

**CONFERENCE FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPE
THE COMMON SECRETARIAT**

Note to the Representatives and Observers of the Executive Board of the Conference for the Future of Europe

Subject: Rules of Procedure of the Conference on the Future of Europe

Representatives and Observers of the Executive Board will find attached a proposal from Mr. Verhofstadt concerning the rules of procedure of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Draft2

Rules of Procedure of the Conference on the Future of Europe

Title 1 Principles, objectives and scope

Article 1

Principles of the Conference

The Conference on the Future of Europe is based on the values of the EU, as enshrined in the EU Treaties and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, and shall be inclusive, open and transparent.

Article 2

Objectives

1. The Conference aims to give citizens a role in shaping the Union's future policies and ambitions as well as how to address Europe's challenges and priorities.
2. The Conference intends to further contribute to the improvement of transnational European democracy, by strengthening the link between Europeans and the institutions that serve them. It intends to provide recommendations to the Council, the Parliament and the Commission.

Article 3

Scope

1. The scope of the Conference shall reflect the areas where the European Union has the competence to act or where European Union action would be to the benefit of European citizens.
2. While not limiting discussions to these themes, debates will cover the following:

Building a healthy continent, the fight against climate change and environmental challenges, an economy that works for people, social fairness, equality and intergenerational solidarity,

Europe's digital transformation, European rights and values including the Rule of Law, migration challenges, security, the EU's role in the world, the Union's democratic foundations, and how to strengthen democratic processes governing the European Union. Discussions may also cover cross-cutting issues related to the EU's ability to deliver on policy priorities, better regulation, application of subsidiarity and proportionality, implementation and enforcement of the *acquis* and transparency.

Citizens are free to raise additional issues that matter to them.

Article 4

Single identity and Conference charter to organise events

The Conference is recognisable through a single identity. All participants and organisers of events shall subscribe to a Conference charter of common principles and minimum criteria, reflecting EU values.

Title 2 Citizens' participation

Article 5

Citizens' events and feedback mechanism

1. Conference events, as physical gatherings and/or in digital settings, may be organised at different levels, including European, national, transnational and regional level and shall involve civil society and stakeholders. Citizens' participation shall be at the centre of these events and should aim at mirroring Europe's diversity.
2. Each Member State and institution may organise events such as national or transnational citizens' panels or thematic events that are all based on common values as determined in the Citizens' Charter.
3. At the European level, European institutions shall organise European citizens' panels, which should be representative in terms of citizens' geographic origin, gender, age, socioeconomic background and/or level of education. Specific attention will be given to young people.

4. These panels shall take on board contributions gathered in the framework of the Conference providing input to the Conference Plenary by formulating a set of recommendations for the Union to follow-up on.
5. A feedback mechanism, whereby representatives of each of the European Citizens panels shall be invited to the Conference Plenary to present and discuss their findings, shall ensure that the ideas expressed during the Conference events result in concrete recommendations for EU action. Moreover, once Plenary has drafted its conclusions, but before adopting them, the co-chairs will convene meeting(s) with (representatives of) the Citizens' Panels to present and discuss the draft conclusions of the Conference.

Notes:

The contributions to the Citizens panels will come from the Online Platform, the European Youth Even 2021 (EYE) and all other events organised in the Member States. Participants of the Citizens Panels under the age of 25, will be invited to EYE to receive the contributions.

Article 6

European Citizens panels and Youth participation

1. European citizens panels will be organised in the autumn. Each panel will consists of 235 citizens in order to ensure at least one female and one male citizen per member state and on the basis of the same degressive-proportionality established in the Union through the composition of the European Parliament. The citizens will be chosen randomly, and be representative in terms of citizens' geographic origin, gender, age, socioeconomic background and/ or level of education. At least one third of each Citizens panel will be composed of young people represented by persons aged between 16 and 25 years old.
2. These panels shall be dedicated to specific themes to be defined by the Plenary of the Conference on a proposal by the Executive Board. The themes will be based on the scope described in article 3 of this Charter.
3. In accordance with Article 5(5), 8 representatives of each of the European Citizens panels from which at least three will be younger than 25, shall be invited to the Conference Plenary to present their findings and discuss them.

[Notes:

The Executive Board would need to take a decision on the number of European Citizens panels, the specific participation in it from the youth, confirm the number of citizens per panel, the period in which these panels will be organised, their location and the themes the panels will discuss.

