



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Council

Subject: Presidency Discussion Note on the follow-up to the Conference on the
Future of Europe

Delegations will find attached a Presidency Discussion Note on the follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe, in view of the General Affairs Council meeting of 20 September 2022.



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General Affairs Council

Presidency Discussion Note on the Follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe

On July 27th, the Presidency circulated to delegations a Note with a Questionnaire related to the Conference on the Future of Europe, where delegations were invited to submit their written position on three topics: Treaty change, the use of *passerelle* clauses to switch from unanimity voting to qualified majority voting in the Council and about the broadening of opportunities for citizen participation in the EU decision-making process. The aim of this questionnaire was to get an initial view on where Council Members stand at this stage in the ongoing debate about possible institutional changes.

The Presidency understands that the timeline of this exercise was short given the breadth and depth of the issues raised and as such the discussions on this topic will continue throughout the autumn as the positions of Member States may develop.

To ease the discussion, the General Secretariat of the Council is preparing a preliminary synthesis Report, gathering Council Members' first answers in approaching the three different topics. This preliminary synthesis report will be updated as further input is received from delegations.

With a view to current debates and upcoming events at the European level, the Presidency would like to propose the following framework of discussions at the September meeting of the General Affairs Council.

The use of Passerelle Clauses

As part of the above-mentioned questionnaire, delegations were invited to express their positions towards the possible use of *passerelles* in switching towards qualified majority voting in the Council in specific areas, where this is not already the case.

Ministers are invited to expand upon their contributions to the Presidency's questionnaire in their interventions at the September General Affairs Council.

The State of the European Union Address

On September 14th, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen is due to present her awaited Speech on the State of the European Union. During this address, President von der Leyen will likely outline support for the follow-up to the Conference process and present several initiatives for implementing the Conference Conclusions. As a co-legislator, the Council will need to evaluate each proposal carefully and work with the Commission and the Parliament on ensuring an effective follow-up to the Conference.

Ministers are invited to exchange views on Conference-specific initiatives highlighted in the State of the European Union Address.

Autonomous Measures

While a majority of the measures included in the Final Report of the Conference on the Future of Europe lie mainly within the initiative of the European Commission, the Presidency and the General Secretariat of the Council are working on identifying measures where the Council can act autonomously and on which work can start, for instance based on a decision of the Council.

Ministers are invited to express their first comments if they so wish, knowing that detailed discussions will take place at working party level.
