoral programmes.

Annex: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS EXAMINED 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 including representatives of NGOs. It should have a training role in sensitizing civil servants to the needs of minorities. This body should have a right of veto on minority issues."

We recommend this measure 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 have 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 follow an impartial and objective process in the production of their content. To prevent disinformation, the Agency should provide for a rating system for the reliability of national media. This rating system should be easy for citizens to understand."

We recommend this measure, because we need an assessment of the media and their reliability, but also of the diversity of the media in the countries of the Union. A European agency would be the most objective body to carry out 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: Enhancing citizen 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 (depending on citizens' decision – possibly by means of a survey). It should be a heterogeneous group of around 100 citizens from all EU countries, in which each country is equally represented. It should be a rotating group, whose members are replaced on a regular basis."

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 have 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 SUBMITTED TO THE PLENARY)

Axis 1: Better lifestyles

Sub-axis 1.1 Healthy lifestyles

1. We recommend that the EU provide subsidies for organic farming, including incentives for organic pesticides, to make organic products more affordable. In addition, the EU must support the education of farmers in organic and sustainable farming and monoculture farming should be avoided. Small organic farms, non-intensive farms and farms with short supply chains should be supported to be more competitive.

Subsidizing organic products would make them more affordable. We should help supermarkets with shorter supply chains and small farmers with opportunities to sell their products. This expands access to fresher products. On the other hand, low prices for non-organic products do not reflect the harm they cause.

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

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

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

We acquire habits from an early age that shape our attitude to health; Good habits should be encouraged at school and students could replicate them at home. It is also a question of social justice: Every pupil in the EU should have the right to quality food at school.

4. We recommend investing in new bike paths and improving existing ones to make cycling safe and attractive, and to ensure that all age groups in Europe can benefit from training on

road traffic rules, especially for e-bike users and people without driving licences. Manufacturers of e-bikes should be required to provide information on the use of the e-bike and the risks associated with it. Legal protection should be offered to cyclists in the event of an accident involving a vehicle (see Dutch legislation). We are in favour of car-free areas in cities (without harming commercial areas). More generally, we recommend giving priority and additional rights to cyclists and pedestrians over motor 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 level, climate and traffic in city centers. Cyclists and pedestrians need to feel safe, given the risks associated with the increased use of e-bikes. Sometimes bike paths are missing or in poor condition.

5. We recommend integrating food production into public education. We recommend subsidizing 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, old 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 the sharing of innovative practices and best practices across Member States.

Gardening projects promote the resilience of cities and their inhabitants, bringing together people of different ages and social groups. The proliferation 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 urban development programmes to comply with specific environmental requirements in order to make cities greener. This Directive should apply to private and public property and spaces, including 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 levels of CO2 emissions and the inclusion of plants in architectural projects.

Greener cities actively contribute to reducing the effects of climate change and CO2 and ozone emissions, in particular, which have a negative impact on the health of citizens. 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 support of Member States, develop, adopt and implement a common European Charter targeting environmental issues in their complexity. The Charter will provide a framework for Member States to organise regular information and training campaigns, disseminated on 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 increase environmental awareness among all citizens.

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 more effective efforts. In addition, it will ensure that consistent and homogeneous information is provided to citizens about the impact of their everyday actions, such as the choice of their mode of transport and the treatment of their waste.

Axis 2: Protecting our environment and our 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 comply with 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 lifecycle information is fundamental for all EU citizens to empower consumers when shopping. This will enable EU citizens to take responsible decisions that will contribute to the protection of their environment.

9. We recommend that more investment be made to explore new environmentally friendly energy sources and, by the time these new sources are deployed, that additional investment be made in existing optimal energy generation solutions. We also recommend transparently informing and educating European citizens about specific energy sources. We strongly recommend taking into account all the 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 the climate and air quality. To comply with EU guidelines, the recommendations of IPCC reports and the goals 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 fertilizers 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 farmer training.

Although progress has been made on fertilizers 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 stricter standards for the use of pesticides and fertilisers. Research results need to be rapidly disseminated at EU level.

11. We recommend the extension of protected areas for the conservation of biodiversity (mammals, birds, insects and plants) and a strengthening of the rule of law regarding human intervention in these areas. Protected areas will be considered not only as islands, 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 ways to protect terrestrial biodiversity. However, it is difficult to preserve protected areas near polluted cities or to avoid human interference when the surrounding areas leave little room for nature. We need to green residential areas and integrate them into their surrounding nature.

12. We recommend redirecting generic subsidies in favour of agriculture mainly towards projects relating to the development of sustainable agriculture, integrating respect for nature and workers. Beneficiaries should adhere to clear environmental standards and be rigorously monitored.

We believe that only sustainable agriculture should be encouraged, which means 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 their traceability, labelling and quality control.

The lower productivity of sustainable agricultural products undermines their cost competitiveness. Imported products should comply with the same strict standards regarding the ecological impact of their production. Our authorities should be able to guarantee the traceability of imported agricultural products.

14. We recommend rapid and massive reforestation and afforestation in the EU through optimised land use. Particular attention should be paid to reforestation of harvested or destroyed forests and afforestation of areas with degraded soils. New and more responsible solutions for better use of wood should be promoted, for example to replace plastic and other chemical materials, achieve greater 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 turn it into high value-added products; for example, to replace plastics, the use of wood is essential.

Sub-axis 2.3 Safe and Healthy Foods

15. We recommend the rapid and progressive removal of unsustainable packaging used for food, including plastic packaging and packaging based on other materials that are not biodegradable. To this end, we suggest offering financial incentives to companies switching to fully biodegradable forms of packaging, investing in the search for alternatives and introducing sanctions for companies that do not use biodegradable packaging.

Plastic waste, especially microplastics, is becoming increasingly abundant and slowly deteriorating. Consumption of plastic is detrimental to 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 breeding, including the end of degrading living conditions for animals. We propose to establish common livestock standards (e.g. maximum number of animals, suitable outdoor space) and to invest more in non-intensive methods (extensive and sustainable agriculture) by offering financial incentives and training to farmers to support this development.

The phasing out of intensive agriculture will reduce levels of environmental pollution and strengthen the protection of nature. In addition, phasing out intensive livestock farming will reduce the amount of medicines needed to fight 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; there is a need to provide subsidies to farmers to help them move in this direction.

17. We recommend strengthening controls on the prohibition of unnecessary use of antibiotics and other veterinary medicinal products in feed additives: Let us make this initiative a reality! We propose that the use of antibiotics in animal husbandry should be allowed only 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 by the consumption of food derived from animals to which antibiotics have been administered. In addition, it takes time to develop appropriate alternatives to existing antibiotics and to ensure that farmers are informed and willing to use them. We recognise that there are European directives on antibiotics; however, they have not been implemented in the same way in all Member States. Finally, veterinary medicinal products are misused for doping purposes; stricter animal welfare legislation will therefore enhance animal welfare and improve the quality of life of animals.

18. We recommend that EU legislation require the declaration of 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, traceability of food products is insufficient, in particular with regard to hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors. We believe that transparency in food production is necessary to meet accountability. On the other hand, consumers should be able to know the full composition of the food they consume and be able to freely choose what they eat. In addition, there is insufficient research on the human impacts (and potential risks) of consuming food products containing hormonal substances and endocrine disruptors.

19. We recommend discouraging the consumption of processed foods by applying taxes on unhealthy foods and investing the funds obtained 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 about their health effects.

In this way, the funds raised can be used to develop awareness-raising measures and promotional campaigns, prioritize healthy eating in the education sector, and ensure that unhealthy foods are less visible in supermarkets. Investments in healthy food also contribute to improving the general health of the population and, as a result, to 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 for longer and to encourage them to do so. The EU should combat planned obsolescence by extending the product warranty and setting a maximum price for spare parts after the 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 actions.

Our waste society is not sustainable because it generates too much waste. By implementing the proposed measures, we will move towards a society in which products are 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 throughout the production chain. EU production standards should be more sustainable and harmonised across Member States and 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 comply with these standards.

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

22. We recommend that the EU and Member States put in place measures to limit advertising for 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 promoted. In this way, consumers will be less likely to buy environmentally harmful products.

23. We recommend that the EU set up and develop the deposit and return system infrastructure for all primary packaging made of glass, plastic, aluminium, etc., in a homogeneous way across the EU. Manufacturers should, where possible, reuse returnable packaging by sterilizing it rather than simply recycling the material. In addition to packaging for food and beverages, the device should also cover other types of bottles and containers, such as shampoo bottles.

Right now, consumers are throwing away too much packaging, polluting and destroying our ecosystems. Deposit-refund schemes help reduce waste by encouraging citizens to bring back packaging rather than throwing it away. With the development of this device, 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 who comply with them.

Many people will end up unemployed if production companies reduce their workforce or even end up in a state of cessation of payment/closure. 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 made from biodegradable or recyclable or more sustainable materials, if possible) and/or the use of less bulky packaging, also with a QR code providing relevant information for the post-use recycling and/or disposal process.

This recommendation will result in less packaging, less waste and, consequently, less pollution; the environment will therefore be cleaner and, ultimately, the carbon footprint will be lower. 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 local food products.

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

The import of poor quality products has a direct negative impact on the environment. To combat climate change, we need to tackle all its causes, including the import of 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 organise 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 have access to more affordable sustainable products.

Citizens must be involved 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 of the results.

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

The fashion sector, which produces too many low-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 energy, now

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

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

We know that the use of conventional fuels leads to the emission of greenhouse gases and EU Member States must reduce the use of this type of energy to comply with the Paris Agreement. Since CO2 emissions cannot be stopped immediately 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 allows solutions to be found because the Member States cannot achieve the objectives on their own.

30. We recommend reducing intensive industrial livestock farming 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 ways to reuse waste from animal production and other industries.

The population is growing, which will result in an increase in the demand for meat in the future. That is why we need to reduce meat consumption.

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

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, since it takes 75% energy to obtain 25% hydrogen, this type of energy has many positive aspects. The best solution may 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 the production of wind energy 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 coercion and reward system to tackle pollution, including water, soil, air and radiation. Fines must be imposed on polluters, coupled with mandatory support from 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 the level of pollution.

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, because it is directly related to our well-being and our future existence.

33. We recommend that the EU set up a dedicated website/platform verified by multiple experts – with diverse and regularly updated environmental scientific information – that is easily accessible and transparent to 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 need independent, science-based sources of information to understand the challenges of climate change (its consequences and what needs to be done to reverse it), as well as to deal with fake news. The media campaign will make them aware of the existence of this platform/website. It is also important that the information provided by the website/platform is comprehensible to all citizens, with access to source material for those wishing 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 goal is to reduce pollution globally. It is also important to present countries with the standards they need to meet if they want 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 the very local (citizens) to the global (national, international and intercontinental) level, in order to address the concerns of all parties involved.

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 the connectivity of rural areas. This requires the development of 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 because all citizens would feel they had the same rights. Strengthening the public transport network and internet connectivity would encourage people to move to rural areas. This process would reduce pollution, as fewer people would live in overcrowded cities.

37. We recommend improving existing transport infrastructure which has fallen into disuse or which can still be 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 to protected areas that are important for biodiversity conservation. Increasing rail infrastructure would lead to a reduction in CO2 emissions and promote the mobility of the population from urban to rural areas.

38. We recommend that the EU encourage the purchase of electric vehicles with good battery life standards. To this end, the EU could provide 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 that are difficult to electrify, such as boats and trucks.

We make this recommendation because electricity is the fastest way to reduce vehicle emissions, along with other energy sources such as hydrogen and biofuels. Indeed, the fastest, most 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 Strengthening the health care system

39. We recommend that the European Union ensure 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 across the European Union.

If we do not have common standards of healthcare, salaries and training for healthcare professionals, the 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 (example of 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 across the EU are of equal quality and at 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 specialised 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 kept to a minimum.

Equality of medical treatment and treatment guarantees equal health rights for all European citizens within the EU. 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 health care database, in which medical records would be accessible in the event of an emergency or illness. Participation should be voluntary and the protection of personal data should be ensured.

Access to data and the use of data make it possible to react quickly in cases where life is threatened. Piracy or misuse are major threats to such a European healthcare database system, hence the need to secure data, while participation remains optional, and obviously 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 accessible 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 life-threatening diseases across Europe. It would also promote European self-sufficiency in medicines and equipment.

43. We recommend that the European Union 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 investment will strengthen preventive medicine in the long term and reduce health-related costs. More funding could prevent the brain drain from Europe to other developed countries with higher health R&D budgets. This funding should not come from existing financial resources for health care.

Sub-Axis 5.2 A broader vision of health

44. We recommend the establishment of a Health Week as an EU initiative in all Member States, in the same week, dedicated to all health issues, with a focus on mental health. During this week, all the main topics related to mental health 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 feminine hygiene products cease to be considered luxury products in terms of taxation, as they are essential products. We also recommend that hormonal contraception products used for medical reasons, such as fibromyalgia and endometriosis, be taxed as regular medical treatment. We also recommend that the European Union promote the harmonisation of medically assisted reproduction treatments for all women (single or married) in all Member States.

In some European countries, feminine hygiene products are taxed as luxury products, 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 in different Member States, and the European Union must strive to harmonise them.

46. We recommend that the European Union take 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 curriculum on mental health and sexual issues.

There is a need to reduce discrimination and taboos regarding mental health issues. Disinformation and unscientific approaches must also be avoided. In addition, sex education is fundamental to a healthy life and community, and helps avoid problems such as teenage pregnancies.

47. We recommend that the European Union develop a better system of communication of all its mental health initiatives, namely the public health portal on good practices, within the Member States and for all citizens. Members of the European Parliament 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 able to benefit from free dental care. Within 15-20 years, the EU should ensure that affordable dental care is available to all.

We make this recommendation because dental care is currently not affordable for many people living in the EU. Lack of dental care and dental prophylaxis affects 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. Ultimately, 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 health care. 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 publish binding regulations and decisions.

50. We recommend that the EU offer free courses on providing first aid 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, recurrent and age-appropriate. A minimum number of defibrillators should also be available in public places in all EU Member States.

We recommend this because many people in the European Union are unprepared to act when a person needs help and because they are not familiar with first aid techniques. This is why many lives are lost. In some public places, no defibrillators are 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 guarantee access to healthcare for all their citizens. In addition, a stronger public health system also implies better preparedness for future pandemics.

Annex: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS EXAMINED BY THE PANEL WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN ADOPTED

Axis 1: Better lifestyles

Sub-axis 1.1 Healthy lifestyles

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

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

We recommend that the EU encourage Member States to include in national school curricula courses to learn how to cook in a sustainable, healthy and tasty way. For this purpose, 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 best to use food to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Research in this area should be encouraged and enriched.

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 have learned. In addition, educating parents about healthy lifestyles would allow them to set an example for their children.

We recommend stepping up the European Commission's public campaign for healthy lifestyles, HealthyLifestyle4All, as well as 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 set up reward and incentive systems to promote positive behaviour. Campaigns should involve influencers, celebrities or authorities. They must highlight the dual benefits for health, the environment and the climate. In addition, subsidies 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. Current campaigns are not sufficiently known. They are more effective and motivating when personalities and influencers are involved.

We recommend an information campaign on healthy eating and nutrition. The EU should encourage the adoption of a higher tax on meat and sugar in the Member States. It should examine the possibilities of distinguishing healthy foods from foods harmful to health and apply differentiated VAT to them. We recommend that very clear warning signs be placed on products that are very harmful to health (such as tobacco products). In addition, we recommend a Europe-wide nutrition score system, providing relevant information and a QR code that enables consumers to make better-informed decisions. Explore opportunities to make healthy food cheaper than junk food and increase incentives for farmers to produce healthy products.

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

Sub-axis 1.2 Environmental education

We recommend that the EU establish 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 to facilitate direct and profound 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 is excluded for financial reasons.

Axis 2: Protecting our environment and our 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 propose a reward system based on water pricing in order to encourage and encourage less consumption, for example: 1) by creating a dynamic system that discourages the consumer from exceeding the average water consumption (e.g. a 10% increase in water consumption leads to an 11% increase in price), 2) by creating a quota market system for water polluted by manufacturing companies, which would be similar to the carbon emission permit market already in place.

This recommendation is justified by the fact that the increase in prices encourages all users to make better-informed decisions. Given the different realities of EU countries and with the aim of building 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 find it more cost-effective to dispose of unsold goods rather than recycle or reuse them. It is therefore important to discourage overproduction by imposing 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 including the necessary measures to raise citizens' awareness of the benefits of reducing waste generation and separate waste collection. Measures targeting socially disadvantaged families (e.g. young families with children, the elderly, etc.) should also be implemented in line with the "leave no one behind" principle.

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. Last but not least, it raises 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 the treatment of waste, 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 trade products and influence climate issues.

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

Due to the relocation of industries outside the EU, notably to 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 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 awarded subsidies based on the environmental and pollution performance of their public transport (electric vehicles, green public transport, creation of pedestrian zones, promotion of bicycle use, etc.). In particular, the fines or subsidies applicable to the local authorities of a city should be determined on the basis of changes in ecological transport compared to the starting situation in that city. It is the European Union that, through its legislation, should define performance indicators for pollution measures and determine proportional reduction. In this regard, the starting point of each city should be taken into account.

We are making this recommendation because cities have been affected by air pollution, which has caused health problems. Developing green transportation 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 the different situations that exist 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 of these alternatives should be the standardisation of railways in order to connect European capitals. We also recommend that the EU grant subsidies to make the transport of goods more environmentally friendly, including transport by train and boat (for short journeys).

We make this recommendation, because short 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 is 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 vision of health

We recommend that the European Union, in line with its HealthyLife4All programme, also promote initiatives such as sports social events, sports activities at school, biannual olympiads open to all ages and 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 publicized 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 play 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 THE PLENARY SESSION)

Axis 1: Self-sufficiency and stability

Sub-axis 1.1 – Autonomy of the EU

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 minimise dependencies on non-European suppliers. Such support could take the form, inter alia, of structural and regional measures, support for the maintenance of industries and supply chains within the Union, tax relief, subsidies, an active SME policy or educational programmes to safeguard relevant qualifications and jobs in Europe. Nevertheless, an active industrial policy should be selective and focus on innovative products or products that are 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 or strategically important products or services. Since production costs are generally higher in the Union than elsewhere in the world, a policy of active encouragement and support for these products will enable Europeans to buy competitive European products and be encouraged to do so. This policy will also strengthen European competitiveness and help to maintain the industries of the future and jobs in Europe. In addition, greater regionalization of production will reduce transport costs and avoid environmental degradation.

2. We recommend that the Union reduce its dependence on oil and gas imports. This should be done by actively supporting public transport and energy efficiency projects, a European high-speed rail freight network, the expansion of the supply of clean and renewable energy (including solar and wind energy) as well as alternative technologies (such as hydrogen or waste-to-energy). The European Union should also encourage a change of mindset and encourage the shift from private cars to public transport, carpooling by electric vehicles and cycling.

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 reduction targets. They will also enable Europe to become a major player in the technologies of the future, to strengthen its economy and to 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 EU human rights standards, and that products complying with these criteria are certified.

We recommend these measures because they give consumers and traders 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 therefore will 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 at the expense of imports.

We recommend these measures because by supporting producers in strategic sectors located in the Union, the Union is able to gain economic independence in these sectors. This can only promote the strengthening of the entire production process and, therefore, encourage innovation. This will result in a more sustainable production of raw materials in the Union that will reduce transport costs and protect the environment.

5. We recommend that the implementation of human rights at European level be improved as follows: increase awareness among countries that do not respect, to the extent required, 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 respect through various forms of sanctions.

We recommend these measures because human rights have already been accepted by the 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 an intensive communication campaign at European level to ensure that EURES (the European network of employment services), 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 companies to publish and publicise their job vacancies.

We recommend not to create a new online platform for the publication of job vacancies for young Europeans. There are already more than enough such initiatives at European level. We believe that in order to raise awareness of the existing workforce and employment opportunities at European level, it is better to improve what already exists.

Sub-axis 1.2 – Borders

7. We recommend the establishment of an EU labour migration mechanism based on the real needs of European labour markets. There should be a unified system for the recognition of professional and academic qualifications that exist within the European Union and in third countries. There should be professional qualification offers as well as cultural and linguistic integration offers for skilled 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 qualifications will make it easier to meet these needs and to simplify labour migration within the Union and the immigration of workers from countries outside the Union. The demand for labour could thus be better met and illegal immigration better managed. Opening up the labour immigration 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 Union's external borders. Nevertheless, the Union should carry out audits of Frontex's organisational processes, as Frontex must operate in full transparency to avoid any type of abuse.

We recommend these measures because, in our view, it is unacceptable for Frontex to be denied access to borders, especially when there is a violation of human rights. We want to make sure that Frontex applies EU legislation. Frontex itself must be subject to checks and inspections 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 Union according to the needs of the economy and the vacancies of the host country. These selection criteria must be public and accessible to all. To this end, a European (online) Immigration Agency 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 border pressure, while making it easier to meet the labour needs of host countries.

10. We recommend that the European Union ensure that reception policy and facilities are identical at all borders, respect human rights and guarantee 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 prevent migrants from staying at borders too long and Member States from being 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 this end, a blacklist of companies should be drawn up, which should be regularly updated in the light of developments. We also recommend that children who stop working be guaranteed progressive access to education and that consumers be made aware of child labour through information officially disseminated by the European Union, for example through campaigns or storytelling.

We recommend these measures because we are convinced that there is a link between lack of schooling and child labour. With this recommendation, we want to raise awareness among consumers and reduce the demand for products made by children so that this practice eventually disappears.

12. We recommend that the European Union establish 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 sources through trade partnerships and diplomatic agreements. The European Union and developing countries would thus develop good long-term relations, which would help to combat climate change.

13. We recommend that the European Union require the display of a European environmental impact indicator (ecoscore) on all consumer products. Ecoscore would be calculated on the basis of emissions from production and transport and on the basis of the harmfulness of the content, on the basis of a list of hazardous products. Ecoscore should be managed and controlled by a European authority.

We recommend these measures to make European consumers more aware of the environmental footprint of the products they buy. Ecoscore would make it easy to indicate how environmentally friendly a product is by means of a common scale 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 European institutions currently in charge of energy should coordinate the development of renewable energies according to the needs, capacities and resources of the Member States while respecting their sovereignty. The institutions would encourage the exchange of knowledge between them 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 from which we import our energy. We are currently 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 inside 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 more resolutely promote the ongoing green transition with the objective of eliminating polluting packaging. This should be done by encouraging the reduction of packaging or by promoting more environmentally friendly 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, especially raw materials from countries outside the Union. 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 increase their prices.