The Joint Declaration indicates a broad spectrum of themes :

" Reflecting the Strategic Agenda of the European Council, the 2019-2024 Political Guidelines of the European Commission and the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, discussions can cover, amongst others: Building a healthy continent, the fight against climate change and environmental challenges, an economy that works for people, social fairness, equality and intergenerational solidarity, Europe's digital transformation, European rights and values including the Rule of Law, migration challenges, security, the EU's role in the world, the Union's democratic foundations, and how to strengthen democratic processes governing the European Union. Discussions can also cover cross-cutting issues related to the EU's ability to deliver on policy priorities, such as better regulation, application of subsidiarity and proportionality, implementation and enforcement of the acquis and transparency. The scope of the Conference should reflect the areas where the European Union has the competence to act or where European Union action would have been to the benefit of European citizens. Citizens remain free to raise additional issues that matter to them."

The concrete proposal is to organise four European Citizens panels in the second half of the year (in Firenze, Natolin, Maastricht, Strasbourg).

As already foreseen in article 6, every panel will consist of 235 citizens as this ensures at least one female and one male citizen per member state and gives the same degressive-proportionality established in the Union through the composition of the European Parliament. Each panel will meet for at least 4 consecutive days to discuss the themes and to formulate recommendations that will be presented to the Plenary. The discussions should be animated by the experts with the help of think-tanks and academia. A number of representatives of each panel (8) would be invited to plenary to present the recommendations and discuss them with the participants of the Conference plenary.]

Article 7

Multilingual Digital Platform

1. Along with events and debates organised across the Union, the Conference shall give citizens a say through an interactive multilingual digital platform. Input from all Conference-related events shall be collected, analysed, monitored and published via the digital platform. The platform will also provide information on the different parts of the Conference and how they are connected.
2. To ensure a clear commitment to the values and principles of the Conference, organisers, participants and contributory citizens will need to subscribe to the Conference Charter set out in Article 4.
3. The platform shall also broadcast citizens' panels organised at European level, receive online submissions and ideas shared by citizens and make documentation available.

Article 8

Involvement of citizens from candidate countries

Conference events may also be organised in candidate countries, with participation of citizens, civil society and other stakeholders of those countries.

Title 3 Governance of the Conference

Article 9

Governance and structure

1. The Conference will be placed under the authority of the three institutions, represented by the President of the European Parliament, the President of the Council and the President of the European Commission, acting as its Joint Presidency.
2. To steer the Conference an Executive Board will be set up. This governance structure will be gender-balanced, among all its component parts.
3. The Conference on the Future of Europe will be composed of European Citizens' Panels, a Conference Plenary and an Executive Board.

Chapter 1 Executive Board

[.....]

Chapter 2 Conference Plenary

Article 19

Composition

1. The Conference shall be assisted by a Conference Plenary.
2. The co-chairs and the Conference Plenary shall 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.
3. The Conference Plenary shall include 273 representatives and will be composed of 108 members from the European Parliament, 54 from the Council and 3 from the European Commission), as well as 108 representatives from national Parliaments, on an equal footing. The delegations of the parliaments should consist of representatives of both the majority and the opposition.
4. The Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Committee, the Social Partners, and civil society shall also be represented by 8 representatives. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy shall be associated when the international role of the EU is discussed.
5. Representatives of key stakeholders may be invited.
6. 8 representatives of each of the European Citizens panels from which at least three will be younger than 25, shall be invited to the respective Conference Plenary to present their findings and discuss them with the other participants.
7. All delegations should be gender balanced, pursuant to Article 9.

Article 20

Organisation

1. The sessions of the Conference Plenary are opened and chaired by the co-chair(s) of the Executive Board.
2. Tasks of the Plenary Chair:
 - i. The Plenary Chair in office shall direct all the activities of the Conference Plenary and its bodies in accordance with these provisions, and shall enjoy all powers that are necessary to preside over the proceedings of the Conference Plenary and to ensure that they are properly conducted.
 - ii. The tasks of the Plenary Chair shall be to open, suspend and close sittings; to ensure observance of these provisions; to maintain order; to call upon speakers; to close debates and to refer to the committees or working groups any communications that concern them.
 - iii. The Plenary Chair may speak in a debate only to sum up or to call speakers to order.]
3. The Conference chair(s) or a significant number of the members of the Plenary may recommend that the Executive Board set up thematic Committees or Working Groups, which will be chaired by its rapporteurs.
4. Decisions in the Conference will require the agreement of the four pillars of the Plenary of the Conference (Council, Commission, European parliament, national parliaments).
5. The Executive Board shall decide how seats in the Chamber are to be allocated.
6. Political families may organise themselves through caucuses.

