



European Movement International Statement on the Launch of the Conference on the Future of Europe

On the day that the Conference on the Future of Europe is launched, the European Movement International re-affirms its wish to use the Conference as an opportunity to create a genuine dialogue between citizens and institutions on the future of the EU and the big challenges of our time.

That is why the European Movement International calls for the Conference to provide for proper citizens' participation and avoid a decision-making process based on consensus, which will make it hard to reach a compromise on forward-looking solutions for a stronger and more integrated EU.

A structured involvement of civil society, Social Partners, and local and regional governments in the Conference is crucial if this is to become an exercise of inclusive and effective participation.

The Conference should not be morphed into the prequel of a "Convention", in which the representation is limited to Member State governments and European institutions. Also, the Conference should explore all options, including Treaty change proposals.

All efforts must be made to facilitate a transparent and open debate by ensuring that public opinion is informed about the Conference and of the issues discussed.

To make the Conference a success, the European Movement International proposes that:

- The Conference engages citizens in a meaningful way, by providing them with the means and opportunity to have their voice heard;
- It must ensure the genuine involvement of representative and organised civil society such as the European Movement International, Social Partners, local and regional governments, and young people, involving all as equal partners and as the constant voice and representation of citizens;

- It should aim to strengthen parliamentarianism and representative democracy at the European level;
- The Conference should aim to reinforce European democracy and pave the way for a comprehensive electoral law reform, not least by making the implementation of the “Spitzenkandidaten” process more open and not limited to the parties’ leadership, and by establishing transnational lists well on time for the European elections in 2024;
- The follow-up of the Conference must be transparently linked to the input of citizens, civil society organisations, Social Partners and local and regional governments. The recommendations that will emerge must be followed up and receive a proper and reasoned response by all institutions in the immediate aftermath of the Conference;
- The European institutions must remain open to proposals for treaty change emerging from the Conference, especially with regards to improving the effectiveness of the EU and enhancing the democratic character of EU decision-making. That could include the abolition of the veto and the consequent shifting from unanimity to qualified majority voting in the Council of several policy areas;
- The Conference should allow for a broad scope and should look at existing as well as emerging challenges, such as the current health crisis, Europe’s recovery from the pandemic, rising inequalities and the climate crisis.

Building on the existing proposals of the European Commission, European Parliament, and Council, the European Movement International has put forward a set of concrete proposals and guidelines to make the Conference a successful and citizens-led exercise that strengthens European democracy. Read the full list of proposals [here](#).