17. We recommend that the countries of the European Union consider together, in a more serious way, the issue of nuclear energy. More collaboration is needed 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 resolved 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 or not the use of nuclear energy is decided, 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 develop and strengthen links with citizens and local institutions such as local authorities, schools and municipalities. The aim is to improve transparency, reach out to citizens, inform them more about 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 must change if citizens are to have a clear vision of the EU's actions and role. To attract public interest, information about the EU must be easy to find, motivating, interesting and written in everyday language. Here are our suggestions: the organisation of visits by 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 dedicated working group to improve EU communication. These measures will allow citizens to obtain information about the EU that is not filtered by the national media.

19. We recommend greater citizen participation in EU policies. We propose the organisation of events involving the direct participation of citizens along the lines of the Conference on the Future of Europe. They should be organised at national, local and European level. The EU should develop a coherent strategy and centralised guidance for these events.

We recommend these measures because these participatory democracy exercises will provide correct information about 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 prove to citizens that it is important for them that citizens are informed about current events and that they are involved in their definition. Centralized guidance will ensure consistency and uniformity 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 "Joint Armed Forces of the European Union" be used primarily for defence purposes. Aggressive military action of any kind is excluded. In Europe, this would make it possible to provide assistance in the event of a crisis, particularly in the event of a natural disaster. Outside European borders, this would make it possible to have resources deployed in territories with exceptional circumstances, exclusively within the framework of a legal mandate of the United Nations Security Council, and thus in compliance with international law.

If implemented, this recommendation would allow the European Union to be seen as a credible, accountable, strong and peaceful partner on the international stage. Its enhanced capacity to respond to crisis situations at home and abroad should thus help protect its core values.

Sub-axis 3.2 – EU decision-making and foreign policy

21. We recommend that all areas where decisions are taken unanimously should now be decided by qualified majority. The only exceptions should be the admission of new Member States to 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 response capacity in general and, in particular, its crisis response.

22. We recommend that the European Union strengthen its capacity to impose sanctions on Member States, governments, entities, groups or organisations as well as individuals who do not respect its fundamental principles, agreements and laws. It is imperative that existing sanctions are swiftly implemented and effectively enforced. 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. Those penalties should be applied effectively and expeditiously and be subject to checks.

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 those Member States that 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 who wish to study in another European country through the Erasmus programme. Students who choose this course would be given priority to benefit from these Erasmus programmes.

We recommend these measures to increase the sense of belonging to the EU. In this way, citizens will identify better with the Union and transmit 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 experiencing bilateral economic, political and social pressures.

We recommend these measures for three reasons. First, 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 intimidation or repression by third countries against EU Member States. 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 used by third countries against us.

25. We recommend that the EU improves its communication strategy. On the one hand, the EU should increase its visibility on social media and actively promote its content. On the other hand, it should continue to organise annual conferences such as the Conference on the Future of Europe. 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 allow citizens to be more involved in the decision-making process and to ensure that their voice is 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 the Member States before considering the integration of other countries. The more Member States there are in the EU, the more complicated decision-making will be; Hence the importance of re-examining unanimity 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 the 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 seek ways to intervene peacefully and effectively in countries

from which the largest flows of migrants originate and which have accepted 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 work and invest in the transparency and visibility of its international development policy.

28. We recommend the establishment of a common European framework for the harmonisation of working conditions throughout the Union (minimum wage, working time, etc.). The EU should strive to create common basic labour standards to prevent citizens from leaving their countries to seek better working conditions elsewhere. Within 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 within the EU migrate for economic reasons, due to the disparity in working conditions between Member States. We support the free movement of citizens, but believe that the migration of EU citizens between the different Member States, when it is not wanted, 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 to focus on the refugee problem. A common procedure for all EU Member States should be based on practices that have proven most effective in all EU countries. This procedure should be implemented proactively by national authorities and the EU administration.

The refugee problem concerns all member countries. At present, these states have too different practices, with negative effects for refugees and EU citizens. It is therefore necessary to adopt a coherent and homogeneous approach.

30. We recommend that the EU step up its efforts to inform and educate citizens of the Member States on migration-related issues. This should be achieved by educating children, as early as possible, at 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 additional labour. 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 be applicable uniformly in all Member States. Priority should be given to improving reception and accommodation facilities. We recommend the creation of a dedicated EU monitoring body for the implementation of the Regulation.

Indeed, the Directive is not implemented uniformly in all Member States. The conditions in the Moria refugee camp should not be duplicated. The recommended regulation should therefore be implemented and include mandatory penalties. 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 compulsory, free of charge and include personal assistance for initial integration. They should start within two weeks of applying for residency. 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 time before the start of the initial integration process has a negative impact on the social assimilation of migrants. Sanction mechanisms can help to identify the willingness of migrants 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 should 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 includes quotas for the distribution of refugees among 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 located close to the external borders of the EU 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 Asylum Agency are needed. Persons whose asylum applications have been rejected must be effectively returned to their country of origin, 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 the 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 that bear the burden of the migratory influx.

Due to their geographical location, some Member  are most affected by the influx of migrants.

36. We recommend strengthening the mandate of the EU Asylum Agency in order to achieve a fair distribution of asylum seekers within Member States. This should take into account the needs of these asylum seekers as well as the logistical and economic capacities of the Member States and their needs in the labour market.

A coordinated and centrally managed 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 the creation of a comprehensive European institution or the strengthening of the EU Asylum Agency so that it can process asylum applications for the whole of the European Union and decide on the basis of uniform standards. This agency should also be responsible for distributing refugees equitably. It should also define safe and unsafe countries of origin and be responsible for the return of rejected asylum seekers.

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 is currently exercising only a power of influence. It can only advise Member States on asylum issues.

38. We recommend the establishment of specialised asylum centres for unaccompanied minors in all EU Member States without delay. The aim is to accommodate and care for minors according to their special needs and as soon as possible.

We make this recommendation because:

- 1) many minors are likely to be traumatized (because they come from conflict zones);
- 2) different children have different needs (depending on age, health, etc.);
- (3) if this recommendation were implemented, it would ensure that vulnerable and traumatized minors receive all necessary care as soon as possible;
- 4) these minors are future European citizens and should therefore, if treated appropriately, 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 include 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 criminality;
- 3) the minimum standards envisaged in our recommendation should include respect for human rights, health and educational needs of asylum seekers;
- 4) the implementation of this recommendation would result in better access to employment and self-sufficiency, which would allow a positive contribution to European society; asylum seekers whose employment status is regularised are less likely to be victims of abuse in their working environment; this could only promote the integration of all those concerned;
- 5) Extended stays in asylum centres have a negative 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 a Europe-wide approach.

We make this recommendation because:

- 1) since 2015, all current agreements are inapplicable, impractical and inadequate;
- 2) the EU should be seen as the main "agency", which oversees all other agencies and NGOs whose task is to deal directly with asylum issues;

- 3) the Member States that suffer the most from the situation are those that are largely left to grapple with the problem alone; 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 the unity of Europe;
- 5) shortcomings in the current legislation give rise to conflicts and a lack of harmonisation across Europe and lead to increased intolerance of migrants among European citizens.
- 6) Stricter and relevant legislation would reduce crime and abuse of the current asylum system.

Annex: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED BY THE PANEL BUT NOT ADOPTED

Axis 1: Self-sufficiency and stability

Sub-axis 1.1 – Autonomy of the EU

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 economic support and the necessary vocational training.

This would lead to greater industrial independence and improve the overall migration situation by creating jobs; this 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 full 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 depending on their size.

The ethical aspect of trade with the EU needs to be developed. This can be done by monitoring companies' activities in international supply chains, and encouraging companies to behave in accordance with ethical criteria, for example with regard to hazardous products, rights and working 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 effective 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 fusion of military capabilities across the European Union will also promote European integration in the long term. The creation of a common European Union 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 European Union'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 for action in anticipation of the next migration crisis, that of climate refugees. Under the Protocol, the EU needs to broaden the definition of refugees and asylum seekers to include people 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 people who have left these areas. For example, flooded areas could be used to create wind farms.

We are making 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 do not have forecasts or concrete data on future refugees, climate change will undoubtedly affect millions of people.

Sub-axis 4.2 – Human considerations

We recommend the immediate strengthening and financing of legal and humanitarian roads and means of transport so that refugees can move from crisis areas in an organized manner. A special system for the safety of European roads should be set up and regulated by the body specifically set up for that purpose. This agency must be set up in accordance with the legislative procedure and have special powers of its own, as defined 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 should ensure that no more than 30% of the inhabitants of third countries live in each area of life in each Member State. This target is expected to be reached by 2030 and EU Member States need to get support for the implementation of this target.

We make this recommendation because a more equitable geographical distribution will result in a better acceptance of migrants by the local population and thus allow them to integrate better. This percentage is based on a recent political agreement in Denmark.

II A– National Panels: Belgium



Here you can find all the recommendations made by the 50 citizens of the citizens' panel organised under the auspices of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign 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". While being very aware that the Conference has a wider scope than EU affairs alone, the topic 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.

In order to reflect all the contributions of citizens, this report presents all the recommendations, including those which did not obtain a simple majority in the final voting session on all the recommendations. They are clearly recognizable due to the percentage **in red and bold**. In other words, some recommendations are in contradiction with each other and even during the final discussions, the citizens have remained inconclusive about them. These recommendations are recognisable because they are in *italics*. For a single recommendation, the split 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 were divergent. They therefore propose that the CoFE bodies and the EU institutions be vigilant in implementing these recommendations, as there is a form of division based on the vote.

1. Communication

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. Communication on the EU is unsatisfactory	1.1 We propose that courses on the European Union be included in school curricula from the third level of primary school onwards. 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 educational material on the functioning of Europe for the Ministries of Education in the various Member States. In addition to explaining the functioning, composition and powers of the institutions, these training courses 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 the citizens	2.1 We propose that the European institutions ensure in their communication that they better explain what falls within the EU's sphere of competence but also what does not fall within its competence.	97.6%
	2.2 The European Union should include in its communication familiar examples from the daily lives of Europeans. 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 European identity, we propose to regularly recall and make accessible information on what life would be like for Europeans 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 simplifying, understanding and making accessible information on priority topics dealt with at European level.	97.6%
	2.7 We recommend that the European Union provide a dashboard indicating for each country the resources allocated by the EU to each priority theme. All such information should be	93.0%

	accessible from the website of the European Union.	
	2.8 We recommend that the European Union provide a clear presentation of the ongoing legislative work. All such information should be accessible from the website of the European Union.	90.7%
	2.9 We want the European institutions to be more accessible to Europeans. Their participation in debates during sessions of the European Parliament should be facilitated.	79.0%
	2.10 We recommend extending participation in the Erasmus programme to all students, regardless of their educational background (vocational technique, alternance). Everyone 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. Everyone should be able to participate in European exchanges.	83.7%
	2.12 We recommend the creation of 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 EU make more use of directly applicable legislation in the Member States. This would reduce national differences in the implementation of European legislation, which weakens the European project. It would also make it possible to capitalise on 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 be a relentless and unambiguous reminder of what it means to Europeans in Europe.	78.0%
	4.2 The values and principles of the EU Treaties to which the Member States subscribed upon accession are irreversible. Their protection must continue to be ensured.	81.0%
	4.3 The values and principles of the Treaties are protected by the European Court and cannot be called into question by the Member States.	81.0%
5. Information about the EU is not easily accessible and understandable	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 in 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. (For example by sponsoring events such as cultural events that bring citizens together and make them proud to be EU citizens. Reporting teasing would also give Europeans access to contextualised information on the EU).	85.7%
7. Citizens do not	7.1 We recommend that parliamentarians make themselves	92.7%

know who represents them in the European Parliament.	better known in their country of origin, especially outside election periods. They need to 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 that candidates are rejuvenated on the lists submitted to the European Parliament elections. Such a mandate should not be seen as a reward for good and loyal service in national politics.	74.4%
8. EU communication is too uniform; it does not take into account the diversity of the population	8.1 In order to reach a sufficiently broad and varied audience, we recommend that the EU should take into account, through inclusive communication, the educational status of those targeted and their possible disabilities from the conception stage. In addition, we also recommend involving individuals and organisations (street educators, neighbourhood workers, 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 to rely on ambassadors (both individuals and organisations) promoting the EU project.	83.7%
	8.3 In order to reach out to young people and students, we recommend that alongside existing channels such as education and relevant youth movements, ambassadors be used, targeting in particular 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 send them European messages.	69.8%
	8.4 For older people, we recommend using the same channels as those proposed for the working population. In addition, we recommend seeking the right balance between digital and non-digital communication (print, radio, face-to-face events) to meet the needs of everyone, 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 commit to include "new Europeans" (people who through one or other legal immigration procedure reside in the EU), and be able to 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 well as new means of communication such as QR codes and traditional means.	62.8%

	8.7 Other recommendations would be to make the EU more visual (through small films or infographics), to create a European sports movement to create connection/a sense of belonging and to make the European anthem better known.	68.2%

2. Disinformation

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. The risk of disinformation is increasingly present in the media	1.1 We recommend that the media funding model, as well as the mandatory publication of revenue streams, be reviewed in a clear and accessible manner. The funding model of the media indeed pushes them to sensationalism, and therefore to publish information taken out of context, transforming them into disinformation.	73.8%
	1.2 We recommend the mandatory citation of sources by the media by providing links to verify them. Failing this, information must be labelled as unverified.	90.2%
	1.3 We recommend that the European Anti-Disinformation Regulator (see point 2) should also be responsible for the accreditation of fact checkers.	85.4%
	1.4 We recommend the establishment of an independent authority in each Member State to verify media neutrality. This authority should be financed and controlled by the European Union.	75.6%
	1.5 We recommend disseminating information about the URLs of the official websites of the European Union, 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 fight disinformation. The task of that regulator would be, inter alia, to lay down the criteria for a neutrality label and to establish, where appropriate, a system of penalties or incentives linked to compliance with the standards of neutrality. Alternatively, adherence to a charter of ethics could be considered. The label would be awarded by the independent national authority and would take into account the measures applied 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 competences (political and	82.1%

	economic).	
3. Citizens are not aware of the risks of disinformation to which they are exposed.	3.1 We recommend that platforms be obliged to publish clear and comprehensible information on the risks of disinformation to which their users are exposed. This information should be automatically communicated as soon as an account is opened.	85.7%
	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 EU launch repeated campaigns on disinformation. These campaigns could be identified by a logo or mascot. The European Union could force social networks to relay this by broadcasting spots.	87.5%
4. The means to fight disinformation are insufficient.	4.1 We recommend publishing information on algorithms organising messages received by platform users in clear and intelligible language.	83.3%
	4.2 We recommend that users can easily disable algorithms that reinforce behavioral biases. The obligation to offer users access to other sources defending different positions on the same subject could also be examined.	80.0%
	4.3 We recommend that the EU support the creation of a social media platform that meets its own standards of neutrality and countering disinformation. Alternatively, new functionalities could be added to the multilingual platform created to support the Conference on the Future of Europe.	56.4%

3. Citizens' Panels

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
1. Difficulty in ensuring the representativeness of a citizens' panel. In the end, only a small part of the population is involved.	1.1 We recommend following what the latest scientific work on deliberative democracy suggests in terms of sampling, development 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 limited to – people who are directly concerned by the topic.	90.2%

2. Difficulty organising a panel at European level.	1.3 We recommend adding the criterion of parenthood (i.e. does the person have children or not?) to the criteria governing sampling, in addition to more traditional criteria such as gender, age, place of residence or level of education.	33.3%
	1.4 We recommend establishing quotas per geographical area, i.e. determining that a European Citizens' Panel should be composed of X persons per European geographical area (to be determined) in order for this panel to be truly qualified as European and to deliberate validly.	73.2%
	1.5 We recommend using population registers (or their equivalent, depending on the country) as the primary databases for the drawing of lots in order to give everyone the same chance to be chosen, and to generate interest in a topic among 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 the 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 committed to discussing.	78.6%
	1.8 We recommend that citizens should not be required to participate.	97.6%
	2.1 We recommend that meetings of the European Citizens' Panel be held in hybrid format (presental/distancial). People who cannot physically travel could participate as well.	70.0%
	2.2 We recommend that the European Union, for ease of access and organisation, delegate the organisation of citizens' panels (on European topics) to different levels of government, at national level.	69.0%
	2.3 We recommend that only one topic should be chosen per panel organised at European level. All participants will have to discuss the same topic, no matter where they come from in Europe.	80.5%
3. Prevent the citizen panel from being misused for	3.1 We recommend that any citizen should be able to submit a topic for discussion, and that this right should not be reserved for the political world or the world of lobbyists.	82.1%

purposes other than those declared.	3.2 We recommend that the right of initiative should belong to the European Parliament, so that it defines the topic to be discussed and then adopts the texts necessary to follow up on the recommendations resulting from the deliberations.	63.4%
4. Difficulty in deciding how best to organise the process for the better representation of citizens.	4.1.1 We recommend that a permanent citizens' panel be set up, alongside Parliament, to carry out specific tasks. It would be renewed on a regular basis. This would make it possible to bring citizens together in the long term and to take the necessary time for debates. Time makes it possible to nuance the debates and to reach a consensus. Alongside this permanent panel, ad hoc citizens' panels debate the topics chosen by the permanent panel. We propose to follow the model of the German-speaking Community.	54.8%
	4.1.2 We recommend setting up only one or more non-permanent European Citizens' Panel(s), which would only meet to discuss a specific topic for a given period of time.	58.5%
	4.2 We recommend not to organise European Citizens' Panels on urgent issues, as sufficient time is needed to ensure the quality of the debates.	63.4%
5. Too often, citizens who participate in participatory democracy initiatives in the style of citizens' panels do not receive feedback on the follow-up given to their work, either in the short term or in the long term.	5.1 We recommend giving citizens feedback on the follow-up given (or not) to recommendations issued following European Citizens' Panels. If the recommendations are not followed, the European institutions involved must give reasons for their decision (e.g. lack of competence). To this end, we recommend writing regular summaries throughout the panel process.	97.5%
	6.1 We recommend organising citizens' panels, also with children from an early age (e.g. 10-16 years old) to raise their awareness of participation and debate. This can be organized in schools.	59.5%

4. Referendums

Problems	Recommendations	Supported by (%)
	0.1 We recommend that referendums on European affairs be held at European level.	73.3%
1. Referendum culture varies widely	1.1 We recommend that research be commissioned on how to create a common culture of referendums in	70.7%

across Member States	Europe.	
	1.2 We recommend that research (by independent experts) be carried out into the need for and possibility of holding a referendum on a particular subject at European level.	77.5%
2. The wording of the question asked in a referendum can have a negative impact, as can being able to answer only by “yes” or “no”, which often polarises debates and societies.	2.1 We recommend setting up a scientific committee to consider how to ask the questions that would be the subject of a European referendum in the most objective way possible.	87.2%
	2.2 We recommend asking multiple-choice questions, going beyond the simple alternative between 'yes' and 'no' in order to add nuance or even attach conditions to 'yes' and 'no' (i.e. 'yes if...', 'no if...').	65.0%
	2.3 We recommend that blank 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 asked in a European referendum should be covered by any European subject falling within the European Union's competences.	87.5%
	2.4.2 We recommend excluding topics that could lead to conflicts 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 has a right of initiative to organise European referenda, and that it can then 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. following rules similar to those applying to the European Citizens' Initiative).	77.5%
	3.3 We recommend that a neutral body should be responsible for the practical organisation of a European referendum.	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	72.5%

	binding only if certain majorities are reached (51/49, 70/30). These conditions are established before each referendum.	
	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 those for which the consequences of the vote could be very serious.	40.0%
5. People often have little information before they vote in a referendum. At the same time, it is crucial to monitor the information provided in order to avoid harmful influences (domestic or foreign) on the vote.	5.1 We recommend that, before any European referendum, the public should be clearly informed of the impact of the result of the vote on their daily lives, through brochures, as is the case in Switzerland, and/or through information sessions.	97.5%
	5.2 We recommend that a scientific committee be set up for each European referendum to ensure the neutrality of the information provided.	87.2%
6. Although a referendum invites the entire population to vote directly (unlike the citizens' panel), there is always a certain amount of 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 In order to reduce absenteeism, we recommend allowing electronic voting in addition to paper voting (or even in addition to other means of voting, such as postal voting). E-voting is particularly interesting for people going on holiday, and it also encourages people who are less interested to vote because the travel constraint is no longer there.	90.0%
7. Too often, citizens who participate in referenda-style participatory democracy initiatives do not receive feedback on the follow-up given to their vote, either in the short or 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 different Member States	1.1 We propose that there should be compulsory voting for the European Parliament, but with sufficient information for citizens to understand the reasons for this.	50.0%
	1.2 Our recommendation is to make the rules for elections to the European Parliament as uniform as possible in all countries, including the minimum age.	87.2%
2. There is not sufficient diversity in the age, origin and gender of European citizens.	2.1.1 We propose that MEPs should 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 distribution of genders on the lists of mechanisms in the indent. The EU must establish these criteria and check whether they are met in the quota composition. If a candidate refuses his mandate, the next candidate in the 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 certain basic rules, so that the composition reflects the voice of the citizen and the citizen knows how the selection took place.	88.9%
4. There is not much information about the candidates, not much is known about them and their programme and the political faction 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 programme 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 not proficient in English	1.1 We propose to put the information on the homepage in the language of each citizen and to post, if it is not possible to translate it, the news in English elsewhere on the website.	89.2%
2. The Ombudsman is not involved in the sanction and possible compensation for the complainant	2.1 We propose that the Ombudsman be part of the process of finding and implementing the solution/penalty/compensation and have a say in the matter.	71.1%
3. The deadline is sometimes very long for the validation of registration on the site (validation email) It sometimes takes 24 hours and demotivates the citizen who moves on.	3.1 We propose an immediate validation system.	47.4%
4. When we submit a complaint, we are 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 the other procedures	89.5%
5. The site of the mediator is well done but is not "branded" European, so this leads to questions for the citizen (am I on the right site, is it credible? ...).	5.1 We propose revising the graphic charter of the site and aligning it more closely 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 consultation website has changed and the citizen is sent in the first instance to an obsolete site. You have to search to find the address of the new site.	1.1. We suggest deleting the old site and referencing the new site first.	81.6%
2. The roadmap (English) and	2.1. We strongly recommend translating the roadmap	81.6%

the opinions (language of the citizen editor) of a consultation are not translated into the language of the citizen reader	into the language of the citizen. The roadmap in English blocks any citizen who does not master the anglais. His participation.	
	2.2. We propose to put a tab/icon "automatic translation" to each review, which links to an open source translation engine like google translate or deepl.	65.8%
3. You must subscribe to have the follow-up of the consultation	3.1. We propose to send the follow-up of the process automatically to anyone who has reacted, with the possibility of unsubscribing.	89.5%
4. We do not know whether the number of opinions in one direction influences the committee 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 consultations and indeed the actions taken by the EU in relation to citizens and the voluntary sector.	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 excessive weight.	60.5%
	4.3. We recommend creating artificial intelligence software that ranks different opinions and counts contrary or favorable opinions.	47.4%
	4.4. We propose to organize relays between citizens and associations (militants): have places where citizens could come to give their opinion, in the form of 'Houses of Europe' that could help disseminate citizens' opinions to the European level. These places should be located in different places, at the local level, relocated.	62.2%
5. The notice form is not clear: There is an open-ended question and a questionnaire. What is the role of each document, what should be fulfilled?	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 the creation of a dispatching centre to direct requests 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 the government, may be involved in disseminating this initiative and collecting signatures. Both electronically and on paper. The EU should take stock of this	71.1%

	network by country and make it available to initiating citizens.	
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. Cost and effort to collect signatures are 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 between the different countries.	75.7%
4. The procedure is complex for citizens.	4.1 We propose the creation of a helpdesk to help citizens complete the process.	83.8%
5. The outcome of the citizens' initiative is not clear.	5.1 We propose to oblige the European Commission to discuss and work on the follow-up of the proposal, 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 citizens' consultation when a European citizens' initiative is received to ask for their opinion on it before the committee follows up on it. This would avoid having only extreme opinions/votes for the initiative and having the opinions 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 state the reasons on which it is based.	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



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 the '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-%20Report%20final.pdf>



WAVESTONE



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Introduction

The Conference on the Future of Europe is an unprecedented exercise in citizen participation that allows the citizens of the 27 Member States of the European Union to be consulted in order to put them at the centre of the decisions that will be taken for the years and decades to come. In this way, EU citizens are invited to make their voices heard, to propose changes and concrete ways of action that will enable Europe to set a new ambition and address the global challenges it is facing today.