Article 21

Notice of meetings

1. The session of the Conference Plenary shall be convened by the Executive Board at least one month before the opening of the session.
2. The notice and draft agenda for a session of the Conference Plenary, and any other documents relating to that session, shall be sent to the members and observers of the Conference Plenary by the Secretariat on behalf of the Executive Board seven working days before the date of the session.

3. The sittings of the Conference Plenary shall be held in the 24 official languages of the Union.

Article 22

Calendar and Agenda

1. The Executive Board, shall draw up the provisional calendar for the sessions of the Conference Plenary and shall submit it to the Plenary.
2. Before each session of the Conference Plenary, the draft agenda shall be drawn up by the Executive Board. The final draft agenda shall be made available to the plenary participants, at least seven working days before the beginning of the session.
3. As part of the draft agenda, the Executive Board shall determine the format of the forthcoming session of the Conference Plenary, including the possibility to be physically present, and determine the relevant meeting arrangements and conditions, in accordance with the applicable health and safety requirements.
4. Before closing the sitting, the Chair shall announce the date and time of the next sitting.

Article 23

Modalities of reporting

1. The Executive Board shall draw up and publish the conclusions of the Conference Plenary.
2. The Executive Board may decide further modalities for reporting on the outcomes of the Conference Plenary. These modalities may include the setting-up of working groups or committees of the Plenary.

Article 24

Contributions to the Conference Plenary

1. Written contributions to the Conference Plenary may be received in accordance with the provisions of Article 16(3) of these Rules of Procedure.
2. In particular, the Conference Plenary shall receive recommendations from European Citizen Panels and input from other events organised in the framework of the Conference. The

panels should provide their input by formulating a set of recommendations for the Union to follow up on.

Article 25

Publicity and audio-visual record of proceedings

(including linguistic regime)

1. The Conference Plenary shall ensure that its activities are conducted with the utmost transparency, in accordance with the second paragraph of Article 1 of the Treaty on European Union, Article 15 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 42 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
2. The debates of the Conference Plenary and all its documents shall be public. The proceedings of the Conference Plenary in the languages in which they are conducted, as well as the multilingual soundtrack from all active interpretation booths, shall be broadcast in real time on the digital platform and the website of the Conference Plenary. Immediately after the sitting, all the proceedings, records and written contributions shall be freely available and can be freely reproduced.
3. The Secretariat shall provide to the plenary participants in the 24 official languages of the Union, the following documents of the Conference Plenary:
 - i. the calendar of meetings;
 - ii. the draft and final meeting agendas;
 - iii. documents issued by the Executive Board;
 - iv. the summary of each meeting of the Conference Plenary.
4. The Secretariat shall forward to plenary participants, and publish electronically, in the languages in which they were sent to the Conference Plenary, documents from
 - i. Plenary participants;
 - ii. European citizen panels and member states contributions, such as national citizen panels;
 - iii. institutions and bodies of the Union
5. The Plenary Chair in Office may exceptionally ask for the translation of documents for the Conference Plenary other than those listed in paragraph [3 and 4] of these Working Methods.

Note:

The EB should decide the following;

- is the digital platform and website of the Conference going to be the sole repository of official Conference information and documentation or will there be other websites e.g. by each Institution and would the latter need to be mentioned?

- should there be other records of the plenary debates that the EB summaries? e.g. the verbatim recordings could be referenced via the MDP.

Title 4 Common Secretariat

Article 26

The European Citizens Panels, the Conference Plenary and the Executive Board shall be assisted by a common secretariat, hosted by the Commission, composed by an equal number of representatives of the three Institutions and work under the responsibility of the three co-chairs of the Executive Board.

Title 5 Final provisions

Article 27

[Revisions]

These provisions may be amended or supplemented by the Conference Plenary on a proposal by the Executive Board.

Article 28

Conclusions of the Conference

The preliminary Conclusions of the Conference shall be presented in a report by spring 2022 by the Joint Presidency and the Executive Board to the public and the three Institutions.

The European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission will decide on the effective follow up to this report, each within their own sphere of competence and in accordance with the Treaties, as set out in Article 11.