

Non-paper on the Conference on the future of Europe proposed by the French Presidency of the Council

Following discussions between the Member States in the last formal and informal GACs, the Presidency proposes the following methodology. This approach is consistent with the provisions of both the Joint Declaration and the agreed Rules of Procedure, and allows the works of the Conference to come to an end by the 9th of May.

Joint Declaration

“A Conference Plenary will ensure that the recommendations from the national and European citizens’ panels, grouped by themes, are debated without a predetermined outcome and without limiting the scope to pre-defined policy areas. [...] The Executive Board will draw and publish the conclusions of the Conference Plenary.

The structures of the Conference will agree from the outset and on a consensual basis on the modalities for reporting on the outcomes of the various activities undertaken in the context of the Conference. The final outcome of the Conference will be presented in a report to the Joint Presidency. The three institutions will examine swiftly how to follow up effectively to this report, each within their own sphere of competences and in accordance with the Treaties.”

Rules of Procedure

Article 17 – Tasks and working modalities of the Conference plenary: *“The Conference Plenary shall debate and discuss the recommendations from the national and European Citizens’ Panels, and the input gathered from the Multilingual Digital Platform, grouped by themes, in full respect of the EU’s basic principles and the Conference Charter, without a predetermined outcome and without limiting the scope to pre-defined policy areas. After these recommendations have been presented by and discussed with citizens, the Plenary will on a consensual basis put forward its proposals to the Executive Board. [...]*

Consensus has to be found at least between the representatives of the European Parliament, the Council, the European Commission, as well as representatives from national Parliaments, on an equal footing. If there is a clear diverging position from representatives of citizens from national events and/or European or national citizens’ panels, this should be expressed in the report by the Executive Board.”

Article 18 – Conclusions of the plenary: *“Based on the Conference Plenary’s discussions and proposals, the Executive Board, acting on a consensual basis, shall draw-up a report, in full collaboration and in full transparency with the Conference Plenary, which will then be published on the Multilingual Digital Platform.”*

Proposed methodology

1) Citizens’ recommendations

On the basis of recommendations adopted by European and national citizens panels, and input from the Multilingual Digital Platform (based on the final report established by Kantar), the common secretariat – in an objective and neutral manner – will group recommendations in thematic clusters. For each cluster, a proposal will be drafted by the common secretariat, on the suggestion of each relevant working group’s chair and citizens’ spokesperson. These proposals will have to include two elements: 1/ an overall political objective and 2/ a set of measures to implement it. All recommendations adopted by citizens’ panels have to appear in the proposals.

Working groups will not have the possibility to add new measures in the proposals if those are not listed in recommendations adopted by the citizens' panels. Input from the Multilingual Digital Platform can complement and illustrate existing citizens' measures.

2) Plenary debate and proposals

The Plenary will debate and discuss the proposals in working groups and during plenary meetings on 25-26th of March and 8-9th of April.

Members of the Council component could especially discuss the overall feasibility and legislative implications of related measures in light of the following criteria: existing EU policies, proposals that would require new legislative proposals, and measures which would require treaty changes.

Working groups will have to incorporate in a transparent way assessments made in plenary meetings to come up with consolidated proposals before the final plenary meeting on 29-30th of April. During this last plenary meeting, consolidated proposals for each cluster will be presented before the entire plenary assembly.

In order to reach a consensus between components of the Plenary during this last meeting, all individual members of the Plenary will proceed to a vote to determine which proposals, among the list of all consolidated proposals, are considered of the highest priority. This allows the Council component not to take a stance on the substance of each individual recommendation. The Plenary will put forward to the Executive board an indicative ranking of all proposals, allowing to concretize the added value of the Plenary while keeping all initial citizens' recommendations .

3) Final report written by the Executive Board

Between the last plenary (29-30th of April) and the 9th of May, the Executive Board will determine how it wants to presents conclusions of the Conference in the final report, which will be handed over the co-presidency on the 9th of May. We propose that the final report be organised as follows: 1/ a short activity report, and 2/ a presentation of final proposals, showing all citizens' recommendations in a prioritized manner.

4) 9th of May

On the 9th of May, the three co-chairs of the Executive board will hand over the final report to the co-presidency of the Conference (President of the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council). Each institution will then have the responsibility to implement final proposals of the Conference on the future of Europe, within the frame of its competences. The co-chairs will guarantee a follow up to give the plenary feedback on the processing status of its proposals.