The French Government supports the initiatives of the Trio Presidency 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 France.

In parallel with these European initiatives, the Government wished to conduct a participatory exercise at national level.

With the support of the Ministry for Relations with Parliament and Citizens' Participation (MRPCC) and the expertise of the Interministerial Centre for Citizens' Participation (CIPC), the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) organised a citizens' exercise based on strong methodological parties (see below 'Methodological commitments and parties'). In implementing the scheme, the MEAE relied on a service consortium composed of Roland Berger, Wavestone, Missions Publiques and Harris Interactive. Finally, the regional prefectures played a key role in organising the 18 conferences throughout the country.

As part of this consultation, participants were asked a single question: "As *French citizens*, what changes do you want for Europe?" (cf. Annex IV "Participation Mandate").

This national exercise took the form of 18 regional conferences, in the 13 metropolitan regions and the 5 French overseas regions, which were held 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, which took place from 15 to 17 October 2021 at the Economic, Social and Environmental Council (EESC in Paris) and brought together 98 volunteer citizens among the participants in the regional conferences.

In addition, and in order to highlight the voices of young French people ahead of the European Year of Youth in 2022, an online consultation entitled 'Word to Youth' was organised by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs in partnership with Make.org. More than 50 000 young people aged 15-35 expressed their ideas and priorities for Europe in 2035.

This report presents the main results of the two consultations conducted by the Government.

Consultation Methodology

Recruitment of citizens participating in regional conferences combined a random selection of participants by drawing lots of their telephone number, and a targeted selection of profiles to reach a panel as representative as possible of the diversity of each territory.

During the regional panels, participants spoke by alternating group work times, per table of 6 to 8 citizens accompanied by a facilitator and presentation times in plenary session. Experts were present during the reflections to answer citizens' questions and shed light, while ensuring a neutral position.

Citizens were first invited to discuss their current perception of Europe. They then expressed their wishes

for Europe in 2035, in groups 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 national level.

Each regional conference resulted in the writing of a regional synthesis report to all participants ahead of the national conference.

The national synthesis conference brought together 98 citizens drawn by lot among the participants of the 18 regional speakers. 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 Réunion and 4 citizens for the ultramarine conferences, respecting parity and age diversity 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 close, in order to constitute 14 groups of ideas reflecting a common wish for Europe (see Section 6). These 14 wishes for Europe served as a basis for the 98 participants of the national conference, whose mission was to enrich the work carried out in the regions and to compare Europe's wishes, changes and proposals with the help of some 20 experts in order to arrive at a list of priority changes. Each group finally selected 3 key changes, the first of which was put to the vote of 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 'Word to Youth', conducted in partnership with Make.org, was held from May to July 2021. More than 50 000 participants took part and submitted almost 3 000 proposals for Europe. Based on all the reactions of young citizens, 35 major ideas could be identified, of which 22 were widely acclaimed and 13 were controversial among the participants (see Part 11).

Exit point and duty of care

This report will be submitted to the Government by the citizens on 29 November 2021, in the presence of the French elected members of the Plenary Assembly of the Conference on the Future of Europe. He will be a member of 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 citizens' follow-up committee embodying the right of follow-up of participants was set up. This committee, made up of 15 Members - 14 representatives of the regional conferences and a representative of the "Word to the Young" consultation - will be responsible for informing citizens about the future of their proposals. At each meeting of the Conference Plenary, one or more members of the Follow-up 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 French State's citizen participation platform: 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: Most voted changes 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

The 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 from 2035

1. Develop **energy sobriety** to consume less by stopping the superfluous

2. Strengthening the defence **and common security** of the European Union

3. Fostering **collective economic** performance through an autonomous, competitive and EU-enhanced industry

4. Building **citizen** power at several levels: participation, decision-making, monitoring

5. Tending towards a **federation of European states** with strong competences in areas of common interest

6. Offering life-long exchange programmes



7. Partager les cultures européennes par des **manifestations et des événements 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

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 manage strategic **sectors at European level** to ensure our sovereignty

10. Improve the **protection of environments and ecosystems** and create **protected areas** in the heart of urban, peri-urban and rural areas

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)

Online consultation "Word to young people"

On 9 May 2021, the Secretary of State for European Affairs launched a 'Word to Young People' consultation led by Make.org, which took place between May and July 2021.

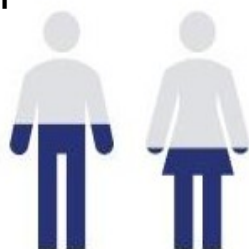
50 000 young people aged between 15 and 30 answered the question: "What are your priorities for the Europe of tomorrow?", with 2918 proposals tabled.

The ideas acclaimed by young French people in this online consultation are part of the citizens' contribution to the Conference on the Future of Europe (see details in Part 2 of this report).

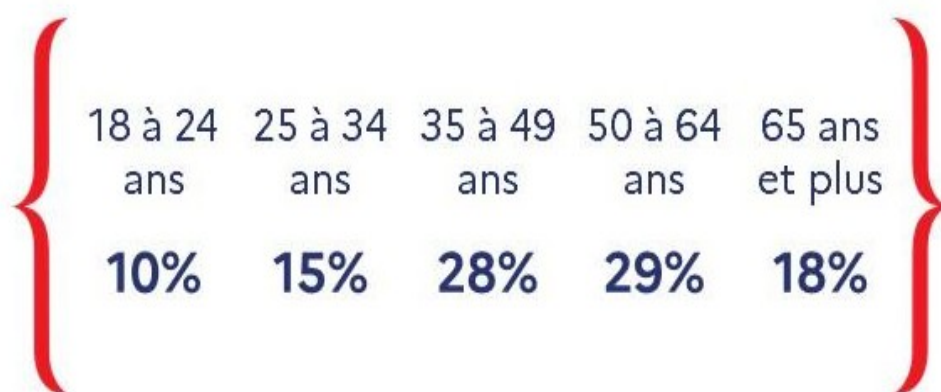
Presentation of the panels of the regional conferences

A diverse panel of 746 citizens

Overview of participants at the 18 regional conferences



60% 40%



Farmers and farmers

Craftsmen – Traders – Entrepreneurs

Senior Management – Liberal Professions

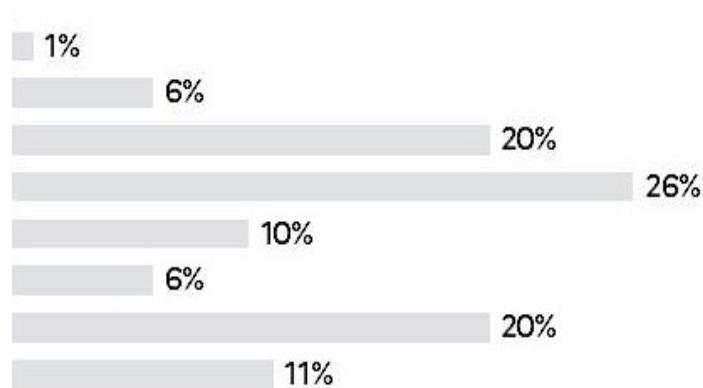
Intermediate occupations

Employees

Workers

Retired

Other inactive



Conferences on the Future of Europe across France

18 regional conferences, 13 in metropolitan France and
5 overseas



Commitments and methodological biases

The State's commitments

1
Transparency

2
Neutrality

3
Duties in a row

Methodological parties



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

a.State commitments to participatory democracy

The French part of the Conference on the Future of Europe is part of the State's commitments to participatory democracy, which are based on three principles: **transparency, neutrality and duty of care.**

Anon-participatory approach commits the organiser to a rigorous methodology. The method of citizen participation must allow citizens to participate in the best conditions and to express their point of view in a free and reasoned way.

Transparency

The Conference organising team is committed to making all information on consultation accessible to citizens:

- The framework within which the consultation takes place; • Commitments to citizens;
- The aims of the consultation;
- The results of the consultation.

The methodology of the Conference on the Future of Europe was thus established with the constant aim of ensuring transparency for citizens. The methodology for recruiting randomly selected citizens, the methodological biases and the treatment of citizen speech were clearly set out. Participants also received an email summarizing their regional conference at the end of the conference. In addition, all working and exit documents will be made public at the end of the scheme on the State Citizen Participation Platform.^{xiii}

XIII www.participation-citoyenne.gouv.fr

Neutrality

During a consultation, the organising team must ensure that it remains neutral in facilitating the meetings and in drafting the summaries presenting the results. Stakeholders in the scheme – facilitators, facilitators, experts – should not express their own opinion or seek to steer the debate in a subjective way.

The objective of neutrality was pursued at all stages of the preparation of this consultation, guaranteeing in particular an unbiased selection of participants, total freedom in the procedures and a lack of influence of the sponsor or stakeholders on the citizen's voice. This imperative of neutrality was materialized by an objective and transparent process of recruitment of participants, by coherent methodological biases (inverted expertise, lack of thematic framing of the debates) and a particular attention paid to the posture of the various speakers (facilitators, facilitators, experts). Finally, the organising team ensured that all statements were valued and that no filtering of citizens' proposals was carried out.

A panel 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.

Duties in a row

Citizens, whether or not they have participated in the consultation, have the right to be informed of what has been selected from their proposals and the opinions resulting from them, and for what reasons. This is called the **duty to act immediately**.

It is defined by the Interministerial Centre for Citizen Participation (CIPC) and the Interministerial Directorate for Public Transformation (DITP) as the undertaking by the public decision-maker to provide citizens with a clear and legible response to the planned follow-up to the consultation. Concretely, the duty to follow up is to go back to the citizens to explain to them the way in which their contributions are taken into account and have an impact on the decision and practices of the administration.

The Government took up this duty in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe and announced an ambitious follow-up mechanism at the end of the national conference described in the next part of this report (see 'Methodological *parties*').

b. Methodological approaches

These three State commitments were reflected in the consultation methodology in the form of **seven strong methodological biases**.

1. Territorialization 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 five French overseas regions, followed by a national conference in Paris. By choosing to organise panels at local level, the aim was to **gather a voice as close as possible to the citizens**. This bias also enriched the consultation by showing the lines of consensus and dissensus between the territories on different topics.

2. Diversity of citizens' profiles and use of the drawing of lots

A recruitment target of 50 citizens per regional conference was set ahead of the process, with the exception of the ultramarine conferences in Martinique, Mayotte, Guadeloupe and Guyana, with 30 to 40 citizens each, and the Grand Est conference, in which 5 German citizens from the three bordering Landers were also present. A **random** generation of telephone numbers made it possible to draw lots for the citizens invited to participate in the regional conferences.

To be eligible, citizens drawn by lot had to be over 18 years old and be French or permanent residents in a **regular** situation. Each regional citizens' panel 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 lot is set out in Annex II.

3. Transparency of the approach

A **panel 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. The guarantors shall in particular: checked the sincerity of the recruitment of randomly selected citizens, made recommendations for the selection of experts and ensured that the debates were held properly on the spot. At the end of the procedure, the guarantors will publish their opinion on the consultation. This document will be posted on the State Citizen Participation Platform.

The following will also be published on the State Citizen Participation Platform: the summaries of the 18 regional conferences, the summary document of all the changes expressed at the regional conferences, the summary of the national conference, and finally the final report submitted to the Government.

4. An open debate without imposed themes

As part of this national consultation, a single question was raised for participating citizens: “*As French citizens, what changes do you want for Europe?*”

Through the process and the methodology put in place, citizens were able to determine for themselves the agenda setting of the desired changes, without being constrained by a specific theme or a prior normative framing.

The aim was thus to allow the citizens of the regional conferences to enjoy full freedom in the subjects they wished to deal with. The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs for the national part of the Conference on the Future of Europe has therefore chosen to develop a complementary approach to the European exercise, structured around nine 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; education, culture, youth and sport; other ideas.^{xiv}

The topics for the exchanges of the regional conferences were thus defined by the citizens themselves and not by the sponsor of the exercise.

5. Reverse expertise

In order to influence the participants as little as possible in the process of identifying their wishes for the Europe, the choice was made not **to provide prior information or expertise (e.g. on the European Union's actual project, 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 experiences and opinions of citizens, who then interview experts to support their discussions and consolidate their working hypotheses.

To achieve this objective, experts were mobilised in the various regions (three on average), not least from the academic world and the Europe Direct information centres in the territories concerned. They were present on Saturdays and Sundays to answer questions from citizens, speaking only at their request. **Fact checkers** were also available to quickly verify factual questions from 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 Interministerial Centre for Citizen Participation (CIPC) of the Interministerial Directorate for Public Transformation (DITP) and the Ministry responsible for relations with Parliament and Citizen Participation (MRPC). The scheme was implemented by a consortium consisting of Roland Berger, Wavestone, Missions Publiques and Harris Interactive to manage the process, facilitate conferences, draw lots for citizens and draft reports and summaries, in collaboration with the regional prefectures for the local organisation of regional conferences.

A **specific governance** has been set up around a project team chaired by the MEAE, bringing together the ICPC, the MRPC and the consortium providing the services.

7. Continuing duty and articulation with the European exercise

On the occasion of the national conference, several elements of the **French institutions' duty of follow-up following the exercise carried out for the Conference on the Future of Europe** were announced:

- **Mis available to all the information** on the process, this document and the summary reports of the regional and national conferences, in a transparent manner and accessible to all on the new platform for citizen participation, launched on the occasion of the return to the Government;
- Organisation of an **event to report back to the Government on the final report of the national part of the Conference on the Future of Europe in November 2021**;
- Establishment of a **citizens' monitoring committee** to ensure that the follow-up to the start-up is consistent with the proposals made. This committee will be composed of 15 citizens, including 14 participants from the regional conferences and one participant from the "Word 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 the 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 carry the voice of its citizens while working to define a common position across the continent.

Part 1: Presentation of the results of the Regional Conferences on the Future of Europe

In each of the 18 regional conferences, citizens individually and then in groups expressed their wishes for the Europe of 2035. Between 3 and 8 groups of wishes emerged in each region, leading to a total of **101 desired Europe throughout France**. Citizens then formulated changes 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** across France.

In the weeks between the regional conferences and the national conference, work was carried out by the project team to regroup 515 changes into coherent groups. All the changes expressed in the regions were subjected to a lexicological analysis and brought closer together when their underlying intention seemed similar or close, so as to constitute working groups for the national conference with a common wish for Europe. Finally, **the changes identified in the regions were grouped into 14 distinct European wishes**.



**Wishes for
Europe 2035**

**Changes to
achieve this
desired Europe**

**Concrete proposals
to implement these
changes**

Question to citizens	What is your wish for the Europe of 2035?	What changes are needed to achieve 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 of 515 regional changes in 14 coherent wishes by the organisational team	Grouping, prioritizing and detailing 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

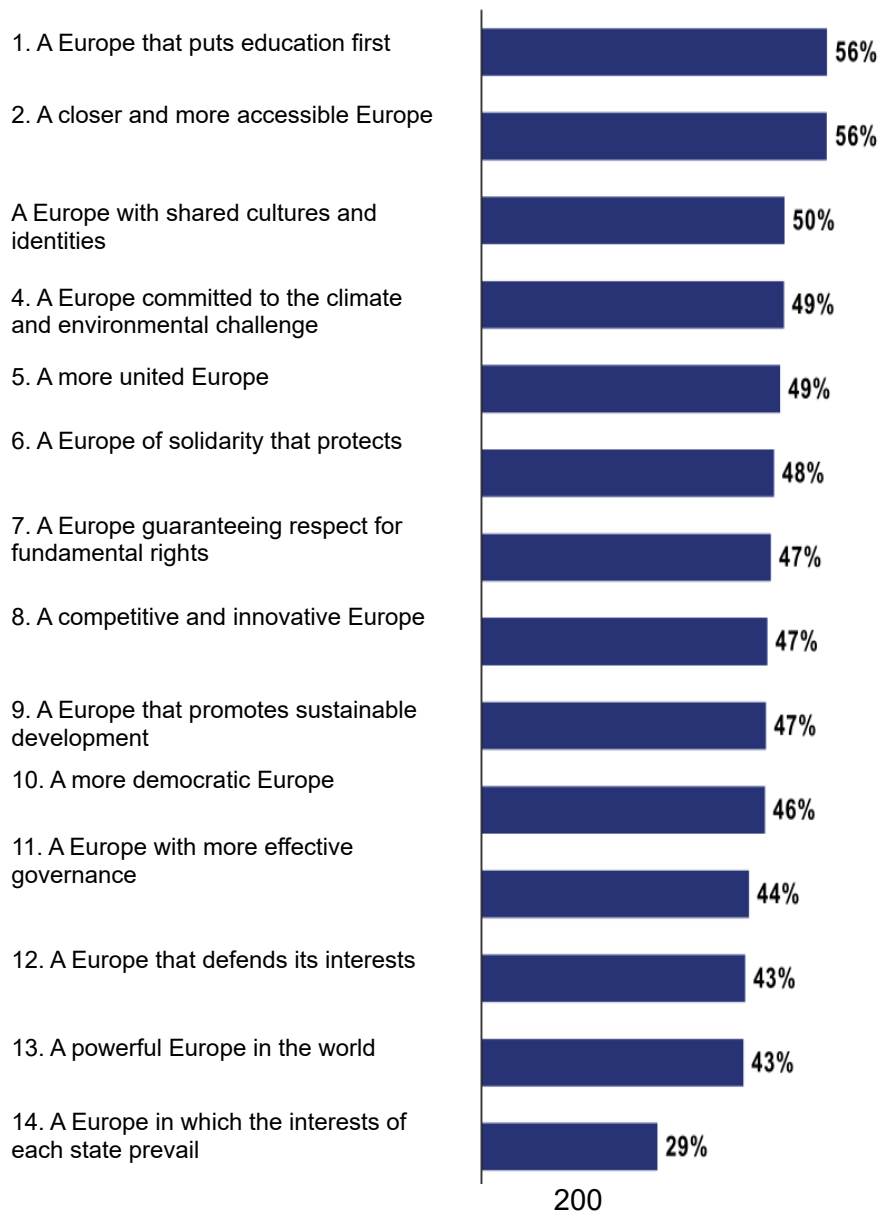
a. Ranking of the 14 wishes of Europe

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 ahead of the national synthesis conference, it is possible to determine— thanks to the votes on the changes in each region – the wishes of Europe that have been the most popular among citizens. Thus, the desires for ‘a *Europe that puts education first*’ and ‘a *Europe that is closer and more accessible*’ were widely acclaimed, 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 **a priority change to be implemented by 2035** to represent its European souhait. These 14 priority changes were then proposed to the vote of the 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 got the most votes from the 100 citizens of the national conference was “Developing *energy sobriety to consume less by stopping the superfluous*”.

14 key changes for Europe in 2035

- (1) Develop energy sobriety to consume less off-duty and the superfluous
- (2) Strengthening the common defence and security of the European Union
- (3) Fostering collective economic performance through an autonomous, competitive industry valued by the European Union
- (4) Putting in place a citizen power at several levels: participation, decision, control
- (5) Tending towards a federation of European states with strong competences in areas of common interest
- (6) Propose lifelong exchange programmes
- (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 manage strategic sectors at European level to ensure our sovereignty
- (10) Improve the protection of environments and ecosystems and create protected areas in the heart of urban, peri-urban and rural areas
- (11) Setting up European relays in the territories to listen and advise citizens
- (12) Unify the method of election of the European Parliament for the 27 states and improve the proximity of citizens by replacing the current election with a single-member election at regional level
- (13) Defining a common policy to improve the reception and social and professional integration of migrants (including irregular migrants)
- (14) Preserving the specific characteristics (food labels, craft products, traditions) of the various European regions, in order to avoid standardising lifestyles and ensure traceability and quality of products

For each priority change, the citizens of the group concerned gave a definition of the change, proposed concrete actions to be implemented for its implementation and indicated the criteria for its 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: Renewable energy development, lower energy consumption

The aim of this change is to encourage the reduction of energy consumption in Europe and the development of renewable energies. Its prioritization by citizens reflects their desire to place Europe and its inhabitants in a **resolute** approach to the climate and environmental challenge.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

This change is reflected in the development of ambitious **research programmes** on renewable energy eyebrows and the **deployment of European investment funds taking direct stakes in companies in the sector**.

For citizens, this change would be successful if **binding targets** were put in place to **reduce** energy consumption and **key indicators** of sobriety, such as the share of the European car fleet or meat consumption. The ambition is also to succeed in establishing **sector-specific consumption quotas** that take into account the fluctuations in companies' consumption and respect the confidentiality of their data.

Changing 2 – Strengthening the common defence and security of the European Union

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 criteria for success?

The success of this change would mean above all for citizens the appointment of a **European Commissioner** responsible for defence and security.

As far as defence is concerned, the creation of a **permanent, reactive and projectable army anywhere in the world** would enable Europe to protect its borders and intervene, if necessary, at the request of third countries.

In terms of security, in the eyes of citizens, Europe should guarantee the **security of its supplies** and protect its **strategic research** in priority sectors such as the postal sector, security cyber, the medical sector and the environment. Better **protection of the external borders** should also help curb illegal

immigration and trafficking.

Change 3 – Fostering collective economic performance through an autonomous, competitive industry valued 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 EU, ensure the **protection of essential goods and know-how**, and create **‘European champions’**.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

Achieving these objectives requires, first of all, the implementation of a **‘European preference’** policy in the context of calls for tenders and the introduction of a **carbon tax** on imports.

The protection of know-how would result in increased control of foreign buy-outs and investments, and the development of **relocation aid**.

Finally, the creation of "European champions" means encouraging **European industrial alliances** in strategic sectors and boosting public investment in venture capital.

The success of this change is materialised for citizens through the development of **European industrial alliances** in key sectors, the increase in the number of business relocations and the improvement of the trade balance.

Change 4 – Building multi-level citizen power: participation, decision-making, monitoring

Wish of associated Europe: A more democratic Europe

What does this change mean?

Keywords: increase in electoral participation, European satisfaction barometer, generalisation of citizens' consultations

Par this change, the citizens propose to develop a "complete *citizen experience*" for the Europeans, by giving about their **involvement** at all stages of the decision-making process. It reflects the will of citizens **to make their voices heard** and to influence public policies affecting their daily lives.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

The main aim is for citizens to develop and sustain citizen participation initiatives. To this end, several levers could be implemented: the establishment of a **permanent** legislative chamber, the inclusion of **the citizen's** 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 in the progression of indicators such as **electoral participation**, **the interest** and trust expressed in the European Union and the **recirculation of European websites**. The increase in the number of decisions taken after citizens' consultation and the increased use of **European Citizens' Initiatives (ECIs)** also appear to be markers of success.

Change 5 – Tending 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 citizens' ambition to **unify** 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, tending towards a federal state.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

Internally, this change could involve the development of **civic 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 embodied in a **single 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 – Offering life-long exchange programmes

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, in the eyes of citizens, of encounters 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 a broad sense as well as lifelong learning.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

The success of such a change is mainly due to the implementation of an **expanded mobility offer**, including inter alia school exchanges, twinning, travel and professional mobility. For citizens, this offer must be accessible to all, especially people with low resources or disabilities. For example, the Erasmus programme could cover all Europeans without age or resource limits. These programs must be imagined as **diverse, inclusive and accessible** with simplified administrative procedures.

Beyond mobilities, the importance of **developing bridges between education systems** (equivalence of diplomas, etc.) and strengthening Europe’s attractiveness in order 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 Expo of Europe

This change aims to **create and live a European spirit** through common experiences, events and festive events.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

The events imagined by citizens are **intended to be fun**, unifying and popular to be shared by as many people as possible. To do this, they should involve **all audiences** (including children, school audiences, young people and Erasmus students) and take place in **various places** (pension homes, schools, public administrations, prisons, etc.).

Two events in particular were envisaged to bring Europeans together: a **Universal Exhibition of Europe** that would represent all Member States and a **redesign of Europe Day** on 9 May, which would include a pedagogical event ‘so that we do not forget the peace linked to Europe and its values’. At the same time, European representatives could meet schoolchildren from 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 Europe of solidarity that protects

What does this change mean?

Keywords: universal health coverage, harmonization of care, health as a fundamental right

To ensure access to health for all Europeans and respond to the ‘need for protection and solidarity’, a **supranational health system** was unanimously proposed. This would be based on fair financing between the Member States and would be inspired by the best systems in the Union. Such a change reflects the will of citizens to see Europe take a more active role in the protection of its inhabitants, especially in the field of health where actions so far are considered too timid.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

In order to implement this change, the principle of **universal European social security** has been approved. However, it was not possible to decide how this system should be implemented. While some argue for “a centralisation of data allowing [European] healthcare workers to access all the patient’s medical history”, others perceive this measure as “an additional deprivation of liberty, and a control system”.

Transparency and harmonisation of **regulatory requirements** in this area across the continent, and a **European Health Plan** have nevertheless been identified as prerequisites for any significant transformation.

Change 9 – Developing and piloting strategic sectors 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 and energy autonomy

Piloting at European level sectors deemed strategic such as health, food, energy, digital, defence, transport or materials meets the **need for sovereignty** identified by citizens. This pilotage would limit competition between European companies, encourage the emergence of **continental champions** and reindustrialize Europe through a European preference.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

In order to achieve this sovereignty, a **European authority** could be tasked with steering these sectors by

issuing authorisations for takeovers of European companies by foreign competitors and by 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. Compliance with these criteria would make it possible to ensure **the self-sufficiency and** influence, or even the export, of the European industrial model.

Change 10 – Improve the protection of environments and ecosystems and create protected areas in 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 for and protection of soils

The aim is to **limit the negative impact of urbanisation on soils**. Strong action would **make it possible to limit catastrophes** linked to the destructuring of soils such as landslides and **to improve the quality of life in urban areas**, in particular by planting trees.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

It was proposed to act at two levels: firstly, **to reverse the trend towards new constructions** in order to reduce the rate of soil sealing, and secondly, **to improve soil restoration** in order to "give back to nature what has affected it".

Change 11 – Setting up European relays in the territories to listen and advise citizens

Wish of associated Europe: A closer and more accessible Europe

What does this change mean?

Keywords: Houses of Europe, local Europe referent, 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 closer to its citizens.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

To address this distance between the EU and citizens, a **specialist focal point** could be appointed in each area with a mission to listen and advise citizens. The information provided by this relay could be of a socio-economic nature, in particular on access to European aid or information, 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 owners to 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 municipal level allowing a

fine territorial network.

The success of this change would be complete if each citizen knew "as evidence" the existence of this referent and this place of resources dedicated to Europe that would bring resources, listening, information and advice.

Change 12 – Unifying the method of election of the European Parliament for the twenty-sixth Member States and improving the proximity of citizens by replacing the current election with a single-member election at regional level

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe with more effective governance

What does this change mean?

Keywords: institutional change, follow-up by citizens of actions throughout the mandate

This change reflects the desire of citizens to strengthen their **proximity to elected representatives** and to monitor their election throughout their term of office. It responds to the widely shared finding of a lack of translation of citizens' concerns into concrete actions by elected representatives in the European Parliament.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

The change in the method of election would consist of **a unification of the voting system at the European level and the transition from national to regional constituencies, which is estimated to be possible by 2035.**

Change 13 – Defining a common policy to improve the reception and social and professional integration of migrants (including irregular migrants)

Wish of associated Europe: A Europe guaranteeing respect for fundamental rights

What does this change mean?

Keywords: European Migration Board, ensuring a decent reception across Europe

This change aims to improve the reception of migrants within the European Union, a problem unanimously identified as an **emergency** by citizens. Breaking with the current situation, the establishment of a **common, concerted and solidarity-based immigration** policy appears to be a major vehicle for peace.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

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 be submitted to the Commission and, in the medium term, enable 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** office on immigration and the recognition of migration policy as a competence of the European Union.

Chapter 14 – Preserving the specific characteristics (food labels, artisanal productions, traditions) of the various European regions, in order to avoid standardising lifestyles and ensure the traceability and quality of products

Souhait from 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 a criticism of the European Union.

What are the key steps and criteria for success?

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 website in ‘three *clicks*’ is proposed: one click to access the site, a second to display a map of the regions of the European Union and a last to display the description of the labels of each region.

The success of this change would be enhanced communication around existing achievements, resulting in a better **knowledge** on the part of citizens of the diversity of European cultures.

Second part: Presentation of the results of the consultation "Word to Youth"

The dates of the consultation
from 09/05/2021 to 18/07/2021

Participation figures

50 008 participants

2 918 proposals

338 330 votes

The “Speaking to young people” 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, the aim of which is to enable all European citizens to express their views on what they expect from the European Union. The lessons learned from 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. 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 concern 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 healthier and more united Europe runs through the entire consultation process**, reaching consensus on several points:
 - A stronger Europe economically (notably through relocation) to face China or the United States
 - A diplomatic Europe that weighs more heavily on the international scene
 - A leading Europe in the fight against climate change in the worldA Europe brought together by its youth
 - A Europe united in research and innovation
4. **Four ideas complementary** to those from the citizens' panels were also endorsed by young people:
 - An environmentally and socially responsible European economy
 - A Europe geographically more connected by rail
 - A fiscally fairer Europe
 - Strong EU action for women's rights

22 acclaimed and 13 controversial ideas across the 9 themes of the Conference on the Future of Europe

*The ideas **acclaimed** are based on proposals that are overwhelmingly supported by the participants in the consultation. The proposals acclaimed have the most support, they capitalise on average **79% of “votes for”**.*

*The **controversial ideas** are formed from the proposals most debated by the participants to the consultation, with a balance between the votes for and against. Controversial proposals are the most heavily debated proposals in the consultation, capitalising on average **40% of “votes for”**, **38% of “votes against”**.*

The analysis of these proposals identified 22 popular and 13 controversial ideas. These 22 ideas were acclaimed 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 popular and controversial ideas

Climate change and environment			
● Building a stronger European environmental policy	● Progressing towards more sustainable agriculture	● Acting more strongly for the protection of biodiversity	
● Developing rail transport in the EU	● Accelerating the energy transition	● Limit packaging and improve waste management	
?? Raising environmental awareness	?? Promote eco-responsible building processes	?? Investing more in nuclear energy	
European democracy			
✦ Better communication on the role and work of the EU	● Changing the democratic functioning of the European Union	?? Fighting disinformation	
?? Making Europe a federation	?? Leave more autonomy to Member States	?? Building a 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	🍷🍷		

✦ Predominant idea (10 proposals acclaimed)

?? Unique idea (<10 proposals acclaimed)

?? Controversial idea (3 controversial proposals)

Conclusion

“In a nutshell, for you, Europe in 2035 will have to be...”:



Citizens' response from 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 citizens' selection process followed stratified random selection of participants in the European Citizens' Panels. 12,000 German citizens were invited to participate; One hundred of them were selected, taking into account current data from the census of the Federal Republic of Germany, in order to reflect the diversity of German society and of 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

*Panel 1:***Linking foreign trade interests to climate policy measures**

It is recommended that the EU (in particular the European Commission) launch an investment package for climate-friendly technologies and innovations, including funding programmes. This package should be financed by climate-related import duties, which would be specifically allocated and passed on as financial compensation for climate damage. In this context, a point system 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 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 bring about lasting change on a global scale. These goals are important to us, as the EU makes a lasting contribution to the fight against climate change, which could, in the long run, play a key role in building global peace.

*Round table 2:***Create incentives to set up 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 setting up in the EU and/or setting up 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 where human rights are respected.

These objectives are important to us because relocating production to the EU would make the EU more autonomous internationally and less politically vulnerable.

Panel 1:

Digi-Score - a points system for a strong EU-wide digital economy

We propose the implementation 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 push for increased digitalisation across Europe. Companies with a low digital score would be entitled to receive targeted support to help them catch up.

Our objective is important to us because it would help pave the way for increased productivity, efficiency and sales, and thus strengthen Europe's role as the basis for production.

Round table 2:

Information platform for an EU-wide exchange of knowledge and experience

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 good practice 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 digitalisation).

We believe that 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 fora and platforms.

Panel 1:

Product Lifetime Guarantee Regulation

We recommend that the EU adopt legislation to establish an extended lifespan specific to 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 the amount of waste, which would benefit the environment, the climate and consumers.

In this way, we want to encourage manufacturers to bring more durable and repairable products to the market.

Round table 2:

EU long-term campaign for sustainable consumption and lifestyle

We recommend that a European body, including branches in EU countries, should have its 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 and adopt a sustainable consumption and lifestyle.

These goals are important to us because we want to awaken an intrinsic motivation for a sustainable lifestyle.

Panel 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 aged between 14 and 25, irrespective of their origin, gender and level of education. This exchange programme must be systematically implemented and promoted by local schools. Each student should have the opportunity to participate in the exchange program at any time during 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 pupils and 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 exchange should be fostered at school age. Above all, it is important that exchange programmes are easily accessible and free of red tape. Through this exchange programme, we want to establish European solidarity and reduce language barriers. In this perspective, educational equity and participation in education must be kept in mind in order to strengthen intercultural and communication skills.

These objectives are important to us because they can help promote European cohesion, strengthen respect and cooperation and transmit European values from an early age, so that Europe's diversity can be seen as an opportunity.

Round table 2:

Establishment of a basic salary specific to employment

We recommend that the European Commissioner for Employment and Social Rights submit to the European Parliament a proposal to introduce a basic salary specific to employment in all Member States. This basic wage should consist of a minimum income sufficient to ensure subsistence and a specific supplement to employment.

Our aim is to ensure that job performance and wages are comparable within the EU, in order to strengthen social justice. This objective is important for us as it would ensure that the labour market respects a fundamental EU principle: comparable living and working conditions, irrespective of a person's place of residence and occupation.

Panel 1:

Embodying European values and communicating them through the use of emotions

We recommend making European values more concrete and communicating them more emotionally. This could be achieved, for example, through an "integration" package covering media, interactive elements and greater citizen participation.

Our aim is for everyone living in the EU to know the common values and to make them their own.

This objective is important to us because it forms the basis of our coexistence within our community of values. These values are too little known, because the personal link is lacking. We need to make that connection.

Round table 2:

"Life in the EU"

We recommend that the EU set up its own television education and information programme to increase awareness of our common values among all EU citizens and to ensure easy and unhindered access to this information for all. These objectives 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 the 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

Panel of citizens in charge of formulating
recommendations for the Conference on the
Future of Europe, 11-12 March 2022

Synthesis report

Rome, 16 March 2022



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1. Guiding principles for the panel's organisational process

The whole process of implementation of the panel has been designed to be in line with the indications 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 aims of the project, with specific references to the Conference on the Future of Europe, the topics discussed and the modalities of participation.

- **Transparency:**

All documents presenting the initiative were made available to participants through various means, always referring to the official conference website. The documents were sent by e-mail to all participants.

- **Inclusiveness:**

The invitation to participate was sent through different channels: e.g. e-mail to members of the SWG community and dissemination via Twitter and LinkedIn of the link to the application form. 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 ensure the presence of people of different gender, age, social origin, place of residence and employment status.

- **Representativeness:**

Although the sample size is not statistically representative, 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 about the conference and the topics discussed during the panel. Participants were reminded of the objectives and modalities of the project in the introductory part, in accordance with the principles of neutrality and completeness. All participants had 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 co-creative recommendations, widely shared by the participants, to be addressed to the European Union. The manner in which the work was organized and the groups led resulted in a process that focused on the collection, processing and synthesis of participants' indications, as well as their verification and validation by the groups themselves in a subsequent working session.

- **Timetable:**

A relaxed atmosphere was created during the working sessions, giving participants plenty of time to delve deeper into the topics 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 in order to allow the ideas formulated to rest.

- **Follow-up:**

On the last day, all groups verified and validated the first draft of the recommendations made during the first phase of the work. Once the report on the outcome had been submitted to the European Policy Department of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the relevant authorisation had been received, the final version of the recommendations was forwarded to all panel participants. In all cases, participants were invited to continue to follow the activities of the conference on the website and through the updates that will be published.

- **Integrity:**

The entire working 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 different stages of the initiative and the results.

- **Protection of privacy:**

The privacy of the participants has been fully guaranteed. In order to be eligible to participate in the panel, all candidates had to sign the informed consent form required by law.

- **Evaluation:**

At the end of the process, a questionnaire was sent to all participants to assess their experience. The results are summarized in this report.

2. Selection of participants and mode 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, in which all interested parties to the initiative were able to submit their applications indicating the data needed to be included in the groups from which the applicants 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 published on social media from **SWG's** accounts. To this end, six posts were published 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.

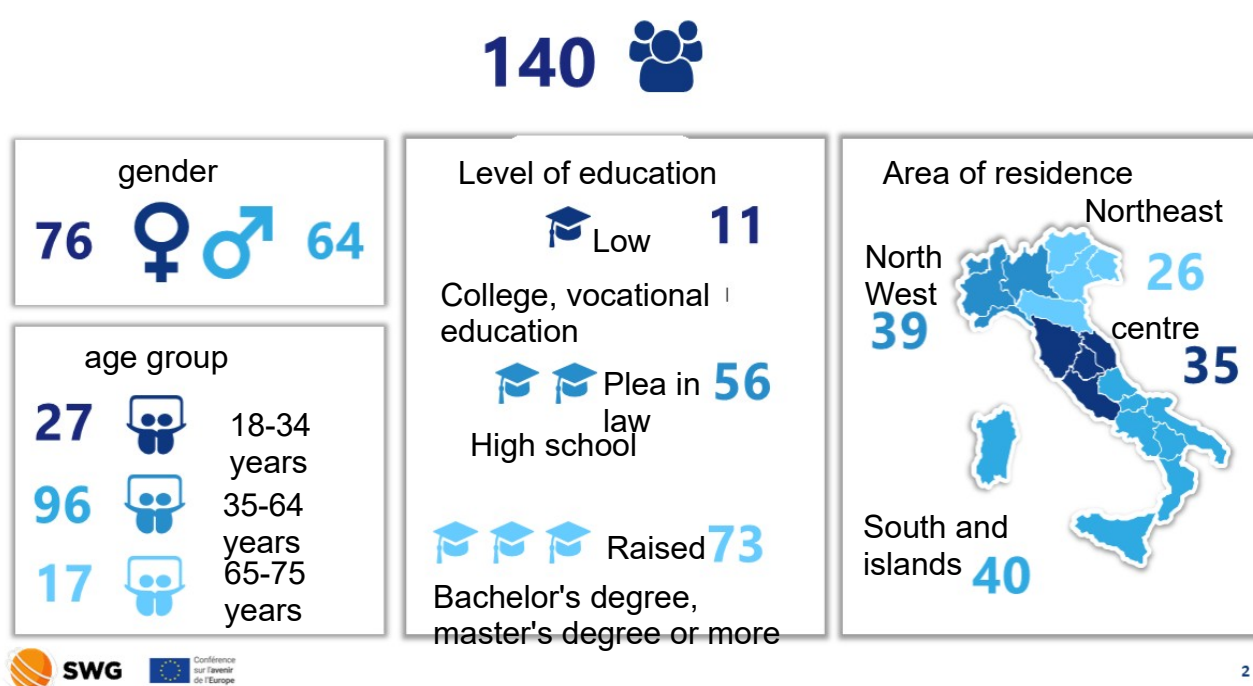
Applications could be submitted between 8 March at 8 a.m. and 10 March 2022 at 4 p.m. In total, the process generated 420 accesses to the application form and 225 full applications were received.

A total of 140 people were actually eligible, 70 of whom were selected on the basis of a criterion aimed at

ensuring a balanced presence in terms of gender, geographical distribution, age and level of education. In the selection procedure for candidates, particular attention was paid to the principle of fair probability for the selection of participants, accompanied by procedures based on a random criterion. The randomness 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 those selected in order to promote maximum inclusiveness.

In summary, the distribution of eligible persons was as follows:

Distribution of eligible candidates

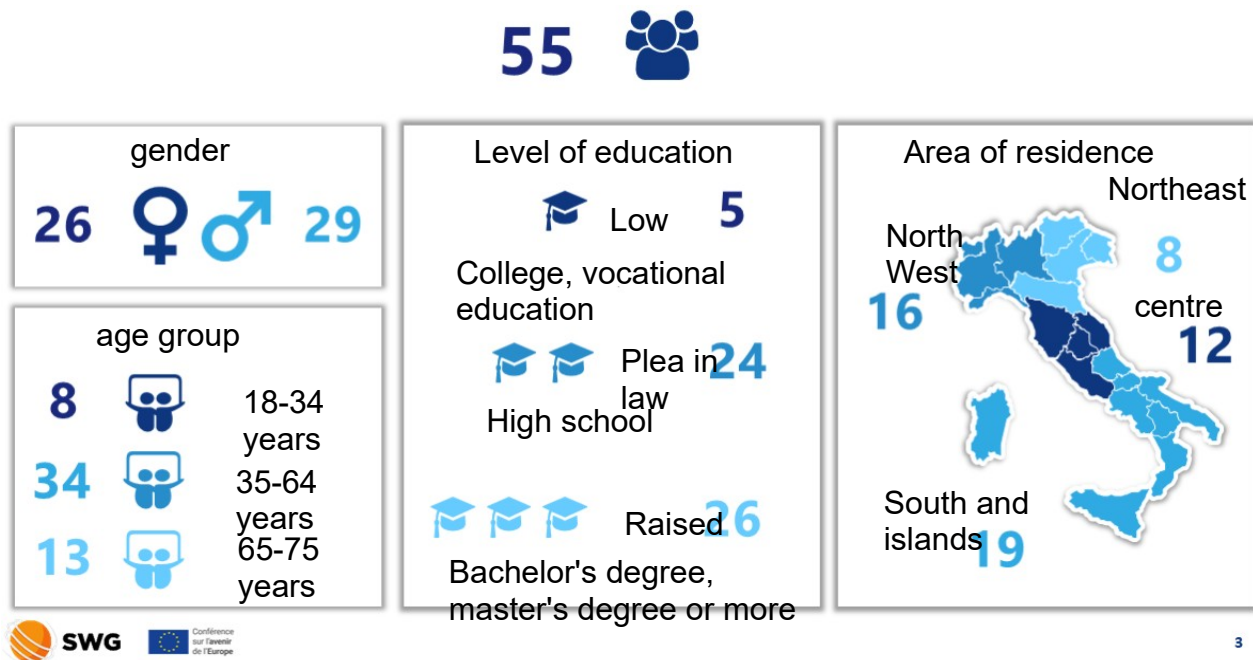


2

Once the 70 candidates were selected, on the 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. In total, at the end of this phase, 59 people confirmed their participation and were registered. **Of these, 55 participated actively in the panel.**

The social and age distribution of the panellists was as follows:

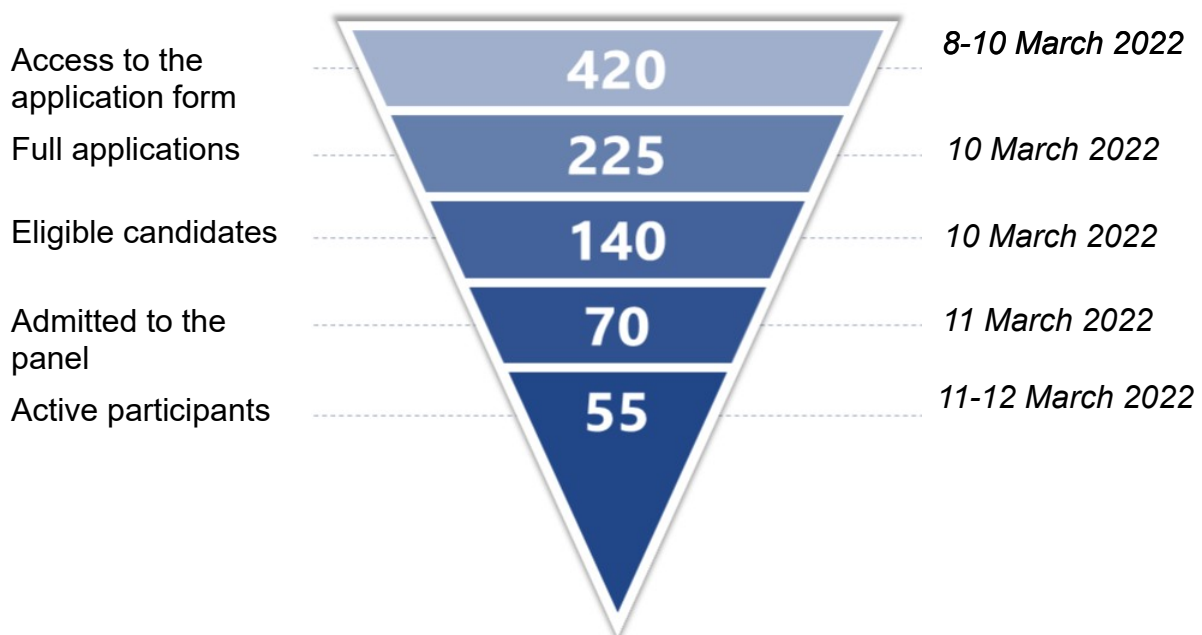
Distribution of active participants



3

In brief, the results of the stages of the selection process are as follows:

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 factsheets for 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 people with professional commitments, the panel was organised over two consecutive half-days, including one on weekends, according to the following schedule:

- **Friday 11 March from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.**
- **Saturday 12 March from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

The aim of this choice was, on the one hand, to facilitate workers' participation in the initiative and, on the other hand, to split attendance time in order to encourage greater attention and participation, as well as further reflection on the themes and proposals presented. The 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 deputies of a person responsible for drafting the minutes of the interventions. The moderators moderated the groups using two different discussion tracks (one for each thematic area), with the aim of involving as much as possible all the selected people and ensuring an approach based on maximum inclusion and neutrality.

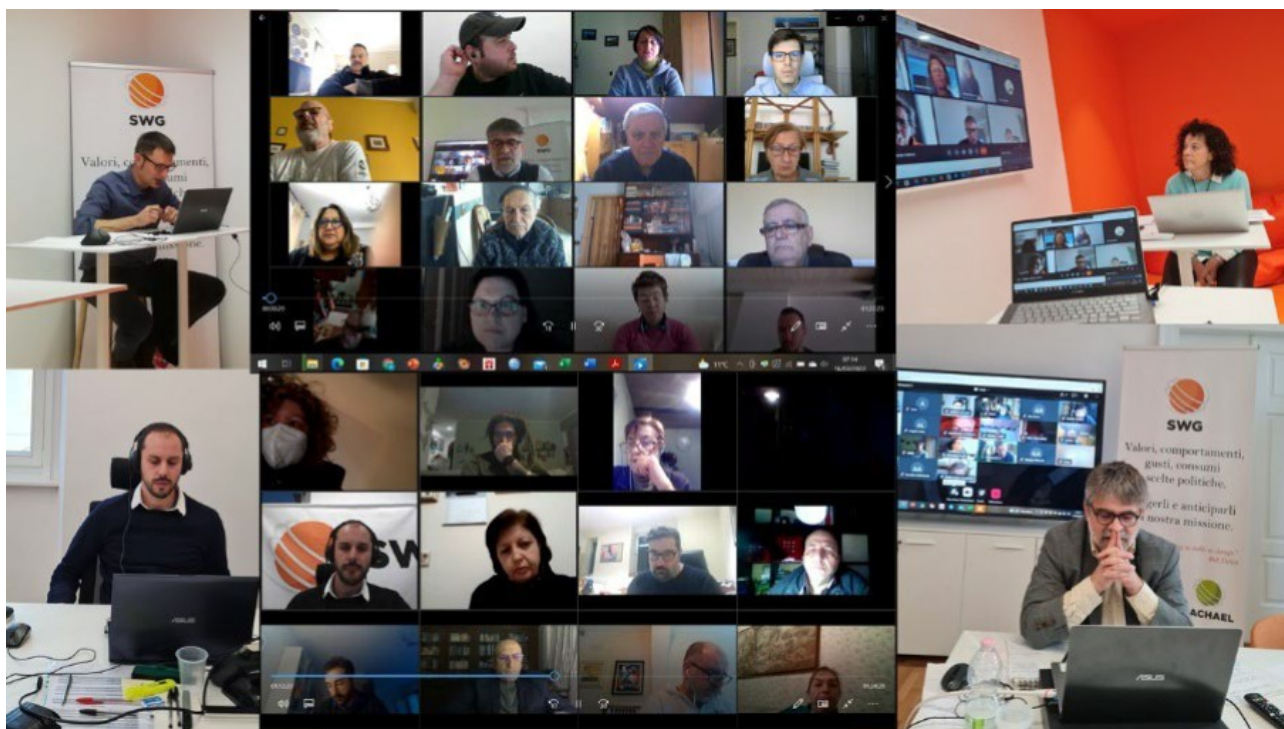
4. Work programme

First session (Friday 11 March 2022)

- 3 p.m. – Opening of the virtual room and possibility for participants to connect to the platform to check the proper functioning of their audio and video systems.
- 16:00 – Introduction by the moderator: explanation of the reasons behind the initiative and description of the structure of the work.
- 16.15 – Breakdown of participants into groups on the basis of the preferences indicated during the application phase.
- 16.20 – Start of the group discussion.
- 20:00 – End of the session.

Second session (Saturday 12 March 2022)

- 10 a.m. – Resumption of work by reading the results of the first day's work.
- 10.15 a.m. – Continuation of the discussion, in-depth discussions and comments by participants.
- 12.00 – Conclusion of the work.



5. Recommendations made

A stronger economy, social justice and employment

1. *Exceeding the production model of the past century*

The panel considered that the latest global events (the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine) ostensibly showed the limits of the current European production model and highlighted the need to review 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 it was not possible to produce alone the quantity of medical devices and vaccines needed to combat the spread of the virus, gave rise to the impression that our economic system suffered from a structural weakness linked 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 significant technological assets. To this end, it is essential to support an education system that pays ever greater attention to STEM-related subjects.

Technological innovation, sustainable energy, but also tourism and culture appear to be three fundamental elements for the development of the European economy of tomorrow, with particular emphasis on maintaining basic production in order to avoid the risk of over-reliance on third countries for 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 economy of tourism and culture, also valuing the many small destinations in Europe.**
- 3. Focus on technology and innovation as drivers of growth.**
- 4. Reduce dependencies on other countries for raw materials, energy sources and agriculture.**
- 5. Encourage young people to study scientific subjects.**

2. *Generative and inclusive production regulations*

To go beyond the economic logic of the past century, we must also review the rules and procedures that govern the activities of companies. There are four recommendations in this direction, all of which respond to a common logic: on the one hand, simplifying the rules and, on the other hand, maintaining a high level of vigilance against wrongdoing (particularly as regards counterfeiting and unfair competition).

A great deal of attention is paid to the need for economic rules that are primarily generative, reducing as much as possible the choices that require normalization 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 production quantities.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Reduce bureaucracy (authorisations, certifications).**
- 2. Reduce product standardisation 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 consequent destruction of surplus production.**
- 4. Fighting counterfeiting and unfair competition.**

3. Measuring growth in terms of happiness within the population rather than the quantity of products

Devoting to 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 focused not only on the quantity of goods produced, but also on the ability to guarantee citizens a goal of happiness. In this new economy, goods cannot be the focus of impact and investment considerations, but people must be the focus. This means moving from a system of indicators based on the quantity of goods produced (GDP) to a system capable of measuring the well-being 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 union is not enough and that Europe must be able to evolve with increasing strength in terms of coherent political unity, able to negotiate with one voice outside and to act with no greater solidarity internally. A stronger Union is an essential aspect of strengthening the political, commercial and productive strength of the European Union: the homogeneity of fundamental laws and 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 panellists said was the most touted in the world and the most concerned about ensuring equal opportunities 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 no longer seems sufficient, and the Europe of the future must make a decisive leap in terms of integration between the 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 that provides for the same laws, taxation systems, duties and duties in all countries.**
- 3. Coordinated tax regimes between different states, especially 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 fair Europe capable of offering happiness to its citizens is an inclusive Europe, which always pays great attention to the fight against inequalities. The recommendations set out 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 inequalities and the right to live in a healthy environment).

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Achieve 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 self-fulfilment and self-determination.**
- 5. Promoting generational renewal at all levels.**
- 6. Manage the reception of refugees and migrants in a balanced way between different states.**

Once again, the role of schools and education 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 an Europe of institutions, it is essential to build a Europe of peoples. In this respect, emphasis is placed on the centrality of a common language, in order to allow dialogue between citizens of different countries and equal access to services. The dream of Esperanto having collapsed, the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union raised doubts about the possibility of adopting as a common language English, a key language of international relations as well as within the scientific and economic system.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Promote the adoption of a common language.**
- 2. Invest in schools and teaching the history of Europe rather than each nation, as well as teaching 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 has often not been able to use the EU funds made available for this purpose. Inclusion and accessibility mean that the European institutions must be closer to their citizens and these concepts go hand in hand with more information and an increased awareness of 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 it 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 the citizens.**
- 3. Clearly communicate their rights and opportunities to citizens and promote citizens' direct access to them.**

6. Employment

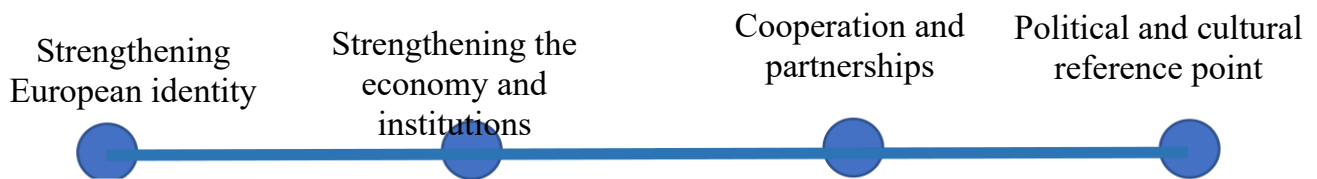
The issue of employment has emerged on an ongoing basis as a cross-cutting element and a direct effect of the European Union's willingness to act on its recommendations. During the debate between the participants, it was clear that the issue of employment was at the heart of citizens' lives, but that it went hand in hand with strengthening issues relating to the economy and social justice. 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 to companies that offer jobs.**

Europe in the world

Recent international events and, in particular, the war between Russia and Ukraine, have had a great influence on the perception of the role that Europe will have to play at international level. The recommendations collected focused mainly on a focus on strengthening the Union (both in terms of identity and as an economic power) and positioning it as a model of reference and recovery in its relations with other countries.



1. Strengthening European identity

In order to be recognised beyond its borders, the European Union must first of all show cohesion at the local level, not only economically and financially, but also in terms of identity and values. An identity that is not created by homogenisation but by valuing local specificities within a framework of shared essential values.

Consideration was also given to a possible enlargement of the Union's perimeter in this context: according to some panellists, it should not take place in a non-differentiated manner but rather focus 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 among citizens of different states.**
- 3. Redefinition of the principles of membership for the new candidate countries, with a strengthening of factors such as cultural identity and values.**

2. Strengthening the economy and institutions

The Europe of tomorrow is called upon to play a leading role at international level, a role that can only be assumed with a strong Union that is independent of other countries. It is widely recognised that EU countries are poor in raw materials, but it seems essential that the EU is able to guarantee 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 brought back to the centre of the debate the importance of an integrated European defence policy, with a specific identity and greater autonomy vis-à-vis NATO, without calling into question its membership.

Finally, this implies specific 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. Valuing 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. Create European scientific laboratories (European Virus Bank).**
- 7. To create a common European army acting within the framework of NATO, but also contributing to going beyond it.**
- 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

Tomorrow's vision of Europe is not that of a fortress defending its wealth, but that of a protagonist who knows the international scene capable of dialogue with all the countries of the world. A dialogue that starts from a trading power and should aim at economic leadership, and that can be consolidated by the establishment of partnerships and projects of large international scope.

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 theme of migration, with better cooperation between countries and the use of common procedures for the management of applications and persons.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

- 1. Boost 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 bargaining power, but with constraints related to respect for human rights.**
- 4. Conduct major international projects such as the International Space Station.**
- 5. To finance projects in Africa to build schools and hospitals, without adopting a colonial attitude, but with a focus 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 a fair distribution between different states, but with common rules (identification and control of behaviour and employment).**

4. Political and cultural reference

In the scenario described above, Europe is called upon to provide a clear political and cultural reference at global level from the point of view of rights and ethics, setting an example by taking decisions aimed at ensuring a healthy environment, respect for human rights and dialogue between East and West.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

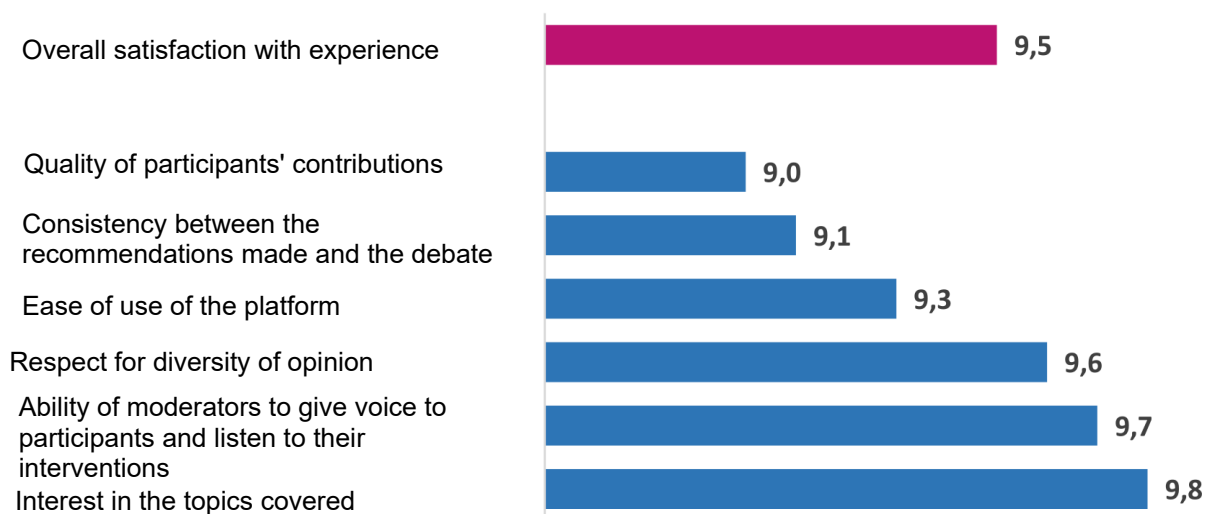
- 1. Leading the way as a green continent, achieving zero emissions ahead of others and increasing clean energy production (wind and solar).**
- 2. Export technology to produce zero-impact goods.**
- 3. To act as a confluence (public place, agora) between East and West, promoting cultural exchanges and joint cultural initiatives (such as the World Art Days, to be organised alternately in the various European capitals, with an artistic programme involving 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 working days, all participants were asked to fill in a short question 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 show a particularly high level of satisfaction, both in terms of interest and in terms of ease of participation and a sense of listening and inclusion.

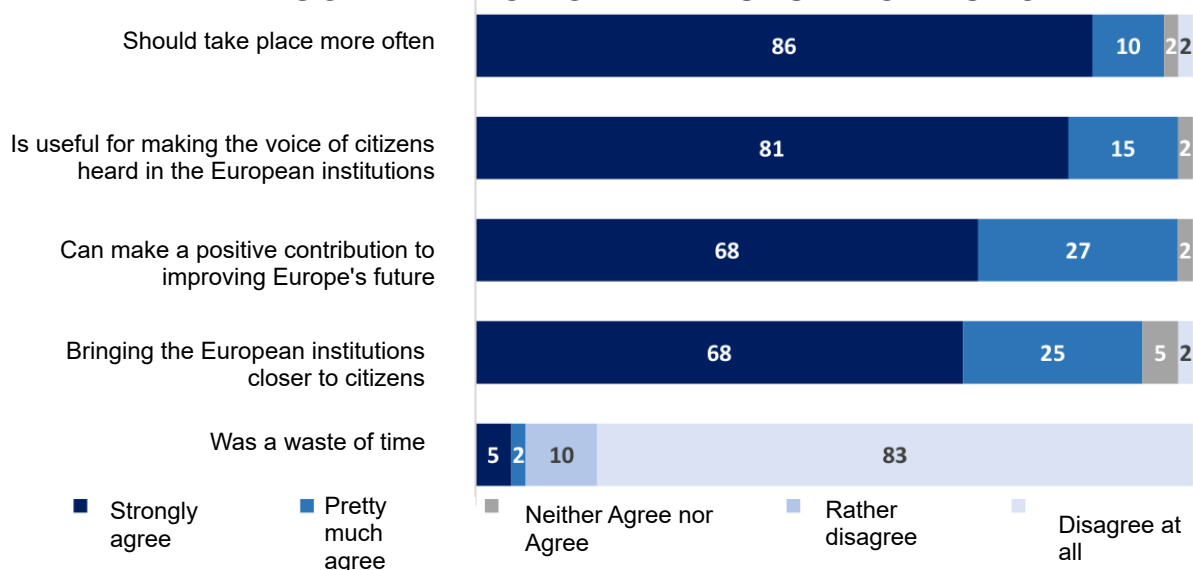
Satisfaction with participation in the panel



Although participants initially had different experiences, skills and motivations, they 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 was perceived above all as an opportunity to participate actively and which gave a feeling of greater proximity to the European institutions, was 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"



Participants indicated that if such an initiative were to be reorganized, not only would they be willing to participate, but they would also recommend 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 indicates the recommendations made by the participants in the Citizens' Panel for EU and Lithuanian policies. The third provides a brief analysis of the discussions within the groups and the main outcomes of the Forum. The fourth compares the results of the citizens' panel with those of the Lithuanian citizens' surveys on the state and future of Europe.

1. Conduct of the National Citizens' Panel

In addition to the guidelines for organising sections of national citizens in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, the Kantar TNS LT polling 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 18-65 representing the different socio-economic groups and 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 took place on the topics most relevant for 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 national citizens' panel on the future of Europe was held at the EAW, organised by the EAW Centre for Eastern European Studies (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 competence of the EU in foreign policy**, as well as the **economic role of the EU**. During this event, each of these issues was the subject of a separate session at the beginning of which the experts on EU issues, Linas Kojala (RESC) and Ramūnas Vilpišauskas (professor at the University of Vilnius), briefly introduced citizens to the current events and issues surrounding the theme of the session. During the discussion, citizens were able to ask questions and express their views. Following the expert presentations, the participants were divided into three smaller representative groups to reflect on a different issue related to the theme of the session. The foreign policy issues addressed were:

1.1. Is there a need for an autonomous EU defence and foreign affairs policy?

1.2. What should the EU's relations be with its Eastern European neighbours, North Africa and Turkey?

1.3. What should be the EU's migration policy?

XV Sample of citizens representing the cities of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Panevėžys and the districts (apskritis) of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Panevėžys, Alytus, Marijampolė, Tauragė, Telšiai and Utena, based on data from the Lithuanian Department of Statistics (Lietuvos statistikos departamentas).

The session on the economic role of the EU gave rise to a reflection on the following issues:

2.1. Should there be a greater reallocation of funds from the EU budget, from the EU 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 principle statements or concrete proposals on issues of EU policy concern. During the discussion with the whole panel, the representative of each group presented these conclusions 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 deliberations, citizens each cast two votes, 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 in favour of the declaration or proposal which they consider to be the most important in their personal capacity, in their interest as EU residents. After this vote, a debate took place in the panel, and an update was given on the main ideas that had emerged from the discussions.

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 the recommendations drawn from the content of their discussions were communicated to citizens. Citizens were given the opportunity to say whether they agreed with the recommendations, to complete them on substance and to evaluate them. All participants had this opportunity one week after the recapitulative session, by sending their opinions and comments in writing to the panel organizers.

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 towards China. Lithuania needs more resolute support, but it should also better align its position with that of the EU. 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 function.
2. We agree to put the issue of migrant quotas back on the agenda at EU level.
3. We recommend setting up a dedicated commission at EU level to address migration issues, which would ensure a faster response to migration crises as well as the right of Member States to explain and defend their national interests, and which would develop and implement common guidelines on migration management.
4. We recommend strengthening economic and humanitarian ties with the countries of North Africa, without losing sight of political realities, particularly with a view to reducing the influence of China, Russia and other States in this region.
5. We recommend strengthening ties with Eastern Europe and encouraging economic measures at the personal level.
6. We urge that the sanctions applied by the EU to foreign actors be stricter, more targeted and involve important figures of the sanctioned state (e.g. political leaders).
7. We strongly call for the EU's common foreign and security policy to be based on the fundamental principle of solidarity between the various EU Member States and European regions and societies.

8. We recommend that the EU review its policy of openness to migration, which has led to security problems, an increase in crime and the creation 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 call for an active and rigorous EU 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 by engaging with them with a view to de-escalation.

Second session: the economic role of the EU

1. We recommend that the EU strengthen the security of supply of essential goods by various means: prioritising intra-EU trade, promoting the production of advanced technologies and further diversifying import sources. We also recommend exploring new export markets.
2. We recommend a review of the practices for negotiating 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 Green Deal measures and their implementation be assessed against potential negative socio-economic impacts. In order to implement the objectives of the Green Deal, we recommend the use of nuclear energy and natural gas in addition to renewable energy sources.
4. We underline that it is particularly important that all Member States respect the principle of primacy of EU law. We urge Lithuania to have a clear position of principle on this issue.
5. We recommend that Lithuania make more active use of best practices from EU countries with the aim of higher social standards, economic expansion and balanced and sustainable development.
6. We recommend paying more attention to strengthening cybersecurity, as well as protecting data and infrastructure.
7. It is recommended that the EU and the Member States give priority to the development of basic economic knowledge among citizens, education and the dissemination of information.
8. We recommend that the new EU trade agreements include ambitious social, labour and health standards. We recommend the establishment at EU level of guidelines on what to do and what not to do for social media platforms managing consumer personal data and information.
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 Member States to go into debt.
10. We recommend strengthening the monitoring of the absorption and use of EU funds, helping local authorities to establish a genuine practice of adjusting the use of funds. In so far as the objective situation of beneficiaries of EU funds may be affected, the link between the requirements of transparency and flexibility is of particular importance.
11. We recommend that Lithuania continue to actively promote economic development and investment in the regions of the country.

3. Discussions in the National Citizens' Panel and analysis of the results

The National Citizens' Panel discussed the most relevant topical issues for Lithuania (widely discussed at national level in the political arena and in the media) and how to address them. The general vote on the main conclusions of the panel revealed that almost 45% of all the votes cast in the course of the two sessions were devoted to proposals relating to two themes: relations with China and control of migratory flows (see table below). The topic of energy policy has also received a great deal of attention. It was the subject of only one proposal but it received the votes of nearly 10% of the participants. The result of these votes suggests that citizens' views on 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 towards China. Current support for Lithuania is not sufficient, but Lithuania has also not sufficiently aligned its position with that of 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 function.	11 (22.9%) important for the whole of Europe: 8; in a personal capacity: 3
2. We call for the issue of migrant quotas at EU level to be put back on the agenda.	9 (18.8%) important for the whole of Europe: 9
3. We recommend setting up a dedicated commission at EU level to address migration issues, which would ensure a faster response to migration crises as well as the right of Member States to explain and defend their national interests, and to develop and implement common guidelines on migration management.	7 (14.6%) important for the whole of Europe: 3; in a personal capacity: 4
4. We recommend strengthening economic and humanitarian ties with North African countries, without losing sight of political realities, particularly with a view to reducing the influence of China, Russia and other states in the region.	6 (12.5%) important in a personal capacity: 6
5. We recommend strengthening ties with Eastern Europe and applying people-level economic measures.	5 (10.4%) personally important: 5
Second session: the economic role of the EU	
1. We recommend that the EU take various measures 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 the whole of Europe: 3; personally: 6
2. We recommend a review of natural gas contract negotiation practices, with both short-term and long-term contracts as objectives. We recommend further diversification of energy supply sources.	9 (19.6%) important for the whole of Europe: 9
3. We recommend that Green Deal measures and their implementation be assessed taking into account potential negative socio-economic impacts. In order to implement the objectives of the Green Deal, we recommend the use of nuclear energy and natural gas in addition to renewable energy sources.	6 (13%) important in a personal capacity: 6
4. We underline the importance of all Member States respecting the principle of primacy of EU law. We urge Lithuania to have a clear position of principle on this issue.	4 (8.7%) important for the whole of Europe: 2; in a personal capacity: 2

In addition, the most important issues for citizens, namely relations with China, migration or energy, are not

transient: their resolution will have a fundamental impact on Europe's long-term future. Also, the likelihood that citizens thinking about the future will prioritise what is important at the moment is not problematic. To the extent that the construction of the future begins with a multitude of small steps today, the perception of citizens' expectations in the short term is an indispensable condition to be able to ensure a solid control of the processes in the long term and the resolution of problems. The following analysis of the main results of the national citizens' panel is based precisely on this observation.

The resolution with the highest number of votes (11, almost 12%) is the one 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, EU support for Lithuania in the face of economic pressures from the China had not been sufficient. Secondly, the representatives of the group which communicated the conclusion stressed that Lithuania itself should make greater efforts to align 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 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 function was established. Eight participants declared this conclusion particularly important for the whole of Europe, and three others declared it important for them in their personal capacity.

The problem of relations with China is closely linked to two other proposals with a large number of citizens' votes. 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 the whole of Europe, and six others said it is particularly important for them in their personal capacity). This conclusion also included several aspects. First, citizens stressed the need to prioritise EU markets with reliable suppliers and products with high standards. Secondly, participants highlighted the need to encourage the production capacity of advanced technologies in Europe itself. Thirdly, citizens have expressed their support for greater diversification of sources of imports. In formulating these recommendations, the participants in the discussion constantly referred to China's factor: security threats related to Chinese goods, dependence on Chinese raw materials needed to manufacture advanced technologies, as well as Chinese technology copying and theft practices from Western companies active in its market. The proposal to **develop EU economic and humanitarian cooperation with North African countries** also garnered 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 unfriendly states.

The results of the vote also reflected citizens' concerns about migration issues. Two of the three conclusions that received the most votes in the field of 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 compulsory quotas for the reception of migrants for Member States** (all stressed that this proposal is of particular importance for Europe). The participants who came to this conclusion agreed that national quotas should be based on the number of inhabitants and that EU co-financing should be provided to meet the needs of migrants allocated according to these quotas. Seven Member States still voted in favour of the proposal **to set up a permanent technical commission at EU level to deal with migration problems, to which representatives of Member States would be seconded** (three participants considered this proposal to be of particular importance for the whole of Europe, four considered 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 addressed two distinct crises in the management of migration flows: in 2016, the migration crisis in the Mediterranean Sea, and in 2021 the hybrid attack in Belarus against Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, in which Minsk used grants from flows from the Middle East and Africa. A number of panellists claimed that the crisis in 2016 seemed remote and uninteresting to them, both for Lithuania as a whole and for them personally, and they did not consider the proposal to introduce a quota system for migrants to be appropriate. 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 appropriate, 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 refugees, migrants and those posing a threat among those who found themselves in the country's territory. All participants in the discussion agreed that the current "open" EU migration policy does not take sufficient account of 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 – namely relations with China and the management of migration flows – are prompting Lithuanian citizens to demand that the EU step up its involvement 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 the economic influence of the Community requires 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 its neighbours. Similarly, citizens considered that a 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 effectively. In the view of the panel participants, the best response to growing pressure from China and the hybrid attack from Belarus would be to have a deepened and strengthened EU common policy.

This opinion on the crises under discussion can be compared to the proposals of the panel 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 one of the most important news for Lithuania. The concern about energy prices was also reflected in the participants' vote: Nine citizens even voted for the conclusion that this topic is the most important for the whole 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 both short-term and long-term contracts**. 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 evaluation of the Green Deal measures** taking into account the expected socio-economic effect and their ambit. This proposal received the voices of six participants, each of whom considered it important to be personal. A few participants expressed concern about the too fast pace of the "green transition" and argued that Lithuania should assess more accurately whether a policy narrative would harm the interests of the country and its citizens. Some participants also updated 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 using natural gas, as well as to the potential of new generation so-called "modular" nuclear reactors. On climate policy, the panel therefore

prioritised Member States' policies in line with national needs, not an ambitious common EU policy on climate governance.

Given the relatively small number of participants in the panel and the disparity in citizens' responses (i.e. unity of action or more flexibility) to the various crises, it would be wrong to consider here recapitulative and broadly applicable measures. However, this dynamic of opinion-forming can lead to the proposal of interesting topics for future opinion-studies of Lithuanian citizens on EU integration issues, where citizens' views on autonomous EU policies, changes in institutional arrangements and differences should be taken into account.

4. Results of the Citizens' Panel in the wider context of public opinion in Lithuania

In order to contextualise the results of the national citizens' panel, they are briefly compared, in the last part, with the results of two current opinion polls 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 focuses on an [EUobarometersurvey](#) of citizens in October and November 2020 on the upcoming conference from Europe; the second on the last [standard Eurobarometer](#) carried out in the summer of 2021. Since some of the questions in the studies focused on other policy issues and citizens' expectations of the conference itself, a comparison with the questions that were really discussed in the panel is given below. 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 contains the statements of the citizens who participated in the work on various EU policy issues.

The results of the Eurobarometer surveys suggest that the discussions and votes of the participants in the Citizens' Panel are fairly consistent with the prevailing opinions in Lithuanian society. The recommendations of the panel participants to strengthen the common foreign and migration policy, 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 see migration as one of the EU's two main problems;

Lithuanian citizens are more interested in solving problems 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 the EU's foreign policy are areas in which Lithuania would benefit from stronger EU intervention.

Data from Eurobarometer studies could shed light on the views of EU participants on relations with China and energy prices: Lithuanians are more concerned than the EU average about the breakdown of relations between countries in the world and the resulting growing political tensions (33% vs. 18%). The panel's conclusions on the need for a more ambitious policy towards China also overlap with 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 much more worried 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 seems to be more important than developing general EU policies or other policy objectives.

The Eurobarometer data also suggest an interesting shift in Lithuanians' perception of the migration issue from a political perspective. In the 2020 survey, the Lithuanian Lit cited migration less often than the EU average as a major challenge to the EU's future (16% vs. 27%); In the 2021 survey, 32% of Lithuanian respondents considered migration to be one of the EU's main problems (compared to an EU-wide average of 25%). While this change in perspective may be due to differences in the wording of the question, it overlaps with what panel participants said during the discussions about the evolution of their views on migration issues.

In addition, a comparison of the results of the citizens' panel with Eurobarometer data reveals a gap between a relatively cautious view of the panel's participants with regard to EU policy on the one hand and a concern for climate change issues on the other. Although panellists encouraged an assessment of whether the Green Deal was too ambitious and would not harm Lithuania's interests, Lithuanians, according to Eurobarometer studies, consistently identify climate change as one of the main challenges for the EU. In the 2020 survey, 47% of Lithuanian respondents considered climate to be among the most important challenges for the future of Europe (compared to an EU average of 45%); In the 2021 survey, this was the case for 28% of Lithuanian respondents (compared to an EU-wide average of 25%). It should be stressed that the 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 greatest 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 topic as important for them from a personal point of view. In other words, personal opposition would not be incompatible 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 "Onze 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 graphic elements) has been modified for translation purposes.

Our vision of...

Summary of the report: all recommendations in a nutshell

Through the Citizens' Dialogue on "Vision of Europe", we gathered the views and ideas of Dutch citizens on the future of Europe. This led, for the first five themes, to the following recommendations to the European Union.

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 in Europe. Cooperation within the EU can bring many benefits in different forms, but it must bring added value to all stakeholders. This also applies to the sharing of security information. Sharing all information quickly makes cooperation ineffective.

1. Ensure everyone can feel free and safe
2. Enlarge the EU only if it brings added value
3. Cooperate 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. EU countries can also cooperate to ensure equal opportunities in the European labour market.

4. Taking into account commonalities and differences
5. Making more use of Europe's strengths
6. Developing a fair and clear tax system
7. Ensure 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. Knowing the views of other EU countries, for example, can contribute to a better overview. In addition, the Dutch believe that the EU should engage in dialogue with citizens more often, and preferably on a permanent basis. In this respect, it is not only important to take account of different interests, but also to take decisions more quickly than is currently the case.

1. Giving a better overview of Europe
2. Finding new ways to continuously listen to citizens
3. Be more transparent and clear about decisions taken
4. In order to be able to decide more quickly the thorny questions

Digital transformation

Society is increasingly dependent on the Internet and big tech companies are increasingly powerful. This sometimes worries the Dutch 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, secure and stable internet everywhere
2. Setting clear rules and standards for internet companies
3. Bringing privacy rules together with practical implementation and explanations

Education, culture, youth and sport

Young people studying abroad should be able to learn more from the host country than they do today.  countries with a lower level of knowledge should not lose all their talents, who go abroad. The Dutch believe that issues such as culture and abuse in sport should rather be a matter for the Member States themselves. And they consider it very important to have your own national language. In general, in Europe, each person must above all feel free and be able to be himself.

1. Encouraging Students to Study Abroad Smartly
2. Leaving matters such as culture and sport to Member States as a matter of priority
3. Ensuring that Europeans get to know and respect each other better

Introduction

The Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe", which took place from 1 September to mid-November, allowed all Dutch citizens 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 resulted, as well as the ideas and views that have been 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 "Vision of Europe"**

The European Union wants its citizens to tell it what they think about Europe. This 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 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 representative panel survey. In order to deepen the initial results of the panel survey and make concrete recommendations, we organised online thematic dialogues. Anyone who wanted to participate could do so. We also travelled the country for discussions with young people and other (difficult to reach) groups.

From schoolchildren, secondary vocational students and students to the Minister, farmers and migrants

In October and November, a total of eight thematic online dialogues took place, with an average of 30 per meeting. We also organised an online thematic dialogue and seven on-the-spot thematic dialogues with different groups of Dutch citizens. We had a dialogue with the Turkish Community in Schiedam and were invited by the volunteers of the Piëzo Foundation in Zoetermeer. On the latter occasion, Foreign Minister Ben Knapen was also present at the end of the dialogue. The Minister had a debate with the participants on 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 in a secondary school in Helmond, in a vocational secondary school in Doetinchem and at the University of Leiden.

"I've always expressed my opinion in front of the coffee shop. That's why I thought I should 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 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.

Because there are differences of opinion between European countries and citizens, of course we do not always agree with each other in the Netherlands either. These differences of opinion are very valuable: they are an important feature of a democracy. The recommendations are drawn from the ideas and opinions most frequently expressed by participants in the Vision of Europe survey. We also describe concerns, ideas and feelings that may be less prevalent, but 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. This is very different from the way discussions usually take place on social media."

Participant in the thematic dialogue

Nine themes were defined 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 providing an initial overview of the findings and additional questions based on the panel survey. In this second report, we set out the opinions, ideas and recommendations on the first five themes, in view of the plenary meeting of the Conference on the Future of Europe in December. The next report, covering the remaining four 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 dialogues with the Citizens at national level, but also to the results of other initiatives launched within the framework of the Conference. For example, there are also European Citizens' Panels, and all EU citizens (thus also Dutch citizens) can access a European digital platform.

"It is good 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 draft a final report on the Citizens' Dialogue: a compilation of this report and the following report (including the other themes). At the end of the conference, recommendations will be made to the Conference Presidency: the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the European Commission. They pledged to explore ways to implement the recommendations. For the Dutch government, the results are also a valuable contribution to Dutch European policy-making.
- In summary, the process until spring 2022 will be organised as follows:

*Chronology***Vision of Europe**

1st Sept.	12 October	22/23 October	15 Nov	17/18 December	21/22 January	22/24 April		
Collecting ideas online								
	Thematic dialogues							
		Interim results (interim report)		Interim report on "Economy" and "Democracy"	Interim report on "Climate" and "EU in the world"	Final report "Our vision for Europe"		
		↓		↓	↓	↓		
		Conference meeting		Conference meeting	Conference meeting	Closing of the conference	→	Recommendations for Presidents • European Parliament • European Commission • Council of Ministers
				^	^	^		
	More opinions and ideas on the future of Europe:							
Citizens' dialogues			European Citizens' Panels		European Digital Platform (also for Dutch citizens)			

Explanations for ease of reading

In this report, we examined five themes. For each theme, we have listed successively:

recommendations based on all strands of the citizens' dialogue;

an overview of the opinions, ideas and views exchanged (online and with physical presence) during the thematic dialogues and the suggestions resulting from the online survey, in words and images.

A description of the methodology used in the survey is provided 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 puts in place measures and rules, and EU countries cooperate intensively.

What is the Netherlands' view on this?

Recommendations - Our vision of security and the rule of law

68% of the Dutch believe that security and the rule of law is an important issue and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Ensure everyone can feel free and safe

78% of Dutch people 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 protecting consumer rights: The vast majority of citizens believe that it is a good thing that the EU obliges manufacturers to include the same information on labels in all countries. However, many Dutch people believe that the EU needs to pay attention to the differences in (governance) traditions and cultures within Europe. This is partly because otherwise it would be difficult to cooperate effectively. We believe that it is especially important for everyone in Europe to feel free and safe. This includes having a roof over your head, but also education and care. And it's also about knowing that the products that are in European stores are

Always safe.

2. Enlarge the EU only if it brings added value

44% of Dutch people do not think that the EU should expand to more countries. 25%, on the other hand, are in favour of enlargement. We see that there is already a lot of debate between the current Member States. Many Dutch people believe 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 believe that the current Member States should also see 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 that the EU pays attention to this.

"Enlargement should not focus on costs and benefits, but on a vision of stability."

3. Pre-cooperation in the fight against international crime and terrorism

68% of Dutch people think that the security services of EU countries should share their information. We believe, however, that it is important that countries can also continue to decide for themselves in part what information they wish to provide or not. Sharing all information quickly makes cooperation ineffective. And the EU is so big today that we must continue to critically examine where sensitive information arrives or is likely to arrive. We want to continue to have confidence 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 a red light in the Netherlands once, there's really no reason for that to be known in Spain.

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

"If you sanction a country that does not respect the rules, it is the poorest people in that country who are the first victims. That's why I think it's better to talk than to punish."

"We must first ensure stability within the current club. And, only then, think of enlargement."

"We also need to critically examine our own rule of law. There is certainly also one or the other malfunction."

IDEA: "Establish strict integrity rules for politicians across Europe to prevent them from being too easily influenced."

IDEA: "Strengthening cooperation between the police and the judiciary in EU countries."

Doetinchem Vocational Secondary School: "Those who want to be part of the EU must respect the rules"

At Graafschap College in Doetinchem, around 20 nursing students debated what they saw as 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 mutually. Union is strength," said one of the students present. Reference was also made to the importance of the rules. If countries do not respect them, it is often difficult to sanction them harshly. According to the students, it might be helpful if this becomes 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 respect the rules."

Hindustanis from Suriname to Utrecht: "Confidence in the rule of law is sometimes lacking"

The Asha Foundation is an organization of Hindustani volunteers from Suriname in the municipality of Utrecht. In particular, participants in the thematic dialogue discussed the importance of citizens' rights: the right to have a roof over one's head, but also, for example, the right to non-discrimination. According to the volunteers present, there must be rules that protect these rights for European citizens. It is not always clear what is currently regulated in the Netherlands and what is regulated at European level. As a result, it is sometimes difficult to have confidence in public authorities. Especially since there are sometimes some dysfunctions within the public authorities. "You may say that the authorities have to defend me, but they sometimes manage to sow pagãie, as was 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 in order to emerge economically stronger from the COVID-19 crisis. In the long term, the EU's goal is to make Europe's economy healthier, greener and more digital. What is the Netherlands' view on this?

Recommendations - Our vision of the economy and employment

61% of the Dutch believe that the economy and employment are an important issue and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Taking into account commonalities and differences

71% of the Dutch believe that the EU should ensure that companies work together more to strengthen the European economy. However, only a small portion of these people think that the EU needs to pay more money to businesses. First and foremost, 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 this money more effectively. In doing so, however, particular attention should continue to be paid to differences between countries.

"The agricultural sector in the Netherlands is so modern. It is not always possible to compare it with other countries."

2. Making more 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. For example, we consider that Europe is good in areas such as digitalisation, sustainability and infrastructure. And what is perhaps more important: we stand for 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 is what can make Europe stand out, for example, from the Chinese economy.

3. Developing a fair and clear tax system

82% of the Dutch believe that EU countries must collectively ensure that all companies in the EU pay fair taxes. This includes very large companies. Today, they sometimes move to other countries for the simple reason that they pay less tax there. 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 the 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 that 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 everyone can participate

71% of Dutch people think 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 far from the labour market. This can be done through rules or subsidies for businesses, but also by providing specific support to employers and workers. We are thinking, for example, of awareness-raising actions or very practical questions. It is possible that, in some cases, such support can be organised more effectively at EU level and that, in others, it is rather a task for the Member States themselves. EU countries should ultimately cooperate to ensure equal opportunities in the European labour market.

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

"Accelerate automation in Europe so that the goods that currently come from China are again manufactured here."

Take the revolution in bitcoins and other cryptocurrencies seriously. Those who are interested in it are being treated as tax evaders, 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 must do more for people with disabilities. It is now far too difficult for them to find a suitable job."

Many European rules are complex and change regularly. This makes it difficult for companies to innovate."

"In the case of transformation work within my company, my local contractor could have been around for a long time. But first I had to launch a European call for tenders. It's a disgrace.

Participants in the online dialogue: "Thinking together about big business"

During one of the thematic online 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 companies. Other participants called for looking at things in their ensemble: These enterprises have a high level of employment and benefit the national economy. "We must not chase them away," said one. One participant felt that it was in any case important for the EU countries to reflect together on this issue. "Large companies can currently compete between countries. That is why we need to present a more united front as the EU."

Farmers who take nature into account: Setting 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 many 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. In particular, there is room for improvement in the procedures: they are often still very administrative and time-consuming. In the view of one participant, the regulations should not be too detailed. "Prefer clear objectives, e.g. clean water. We can then decide for ourselves the width of a gap."

European democracy

The EU encourages Europeans to vote and also wants to involve them in European decision-making and policies outside the election period. The EU is also taking initiatives to strengthen democracy, e.g. by developing an action plan focusing on free and fair elections and freedom of the press. What is the Netherlands' view on this?

Recommendations - Our vision of 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 to be able to form a good opinion, it would be good to have a better overview. For example, it would be interesting to hear other countries' views on the EU more often. 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 sentiment towards Europe remains negative."

2. Finding new ways to continuously listen to citizens

51% of Dutch people think that the EU is not sufficiently aware of what is happening in society. To improve this, the EU should engage more often, and preferably on a permanent basis, with citizens. Many Dutch people therefore consider the Conference on the Future of Europe to be a good initiative. Referendums can also be a valuable tool, but the Dutch have differing views on this. For some themes, it is also sometimes necessary to have specific knowledge. In any case, talking with citizens should not be a mere formality. We believe it is important that we are taken seriously.

3. Be more transparent and clear about decisions taken

The Dutch sometimes find Europe quite complicated. Not everyone has the same level of knowledge of base. The EU needs to hold more compte. We want the EU to become more transparent and to make it easier to keep up to date. The Dutch authorities also have a role to play in this respect. 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. We should therefore be able to choose the topics on which we want 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 the new forest plantation stating: 'This planting was made possible by the EU.' Even though I am skeptical of Europe, I still felt proud."

4. Making it possible to resolve thorny issues more quickly

The Dutch have difficulty understanding 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 alliances between national parties. There may also be other ways to address European interests. About a third of Dutch people believe that it should be possible to vote for foreign candidates in elections to the European Parliament. A roughly equal number of citizens believe that this should not be possible. What matters most is that sufficient account is taken of the different interests at stake. And, at the same time, that it is possible to resolve the thorny issues more quickly than is the case today.

"In the elections, I would like to be able to identify myself with someone and know what he or she stands for. It doesn't have to be a compatriot."

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

"Remove the veto power of countries. The majority must decide."

"For important decisions, set up citizen focus groups, perhaps even on a (semi-)mandatory basis, as is done for juries in the United States."

"Ensure that EU politicians and officials regularly travel to the hinterland" and do not remain completely 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: "European politicians may need to participate more often in television programmes."

"As a young person, I hardly ever 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." Supporters of referenda said they felt it was useful for policymakers to know what citizens think about a particular topic: this could help to provide guidance. Referendums could also help raise overall public awareness of the EU: what are the topics on the agenda and what are the choices to be made.

Social volunteers: "There is a need for 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 widening gap they are seeing in Europe. These are, for example, the views that people have on the LGBTIQ community. If countries do not understand their specific points of view, it is difficult to cooperate. "It is for this reason that it is essential to learn to be better known," said one participant. "Today, we just don't know what people are thinking in other countries. We do not sufficiently understand the culture and context of our respective countries. However, it is essential if we want to make good decisions together."

Digital transformation

In the virtual world, internet connectivity, security and life protection requirements are increasingly high. 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' view on this?

Recommendations - Our virtual worldview

45% of the Neerlandais believe that the virtual world is an important theme and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Ensuring a fast, secure and stable internet everywhere

61% of Dutch people believe that the EU should ensure that everyone in Europe has access to a fast and secure internet. We all see the internet playing an increasingly important role in our lives. Our children are born with digital education. And communication is increasingly moving towards the Internet, both nationally and internationally. We are sometimes concerned about the heavy reliance 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 cyberattack on our water protection system makes me feel vulnerable."

2. Setting clear rules and standards for internet companies

75% of Dutch people 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 increasingly buying from abroad and sharing sensitive personal data in this way. It sometimes seems dangerous. It is difficult to determine which websites are trustworthy. It is good that the EU is developing 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. 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 destitute as a small country."

3. Bringing privacy rules together with practical implementation and explanations

With the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Dutch know that all payroll must comply with the same privacy laws and regulations. We reassure you that it is good to be able to count on this, because the protection of privacy is an important issue. Some Dutch people always consider that the rules on the protection of privacy 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 Member States have a role to play. Privacy issues or questions are best managed by our national authorities, in our own language.

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

IDEA: "Fix stricter criteria for programmers and companies by banning dangerous programming languages."

"Provide free European antivirus software to create a European firewall."

"When I cross the border into Germany, all of a sudden I don't have a network on my mobile phone anymore. But it shouldn't happen anymore, should it?"

With our iPhones, we can track all our movements. We also have our share of responsibility.

"It is not practical to have to fill out a different type of privacy form in each country."

IDEA: "A European cyberpolice should be established. This is clearly something for the EU."

Participants in the online dialogue: "Quality internet access everywhere is also in our own interest"

During one of the thematic online dialogues, an interesting debate was born on the role of the EU in the virtual world. All the Member States agreed that it was 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 that was primarily the responsibility of individual Member States. Another participant stressed that a stable and high-quality internet abroad was also an asset for the Netherlands: "We are making billions from trade with other EU countries. It is therefore in our interest that these countries work 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 regularly hear about it in the news. 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, it makes sense for European countries to cooperate. In this context, they are considering the development of rules, but also the definition of sanctions. "If Russian cyberpirates try to break into our country, the EU must take strong measures to prevent them."

Education, culture, youth and sport

EU countries are directly responsible for education, culture, youth and sport. The EU can and will support them in this regard, for example by promoting quality education, multilingualism, the protection of cultural heritage and support to the cultural and sports sectors. What is the Netherlands' view on this?

Recommendations - Our vision of education, culture, youth and sport

45% of the Dutch believe that education is an important topic and that the EU must intervene in this area. For youth, culture and sport, the figure is 39%, 23% and 19% respectively.

1. Encouraging Students to Study Abroad Smartly

Many Dutch people believe that studying abroad has a positive impact on young people. This contributes to personal development. In addition, studying abroad can help Europeans to better understand each other. It can also contribute to better integration. Many Dutch people therefore find it positive that there is an Erasmus programme that encourages study abroad. But we also believe that the EU should continue to look critically at this issue. In practice, for example, it seems that international students stay mostly among themselves and do not always learn much about the country where they are located. The EU must also prevent countries with a lower level of knowledge from "emptying out" because all talent goes to study abroad.

"Also develop exchange programmes at the level of secondary vocational education."

2. Leaving matters such as culture and sport to Member States as a matter of priority

58% of the Dutch believe that the EU should better protect cultural heritage in Europe. We think, for example, of the 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 core mission of the EU. Europe must necessarily set priorities and significant financial resources are needed for other issues. Sometimes we can make a financial contribution, but sometimes we can also work together in other ways, for example by exchanging knowledge and ideas.

"The protection of culture is the responsibility of the countries themselves. But if the global heritage is neglected, then I think the EU must step in."

3. Ensuring that Europeans get to know and respect each other better

Dutch people like it when other Europeans speak good English. It simplifies things when we're abroad. As well as when, for example, we want to communicate with migrant workers in the Netherlands. At the same time, many Dutch people feel it is 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's culture, education or sport, every person needs to feel free and be able to be themselves. Differences can sometimes cause tensions, but they also make the European continent rich. Many Dutch therefore believe 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 it."

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

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 each year a capital (or country) 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 to be able to

be gathered under the banner of a single culture.

"Instead of highlighting negative things, it is better to try to promote sport."

"I am integrated here, I pay taxes, but I am and I remain Latin American. I love my language, 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 of the University of Leiden: "Language is important, but it must remain a free choice"

At the University of Leiden, history students talked to each other. They believe that it is important for l'esgens to speak several languages. Proficiency in several languages is, in their view, great for personal development and good for trade and political relations within the EU. However, they believe that languages should be offered at school and not made compulsory. Similarly, they 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: "Ensuring fair employment opportunities for all young people" 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 opportunities. They indicated that young migrants, in particular, face difficulties in finding a traineeship or job. "Sometimes they don't even dare to go to the GP because they fear they will have 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 pay more attention and the EU can encourage them to do so."

Description of the methodology used in the survey

The Vision of Europe quest consists of various forms of linked 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 related forms of dialogue are in line with the applicable guidelines for national citizens' panels in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Conception of related forms of dialogue The following forms of dialogue are used:

4. Panel survey

Survey of a representative sample of the Dutch population.

5. Thematic in-depth online dialogues

Dialogues organised each time with a group of Dutch people with the aim of deepening the conclusions of the first interim report "Our Vision for Europe" (8 October 2021) giving a first overview of the results and complementary questions.

6. Dialogues with specific groups

Meetings with Dutch people who are not used to participating in (online) surveys and panels.

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 questionnaire of the panel survey could also be completed by all Dutch people, including those residing abroad. This questionnaire was available from 1 September 2021 to 14 November 2021. In addition, during the same period, every Dutch person was able to participate in the action "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper to the future), an online tool with 20 affirmations.

1. Panel survey

The Dutch Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe" started on 1 September with a survey of a number of citizens. In this description of the methodology used in the survey, we briefly explain the design and implementation of this panel survey.

Objective and target population

The "Vision of Europe" campaign began with an online questionnaire on how Dutch people see the future of Europe. This questionnaire was submitted to a representative panel and is also open to all Dutch citizens (including those residing abroad). In outre, each person was able to participate in the action "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper  towards the future), an online tool presenting 20 affirmations. The results of the panel survey fed into several thematic dialogues organised as a follow-up to the Vision of Europe citizens' dialogue process.

The target population of the panel survey includes all Dutch people aged 18 or over 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 panel survey population.

Field work

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 "average Dutch". These participants signed up for 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 in a stratified manner (ensuring an equal distribution of subgroups) until the necessary 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 therefore ensured in advance that the sample was well distributed over a certain number of characteristics. The Netherlands is a relatively small country, but opinions may differ by region. The positioning in relation to the themes and the importance given to them can be (in part) determined by the region in which one lives. For example, people in rural areas may understand a topic such as security differently from those in urban areas. Research carried out by the Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office also shows that people with a higher level of education are more often supporters of the EU than people with a lower level of education and that young people are more often in favour of the EU than older people (source: Wat willen Nederlanders van de Europese Unie?, Dutch Office of Social and Cultural Planning, The Hague, 2019).

For this reason, we have distributed the following three characteristics proportionally in order to guarantee the representativeness of the sample: (1) residence through COROP regions, (2) age and (3) educational level. The distribution of the sample was also presented according to the following general characteristics: gender, origin, main occupation, political orientation.

COROP regions were developed on the basis of the nodal principle (a "heart" with an area of attraction or a regional function), based on the flows of people who commute. Some breaches of the nodal principle have been conceded so that the regions follow provincial boundaries. After the reorganisation of the municipalities beyond the COROP limits, the distribution was adjusted (source: Dutch National Statistical Office). Within COROP regions, we have ensured a good distribution between age groups, with the following breakdown: 18-34 years, 35-54 years, 55-75 years and over 75 years.

Finally, we have ensured a representative distribution of educational levels. In the sample, the replacement 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 year of upper general secondary education/pre-university education, secondary vocational education level 1	32,1 %
Intermediate: upper secondary 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 panel survey. The target of 3,600 fully completed questionnaires is therefore met.

Responses by COROP Regions and Age	18 to 34 years	35 to 54 years	55 to 75 years	over 75 years of age
North of Drenthe	11	14	17	5
South-East of Drenthe	10	12	14	4
South-West of Drenthe	7	10	11	3
Flevoland	29	33	28	6
Northern Friesland	20	22	25	8
South-East Friesland	12	13	14	3
South-West Friesland	8	11	11	4
Achterhoek	22	27	34	11
Arnhem/Nijmegen	52	53	55	15
Veluwe	44	48	51	17
South West 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

North Limburg	17	20	23	7
South Limburg	38	40	52	17
North Brabant Centre	34	35	35	11

Responses by COROP Regions and Age	18 to 34 years	35 to 54 years	55 to 75 years	over 75 years of age
Northeast North Brabant	41	43	51	14
Western North Brabant	40	47	49	15
South-East of North Brabant	55	56	58	18
Haarlem agglomeration	13	18	18	7
Alkmaar and surroundings	14	19	19	6
Greater Amsterdam	116	104	88	23
The Gooi and Vechtstreek	13	21	19	7
IJmond	12	14	15	4
North Holland Point	22	27	30	9
Zaan Region	11	13	12	3
North Overijssel	25	28	25	8
Twente	41	44	46	14
South-West 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 bulb region	30	31	31	10
Category: Agglomerations of The Hague	63	70	57	18
Delft and Westland	19	15	15	4
Grand Rijnmond	103	107	99	31

East of South Holland	22	24	25	8
South-East of South Holland	24	26	26	9

Responses by level of education

Low	1382	34 %
Intermediate	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 entire population with a confidence level of 95% 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 significance level. It is common to rely on a significance level of 5%. This is referred to as 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 identical in 95% of cases.

Accuracy (expressed as the 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 study and the results that would be obtained from the whole population? A margin of error of 1.53% means that the actual value within the total population may be 1.53% maximum higher or lower than the sample value. For example, if a survey of a sample of individuals indicates that 50% of respondents consider a particular theme to be important, the actual percentage is 1.53% higher or lower than the 50% percentage, i.e. between 48.47 and 51.53%. A margin of error of up to 5% is common and generally accepted in quantitative (statistical) studies.

In addition to reliability, the representativeness of the sample is important. Since the invitations to participate were sent out in batches and stratified form, the results are representative for the characteristics of the COROP region and the age groups by COROP region. The responses are also representative in terms of educational attainment in relation to the highest level of education attained nationally.

Other general characteristics

A number of additional contextual questions were asked of panel participants. These include gender, positioning towards the EU, origin, main occupation and the political party for which the person would vote in the event of an election.

49% of respondents are male, 50% are female and 1% prefer not to answer this question.

51% of respondents think it is a good thing that the Netherlands is 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 report that both parents were born in the Netherlands. 5% were born to two parents who were themselves born abroad.

Current political orientation of respondents

Party %

VVD (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy)	14 %
PVV (Freedom Party)	13 %
SP (Socialist Party)	8 %
D66 (Democrats 66)	6 %
CDA (Christian Democratic Appeal)	6 %
PvdA (Labour Party)	6 %
Partij voor de Dieren (Party for Animals)	4 %
GroenLinks (Green Left)	4 %
ChristenUnie (Christian Union)	3 %
JA21	3 %
BoerBurgerBeweging (farmer-citizen movement)	2 %
Forum voor Democratie (Forum for Democracy)	2 %
SGP (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 your current main occupation?

Occupation	%
Pupil/student	6 %
Part-time employee	16 %
Full-time employee	31 %
Independent contractor	3 %
Homemaker	5 %
Jobseeker	2 %
Volunteer	2 %
Incapacitated 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 organization at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The questionnaire has 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 topics 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 development of the questionnaire, great attention was paid to the quality, reliability and validity of the questions. Therefore, a neutral and non-directive formulation of questions, affirmations and answer options was sought, and it was verified that the questions were formulated in understandable language (level B1).

The questionnaire was subjected to quality testing through face-to-face interviews with participants belonging to the target group. This allowed us to study how the questions are understood by different types of respondents. If a question seemed to represent a cognitive load too large (too complex), it was adapted.

Analytical methods

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

Bivariate analyses examine the relationship between two variables, i.e. the relationship between the import of the different themes and the question of whether the EU should intervene in this area and the general age characteristic. An examination was carried out to determine whether different age groups attach different importance to a topic and whether opinions diverge as to the extent to which these are topics in which the EU needs to intervene.

Publication of information and completeness

This report includes a (visual) representation of the results of all questions asked of survey panel respondents. For some questions, the respondent was given the opportunity to provide "open" (i.e. non-predetermined) answers. Open responses were then categorized and included in the publication. The ideas shared by the respondents in the free comments are used to feed into the various thematic dialogues organised in the follow-up to the Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe".

2. Thematic in-depth online dialogues

The themes at the heart of the conference on the future of Europe were deepened in 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 make suggestions and ideas on these topics, as well as to raise issues that are not part of the conference but are nonetheless important to them.

The thematic dialogues took place on 12-14 October and 9-11 November. Four thematic online dialogues were organised in October on "Economy" and "Democracy". Four online thematic dialogues were organised in November on "Climate" and "EU in the World". In all, 29 people participated in each discussion session (231 in total). The participants were recruited from among the panel members (see point 1) and via social media.

3. Dialogues with specific groups

One knows from some groups of Dutch people that they are less accustomed to participating in surveys and (online) panels. 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 have also organised a number of on-the-spot dialogues for the Vision of Europe survey. The opinions and ideas 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 are much less involved in surveys and discussions on their own. As this represents an important group (14% of the Dutch¹), they have been selected to participate in the Vision of Europe dialogue. The same reasoning was followed with regard to the **low-educated**. It is also a large group (2.5 million Dutch²), which partly overlaps with the group of migrants (39%). Finally, a dialogue was held with a group of people who are not often found in surveys and discussions, **who are critical of Europe, but for whom it plays an important professional role**. Entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector were selected.

The above-mentioned groups have been approached through organizations of which they are members, such as migrant organizations, advocacy associations and professional organizations. Since we limited the number of dialogues to eight, we could not 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 mobilize their base, as well as practical issues such as availability based on 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 heard, five physical discussion meetings were organised specifically for young people. A planned sixth 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, Secondary Education, Helmond

Coalitie-Y, Youth Platform of the Economic and Social Council

Graafschap College, Vocational Secondary Education, Doetinchem

CSG Jan Arentsz, secondary education focusing on technological subjects, Alkmaar

A total of 95 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 from all over the Netherlands interact on issues that concern them. In the Socratic maintenance method, the moderator takes into account the following principles:

- Let the other tell his story
- Do not respond immediately with another story
- Treat yourself with respect
- Talking from your 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 analyze them
- Give moments of silence if people need to think for a moment

During the dialogues, the following rhythm is used: divergence – convergence – divergence. The principle is that you must first diverge (express individual feelings and opinions directly), before you can converge (talk about possible leads) and then finally diverge again (for example, collect individual recommendations). Experience and theory show that this rhythm guarantees 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 panelsurveyquestionnaire was also open to all Dutch people, including those living abroad. This questionnaire was accessible from 1 September 2021 to 14 November 2021. In addition, during the same period, every Dutch person was able to participate in the action "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper to the future), an online tool with 20 affirmations.

Responses and Use

A total of 1,967 participants completed the questionnaire and 6,968 completed the screenscan tool. Both the questionnaire and the screenscan tool were open to everyone: there were no suitable conditions or selection criteria for participation. In the questionnaire, it was possible to pass questions (there were no mandatory questions) in order to maximize the response rate. Participants chose "I prefer not to answer" much more often than in the representative panel survey.

The general characteristics of the participants in the open questionnaire and the screen-scanning tool differ in most respects from those of the participants in the representative panel. Unlike the panel survey, the results of the open questionnaire and the screen scanning tool are not representative. The results of the online open survey were used to complete the panel survey. They give an overview of the feelings and ideas circulating in the Netherlands. Suggestions for improvement mentioned in the input fields were used in the "Discussions and Ideas Online and On-Site" section. The screenscan tool was used to better understand certain feelings circulating in the Netherlands. These results were taken into account in the development of the recommendations. Due to the requirement of representativeness, the results of the online survey have been taken into account to a limited extent in this report.

This report is published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. www.kijkopeuropa.nl



Rijksoverheid



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
-

- 14 January 2022
-

• This document is a translation of the report "Onze 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 a nutshell

Through the Citizens' Dialogue on "Vision of Europe", we 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 a total of nine themes).

Climate change and environment

- 1. Choosing a clear direction for the European approach to climate change**
- 2. Ensure that countries and businesses work more closely together to find targeted solutions**
- 3. Creating a CO2 system that is fair and workable in practice**
- 4. Communicate more clearly and positively 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 fingers at 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. In general, the Dutch believe that the EU should communicate more effectively and positively on climate.

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 knowledge and experience to help 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, clear criteria must be agreed within the EU, taking into account both the Member States and the people 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. First and foremost, countries must look to themselves to improve their health systems and make them 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 stay 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 should remain primarily at the national level.

The role of the EU in the world

1. Leveraging the EU's strength on key international issues mainly
2. Within and outside Europe, choose cooperation over struggle
3. Offer, in a thoughtful way, assistance in case of conflict

The Dutch believe that European cooperation should focus mainly on major common interests. The EU's cooperation with third countries must also be seen in this light. In addition to climate change and the coronavirus pandemic, this includes, 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. With regard to the approach to conflicts as well, it is always preferable to resolve them without resorting to violence.

Introduction

The Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe", which took place from 1 September to mid-November, allowed all the Dutch to share 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 resulted, as well as the ideas and views that have been expressed. In this report, we cover the last four themes (out of a total of nine). The first five themes have already been addressed in the report that was published on 3 December 2021.

On "Vision of Europe"

The European Union wants its citizens to tell it what they think about Europe. This 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 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 representative panel survey. In order to deepen the initial results of the panel survey and make concrete recommendations, we organised online thematic dialogues. Anyone who wanted to participate could do so. We also travelled the country for discussions with young people and other (difficult to reach) groups.

From schoolchildren, secondary vocational students and students to the Minister, farmers and migrants

In October and November, a total of eight thematic online dialogues took place, with 30 participants per meeting. We also organised an online thematic dialogue and seven on-site thematic dialogues with different groups of Dutch citizens. We had a dialogue with the Turkish Community in Schiedam and were invited by the volunteers of the Piëzo Foundation in Zoetermeer. On this last occasion, Foreign Minister Ben Knapen was also present at the end of the dialogue. The Minister had a debate with the participants on 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 in a secondary school in Helmond, in a vocational secondary school in Doetinchem and at the University of Leiden.

"This is about 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 send 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.

Because there are differences of opinion between European countries and citizens, of course we do not always agree with each other in the Netherlands either. These differences of opinion are very valuable: they are an important feature of a democracy. The recommendations are drawn from the ideas and opinions most frequently expressed by participants in the Vision of Europe survey. We also describe concerns, ideas and feelings that may be less prevalent, but 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 held with Dutch citizens. In October, we published an interim report providing an initial overview of the findings and additional questions based on the panel survey. At the beginning of December, a new report was published containing 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

No Stronger Economy, Social Justice and Employment European Democracy

Digital transformation

Education, culture, youth and sport

Current contribution - 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 framework of the Conference. For example, there are also European Citizens' Panels, and all EU citizens (thus also Dutch citizens) can access a European digital platform.

"I hope that EU leaders will take my views into account. And that will help them make the right choices."

Participant in the thematic dialogue

The conference will end in spring 2022. The Netherlands will then draft a final report on the Citizens' Dialogue: a compilation of this and the previous report, including recommendations on all nine themes. At the end of the Conference, recommendations will be made to the Presidency of the Conference: the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the European Commission. They pledged to explore ways to implement the recommendations. For the Dutch government, the results are also a valuable contribution to Dutch European policy-making.

In summary, the process until spring 2022 will be organised as follows:

Timeline

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											
		Interim results (interim report)		Interim report on "Economy" and "Democracy"	Interim report on "Climate" and "EU in the world"		Final report "Our vision for Europe"					
		↓				↓		↓	↓	↓		
		Conference meeting				Conference meeting		Conference meeting	(possibly) conference meeting	Closing event of the conference	→	Recommendations for Presidents • European Parliament • European Commission • Council of Ministers
						Λ		Λ		Λ		
				More opinions and ideas on the future of Europe:								
Citizens' dialogues					European Citizens' Panels			European Digital Platform (also for Dutch citizens)				

Explanations for ease of reading

In this report, we have examined four themes. For each theme, we have listed successively:

recommendations based on all strands of the citizens' dialogue;

online and on-site discussions and ideas: an overview of the opinions, ideas and views exchanged (online and with physical presence) during the thematic dialogues.

A description of the methodology used in the survey is provided at the end of this report.

Climate change and environment

Recommendations - Our vision of 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 New Zealanders believe that the EU must play a leading role in the fight against climate change. Climate change is a problem and no country can solve it on its own. Even if the Netherlands is not all of the same opinion on climate change, we believe that the EU must have a clearer vision of the future anyway. Despite the Green Deal, we are currently seeing that Member States are often not aligned. While countries must be able to continue to make their own choices, they must cooperate to achieve the same goals. We also believe that, as citizens, we also have our own share of responsibility, for example in adapting our consumption habits.

"The Netherlands wants to move away from natural gas, while in Germany the use of natural gas is specifically encouraged. Sometimes you don't understand it anymore."

2. Ensure that countries and businesses work more closely together to find targeted solutions

When it comes to climate change and the environment, the Dutch find that countries often point fingers. The focus is often on differences, for example between poor and rich countries within the EU. Or between highly industrialized or weakly industrialized countries. We would prefer to try to reach agreements. Similar companies in different countries could, for example, exchange knowledge and think together about solutions. If done in this way, poorer countries could be more involved in the approach to climate change. They could participate in the reflection and could also benefit from common solutions.

"The next step in climate change must not be a race, but cooperation."

3. Creating a CO2 system that is fair and workable in practice

The EU's approach to climate change pays a lot of attention to reducing CO2 emissions. The Dutch believe that there is a need for a better system to this effect, which would allow both producers and consumers to be taxed fairly. The Dutch are divided on 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 it becoming too complex, because the system must be understandable for everyone.

"Industrialised countries export a lot. Do they have to bear the CO2 tax alone? In my opinion, the consumer should also pay."

4. Communicating more clearly and positively about the climate approach The Netherlands hear a lot about climate change and read a lot about it. Nevertheless, it remains an abstract and complex subject for many people. It is often seen 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 set out 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, help support sustainability.

"Sustainability is still too often seen as a cost. It should be seen as an opportunity and not a threat."

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

"We should not consider CO2 emissions as a right, but as an awkward corollary."

"I feel that in Europe we spend more time talking about climate change than we do taking real action to address it."

"Stricter climate rules could ultimately also be beneficial for us. As a continent engaged in trade, we must try to see opportunities."

"We cannot wait for other continents. We don't have time to wait."

IDEA: *"Rewarding 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: "Long-distance travel 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, believing that more expensive tickets would encourage people to look for cheaper alternatives. In addition, it was pointed out that the EU should then make sure to offer more environmentally friendly options, for example better rail connections. Other participants indicated that they were not in favour of higher airfare prices. "Wealthy people are the ones who travel the most today and they will be able to pay for it easily," said one participant. "High prices will not prevent them from travelling. While distant 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 in particular on the theme of climate change and the environment.

What was likely to be improved, according to the participants, was the application of EU legislation and regulations by the 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 concept is interpreted quite differently than in the Netherlands." Most of those present agreed that Europe must play a leading role in the fight against climate change. And we must not be content with speeches, we must achieve results. Especially through the exchange of knowledge, say farmers. "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)

The borders between EU Member States are open. Cooperation is therefore being pursued within the EU for, for example, the management of external borders and the fight against migrant smuggling. A fair distribution of refugees between the different EU Member States is also under discussion. What is the view of the Netherlands on this issue?

Recommendations - Our vision of 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. Avoiding too little nuance in the debates on the refugee issue

70% of Dutch people believe that Europe's external borders need to be better protected. Of these, 72% also believe that this means sending more refugees back to unsafe countries. The Dutch believe that more attention should be paid to the reasons that lead people to flee an insecure country. These reasons are sometimes linked to climate change, sometimes to wars. These contexts are often mentioned only to a limited extent in discussions on the refugee issue. The added value that these refugees bring to a country is also rarely discussed. Finally, we believe that the EU needs to make a clearer distinction between people coming from insecure regions who come to the borders and economic refugees. In summary, we find that debates on migration and refugees generally lack context and nuance. European politicians could remedy this situation by setting an example.

"We must continue to see refugees first and foremost as our fellow human beings. For almost no one will abandon a person in distress."

2. Defining what a fair and practical distribution of refugees is

A European immigration service should ensure that refugees are distributed equitably among EU Member States. The Dutch also believe 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 citizens, but other factors are also important for both refugees and the people concerned. In the Netherlands, we are facing 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 ensure not only transparency, but also less contestation, which is ultimately in everyone's interest.

"Refugees must also be able to express their talents in a country of destination."

3. Leveraging knowledge and experience to help refugee regions of origin

67% of Dutch people believe that the EU needs to do more to help insecure regions to stem refugee flows. We realize that refugees do not leave their country by 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 through financial support, but also through knowledge. In the Netherlands, for example, we have strong agricultural skills. Thanks to modern agricultural techniques, we can help other countries better cope with droughts and salinization. And people who have found refuge in Europe can take training in a European country and then help their country of origin themselves.

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

"The EU needs to put in place faster asylum procedures. This will give more space to the people who really need it.

"I know many young people around me who want to buy a house, but find nothing affordable, while refugees are offered housing. I find this difficult to accept.

"Climate change will continue to cause displacement anyway. We can't stop these flows, but we can probably regulate them better.

"I live in Betuwe. During the season of pears and apples, we simply need a lot of migrant workers.

"Unsafe regions are not unsafe for nothing, public authorities are often unreliable. How can we know where our help and money are going?

IDEA: *"Also consider local strategies, such as citizen participation in the local reception of refugees and funding for local integration initiatives."*

IDEA: *"To set up mini-houses in the 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 have themselves been refugees: *"In Europe, people often stay away from each other."*

Taal Doet Meer ("Language Makes Things Easier") is a voluntary organization 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 arrived in the Netherlands as refugees themselves, including one from Syria. "After seven years, I still don't feel Dutch. I also did not find a job, even though I obtained 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 think we have to talk to each other and we can learn from each other.

Youth from the National Youth Council: *"People should only be allowed in if they can be taken care of."*

In Utrecht, members of various working groups of the National Youth Council (CNJ) held a debate. Participants (aged 16-23) felt that the distribution of refugees in Europe should take into account several aspects, such as the number of inhabitants, the size of the country, prosperity and the number of centres for asylum seekers. "Refugees should only be allowed into the country if they can then be dealt with properly," one said.

Young people also believe that there must be consequences when countries fail to meet their refugee commitments. They must, for example, be fined. "And refugees must also have their own say as to where they are going to go," someone said. For example, if they already have family somewhere, we can't send them elsewhere.

Health

(Health care)

Although healthcare is primarily the responsibility of individual countries, it can be supported and strengthened by European 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 view of the Netherlands on this issue?

Recommendations - Our vision of health care

64% of the Dutch believe that healthcare is an important topic and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Have better control over the management of a pandemic

83% of the Dutch believe that EU countries need to work together more 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 in the EU are sometimes confused. It's not good for the rules. We believe that the rules aimed at combating the spread of a virus in Europe must be better coordinated, without necessarily being the same everywhere. There must be room for local choices. Not only because contamination figures may differ, but also because there are many crops in Europe. Some measures work better in some countries than others.

"I live in the Netherlands, on the border with Germany. The different measures taken 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 Dutch people believe that the EU must ensure that we have less need of third countries for the development, production and delivery of medicines. But if it means waiting longer to get drugs, opinions are divided. The Dutch believe that the production and distribution of medicines is thus a complex issue. On the one hand, healthcare costs are rising sharply in the Netherlands, so we consider it important to keep them as low as possible. On the other hand, we want to be able to have confidence in medicines, 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 should be accessible to everyone, including in poorer countries.

"Health care costs are already currently unaffordable. We must therefore also try to buy the new medicines at the lowest possible price."

3. Countries must make every effort themselves to improve their health systems and make them more equitable

The Dutch care a lot about healthcare, and this care goes beyond the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are aware, for example, of structural capacity problems in hospitals. Some of the Neerlandais 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 believe it is important for European countries to be able to learn from each other in order to improve health care.

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

"When it comes to the availability of medicines in Europe, we could also be a little more cost-efficient. We're throwing too many today."

"It is very good that Germany has welcomed patients from the Netherlands with COVID-19. I would like to see more solidarity of this kind in Europe."

"Wherever you live in the EU and whether you are rich or poor, everyone has the right to quality care."

"When buying medicines, not only costs but also ethics must be taken into account. This means, for example, that child labour should not be used."

IDEA: *"Improve the health of Europeans by ensuring that they are under less stress. Reduce, for example, the length of the working week."*

IDEA: *"Enabling young people to make healthier choices through serious augmented reality games."*

Residents of Utrecht of Moroccan origin: "Health can come at a price."

The "Marokkaans Dialoog Overvecht" (MDO) Foundation (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 combats inequalities. The participants in the "Vision of Europe" thematic dialogue consider that European cooperation is very useful. However, a number of them 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. According to the participants, the result of the numerous consultations within Europe was that the Netherlands started 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 may well cost a little more.

Dare students of Helmond: "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 European management of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some believe that the EU Member States should have defined the vaccination programme together. Most participants felt that the countries themselves had a better idea of what was needed and what worked. They are therefore better off, in their opinion, deciding what is appropriate 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 several countries have their own approach, they can observe what others are doing and learn from each other."

The role of the EU in the world

The world is facing 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 clear on the world stage in this regard, alongside, for example, the US and China. What is the view of the Netherlands on this issue?

Recommendations - Our vision of the EU's role in the world

56% of the Dutch believe that the role of the EU in the world is an important topic and that the EU must intervene in this area.

1. Leveraging the EU's power mainly in the context of major international themes

The fact that its creation has contributed to Europeans living in peace for more than 75 years is seen by many Dutch as the EU's main added value. The Dutch also believe that the EU's power lies in the joint management of major international challenges. In this regard, 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 on its own. That said, the Dutch want the Netherlands to be able to continue to make its own choices, based on its own culture and interests. Cooperation in Europe must therefore also ensure, above all, effectiveness and power to act.

"It is easier to conclude cooperation agreements within the framework of the EU than as a single country."

2. Within and outside Europe, choose cooperation over struggle

66% of Dutch people believe that the EU should form a stronger bloc compared to other international blocs. We are facing a weakening of the balance in the world. Countries like China and Russia are constantly expanding their power in different areas. We are very concerned about that. The EU therefore needs to pay more attention, for example, to international security and the protection of the European economy from unfair trading practices. In this regard, we consider it important that Member States coordinate better and faster. This will allow us to make our voices 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, to have good cooperation with third countries.

"The reduction of internal disputes and conflicts will increase the EU's prestige and influence on the world stage."

3. Offer, in a thoughtful way, assistance in case of conflict

In the context of strengthening the EU's role in the international arena, 50% of the Dutch believe that dealing with conflicts around the world is an important issue. The best way to react to conflicts is, in their opinion, difficult to determine. Past experience has shown that military intervention in a country is not always beneficial. It can, for example, lead to unexpectedly high costs and create additional refugees. Given this local impact, countries should decide for themselves whether to take part in a war. We are generally interested in increased cooperation between European armies: we consider it important that Europe can defend itself well. But we always prefer to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence.

"When Afghanistan was evacuated, each country acted in its own corner. We could have done better, couldn't we?"

Discussions and ideas online and on-site

"The EU must first put its own affairs in order before confronting others."

"By massively buying Chinese products as Europeans, we are supporting China itself."

"The United States continues to play a very important role in the defence of Europe."

"Being an EU member also means sitting at the negotiating table. This allows important decisions to be discussed."

"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 World Climate Conference, a human rights conference should also be held."*

IDEA: *"Making European armies more efficient, for example by making greater use of the collective purchase of equipment."*

Dutch-Moroccan women: "Promoting human rights."

"Women for Freedom"  Dutch foundation that fights against 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 organized. Participants felt that the EU is currently too dependent on Russia and China. "We see that the EU generally does not dare to propose anything, for fear of sanctions," said one of them. The production of drugs, which can often be very expensive, was cited as an example. "In case of conflict, China can turn off the tap, and we will have nothing," said one participant. The issue of human rights was also raised. "We're all acting like we think it's very important, but we're turning a blind eye to what China is doing to the Uyghurs," he said.

Students of the technasium of Alkmaar: "No common army."

During their thematic dialogue, students from the Jan Arentz technasium in Alkmaar discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a common European army. Participants indicated that they were not supporters. "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 for themselves," someone said. The possibility of a third world war has been sidelined. This possibility is not considered very great by the students, but they think that if we get there, a solution could nevertheless be found quickly. "Armies can also work well together. In my opinion, there is no need for a European army."

Methodology used in the survey

Vision de l'Europe is complemented by various forms of closely related dialogues which allow for the gathering of 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 line with the guidelines for 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. Panel survey

Online survey of a representative part of the Dutch population.

7. Thematic in-depth online dialogues

Dialogues where the results of the first interim report "Our Vision for Europe: opinions, ideas and recommendations" (8 October 2021) were discussed in depth with a group of Dutch people.

8. Dialogues with specific groups

Meetings with Dutch people who are not used to participating in surveys or (online) panels.

9. Dialogues with young people

Meetings where the European themes of most interest 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 people, including those living abroad. This questionnaire was available from 1 September 2021 to 14 November 2021. In addition, during the same period, every Dutch person was able to participate in the action "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper to the future), an online tool with 20 affirmations.

1. Panel survey

The Dutch Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe" started on 1 September with a survey of a number of citizens. In this description of the methodology used in the survey, we briefly explain the design and implementation of this panel survey.

Objective and target population

The "Vision of Europe" survey started with an online questionnaire on how Dutch people see the future of Europe. This questionnaire was submitted to a representative panel and is also open to all Dutch people (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 with 20 affirmations. The results of the panel survey fed into several thematic dialogues organised as a follow-up to the Vision of Europe citizens' dialogue process.

The target population of the panel survey includes all Dutch people aged 18 or over 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 panel survey population.

Field work

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 "average Dutch". These participants signed up for 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 in a stratified manner (ensuring an equal distribution of subgroups) until the necessary 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 therefore ensured in advance that the sample was well distributed over a certain number of characteristics. The Netherlands is a relatively small country, but opinions may differ by region. The positioning in relation to the themes and the importance given to them can be (in part) determined by the region in which one lives. For example, people in rural areas may understand a topic such as security differently from those in urban areas. Research carried out by the Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office also shows that people with a higher level of education are more often supporters of the EU than people with a lower level of education and that young people are more often in favour of the EU than older people (source: *Wat willen Nederlanders van de Europese Unie?*, Dutch Office for Social and Cultural Planning, The Hague, 2019).

For this reason, we have distributed the following three characteristics proportionally in order to guarantee the representativeness of the sample: (1) residence through COROP regions, (2) age and (3) educational level. The distribution of the sample was also presented according to the following general characteristics: gender, origin, main occupation, political orientation.

COROP regions were developed on the basis of the nodal principle (a "heart" with an area of attraction or a regional function), based on the flows of people who commute. Some breaches of the nodal principle have been conceded so that the regions follow provincial boundaries. After the reorganisation of the municipalities beyond the COROP limits, the distribution was adjusted (source: Dutch National Statistical Office). Within COROP regions, we have ensured a good distribution between age groups, with the following breakdown: 18-34 years, 35-54 years, 55-75 years and over 75 years.

Finally, we have 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 year of upper general secondary education/pre-university education, secondary vocational education level 1	32,1 %
Intermediate: upper secondary 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 panel survey. The target of 3,600 fully completed questionnaires is therefore met.

Responses by COROP Regions and Age	18 to 34 years	35 to 54 years	55 to 75 years	over 75 years of age
North of Drenthe	11	14	17	5
South-East of Drenthe	10	12	14	4
South-West of Drenthe	7	10	11	3
Flevoland	29	33	28	6
Northern Friesland	20	22	25	8
South-East Friesland	12	13	14	3
South-West Friesland	8	11	11	4
Achterhoek	22	27	34	11
Arnhem/Nijmegen	52	53	55	15
Veluwe	44	48	51	17
South West 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
North Limburg	17	20	23	7
South Limburg	38	40	52	17
North Brabant Centre	34	35	35	11
Northeast North Brabant	41	43	51	14
Western North Brabant	40	47	49	15
South-East of North Brabant	55	56	58	18
Haarlem agglomeration	13	18	18	7
Alkmaar and surroundings	14	19	19	6
Greater Amsterdam	116	104	88	23
The Gooi and Vechtstreek	13	21	19	7
IJmond	12	14	15	4
North Holland Point	22	27	30	9
Zaan Region	11	13	12	3
North Overijssel	25	28	25	8
Twente	41	44	46	14
South-West 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 bulb region	30	31	31	10
Category: Agglomerations of The Hague	63	70	57	18
Delft and Westland	19	15	15	4
Grand Rijnmond	103	107	99	31

East of South Holland	22	24	25	8
South-East of South Holland	24	26	26	9

Responses by level of education

Low	1382	34 %
Intermediate	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 entire population with a confidence level of 95% 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 significance level. It is common to rely on a significance level of 5%. This is referred to as 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 identical in 95% of cases.

Accuracy (expressed as the 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 whole population? A margin of error of 1.53% means that the actual value within the total population may be 1.53% maximum higher or lower than the sample value. For example, if a survey of a sample of individuals indicates that 50% of respondents consider a particular theme to be important, the actual percentage is 1.53% higher or lower than the 50% percentage, i.e. between 48.47 and 51.53%. A margin of error of up to 5% is common and generally accepted in quantitative (statistical) studies.

In addition to reliability, the representativeness of the sample is important. As the invitations to participate were sent in batches and stratified form, the results are representative with respect to the characteristics of the COROP region and age groups by COROP region. The responses are also representative from the point of view of educational attainment in relation to the highest level of education attained at the national level.

Other general characteristics

A number of additional contextual questions were asked of panel participants. These include gender, positioning towards the EU, origin, main occupation and the political party for which the person would vote in the event of an election.

49% of respondents are male, 50% are female and 1% prefer not to answer this question.

51% of respondents think it is a good thing that the Netherlands is 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 report that both parents were born in the

Netherlands. 5% were born to two parents who were themselves born abroad.

Current political orientation of respondents

Party	%
VVD (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy)	14 %
PVV (Freedom Party)	13 %
SP (Socialist Party)	8 %
D66 (Democrats 66)	6 %
CDA (Christian Democratic Appeal)	6 %
PvdA (Labour Party)	6 %
Partij voor de Dieren (Party for Animals)	4 %
GroenLinks (Green Left)	4 %
ChristenUnie (Christian Union)	3 %
JA21	3 %
BoerBurgerBeweging (farmer-citizen movement)	2 %
Forum voor Democratie (Forum for Democracy)	2 %
SGP (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 your current main occupation?

Occupation	%
Pupil/student	6 %
Part-time employee	16 %
Full-time employee	31 %
Independent contractor	3 %
Homemaker	5 %
Jobseeker	2 %
Volunteer	2 %
Incapacitated 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 has 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 topics 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 development of the questionnaire, great attention was paid to the quality, reliability and validity of the questions. Therefore, a neutral and non-directive formulation of questions, affirmations and answer options was sought, and it was verified that the questions were formulated in understandable language (level B1).

The questionnaire was subjected to quality testing through face-to-face interviews with participants belonging to the target group. This allowed us to study how the questions are understood by different types of respondents. If a question seemed to represent a cognitive load too large (too complex), it was adapted.

Analytical methods

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

Bivariate analyses examine the relationship between two variables, i.e. the relationship between the importance of the different themes and the question of whether the EU should intervene in this area and the general age characteristic. An examination was carried out to determine whether different age groups attach different importance to a topic and whether opinions diverge as to the extent to which these are topics in which the EU needs to intervene.

Publication of information and completeness

This report incorporates the results of all the questions asked of the respondents to the panel of inquiry. For some questions, the respondent was given the opportunity to provide "open-ended" (i.e. non-predetermined) answers. Open responses were then categorized and included in the publication. The ideas shared by the respondents in the free comments are used to feed into the various thematic dialogues organised in the follow-up to the Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe".

2. Thematic in-depth online dialogues

The themes at the heart of the conference on the future of Europe were deepened in 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 make suggestions and ideas on these topics, as well as to raise issues that are not part of the conference but are nonetheless important to them.

The thematic dialogues took place on 12-14 October and 9-11 November. Four thematic online dialogues were organised in October on "Economy" and "Democracy".

Four thematic online dialogues were organised in November on "Climate" and "EU in the World". On average, 29 people participated in each discussion session (231 in total). The participants were recruited from among the panel members (see point 1) and via social media.

3. Dialogues with specific groups

One knows from some groups of Dutch people that they are less accustomed to participating in surveys and (online) panels. 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 have also organised a number of on-the-spot dialogues for the Vision of Europe survey. The opinions and ideas 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 are much less involved in surveys and discussions. As this represents a large group (14% of the Neerlandais¹), they have been selected to participate in the Vision of Europe dialogue. The same reasoning was followed with regard to the **low-educated**. It is also a large group (2.5 million Dutch lions²), which partly overlaps with the group of migrants (39%). Finally, a dialogue was held with a group of people who are not often found in surveys and discussions, **who are critical of Europe, but for whom it plays an important professional role**. Entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector were selected.

The above-mentioned groups have been approached through organizations of which they are members, such as migrant organizations, advocacy associations and professional organizations. Since we limited the number of dialogues to eight, we could not 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 mobilize their base, as well as practical issues such as availability based on 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 encourage their participation in the Citizens' Dialogue "Vision of Europe" and to make the opinions and ideas of this group 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, Secondary Education, Helmond
- Coalitie-Y, Youth Platform of the Economic and Social Council
- Graafschap College, Vocational Secondary Education, Doetinchem
- CSG Jan Arentsz, secondary education focusing on technological subjects, Alkmaar
- National Youth Council (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 from all over the Netherlands interact on issues that concern them. In the Socratic maintenance method, the moderator takes into account the following principles:

- Let the other tell his story
- Do not respond immediately with another story
- Treat yourself with respect
- Talking from your 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 analyze them
- Give moments of silence if people need to think for a moment

During the dialogues, the following rhythm is used: divergence – convergence – divergence. The principle is that you must first diverge (express individual feelings and opinions directly), before you can converge (talk about possible leads) and then finally diverge again (for example, collect individual recommendations). Experience and theory show that this rhythm guarantees an optimal flow of dialogue.

All dialogues were conducted by professional facilitators.

5. Online public survey: Questionnaire and "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper the future)

The panel survey questionnaire was also open to all Dutch people, including those living abroad. That questionnaire was available from¹ September 2021 to 14 November 2021. In addition, during the same period, every Dutch person was able to participate in the action "Swipen naar de toekomst" (Swiper to the future), an online tool with 20 affirmations.

Responses and Use

A total of 1,967 participants completed the questionnaire and 6,968 completed the screenscan tool. Both the questionnaire and the screenscan tool were open to everyone: there were no suitable conditions or selection criteria for participation. In the questionnaire, it was possible to pass questions (there were no mandatory questions) in order to maximize the response rate. Participants chose "I prefer not to answer" much more often than in the representative panel survey.

The general characteristics of the participants in the open questionnaire and the screen-scanning tool differ in most respects from those of the participants in the representative panel. Unlike the panel survey, the results of the open questionnaire and the screen scanning tool are not representative. The results of the online open survey were used to complete the panel survey. They give an overview of the feelings and ideas circulating in the Netherlands. Suggestions for improvement mentioned in the input fields were used in the "Discussions and Ideas Online and On-Site" section. The screenscan tool was used to better understand certain feelings circulating in the Netherlands. These results were taken into account in the development of the recommendations. Due to the requirement of representativeness, the results of the online survey have been taken into account to a limited extent in this report.

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III – References to the results of national events

- [Belgium](#)
- [Bulgaria](#)
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IV – Reference to the Multilingual Digital Platform report

[Multilingual Digital Platform of the Conference on the Future of Europe – February 2022 report](#)

V – Co-Chairs of the Conference on the Future of Europe and members of the Joint Secretariat

European Parliament	Council of the EU	European Commission
Co-Chairs of the Conference on the Future of Europe		
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	DOVŽAN Gašper (July-December 2021)	
	ZACARIAS Ana Paula (March-June 2021)	
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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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