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From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Update - Practical modalities of the European Citizens' Panels of the Conference on the Future of Europe

Delegations will find attached an updated version of the Practical modalities of the European Citizens' Panels of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

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UPDATE Practical modalities of the European Citizens' Panels
of the Conference on the Future of Europe

The Conference on the Future of Europe will rely on a mix of online and offline events, organised by the European institutions, national, regional and local authorities, civil society organisations and citizens, the results of which will be collected, analysed and published on the Multilingual Digital Platform. **A central feature of the Conference** will be the **European Citizens' Panels**, organised **on the main topics of the Conference**. A number of randomly selected panels representative of EU sociological diversity, organised over several **deliberative sessions,** will come up with ideas and **recommendations** that will feed into the overall Conference deliberations, in particular, into the Conference Plenaries, and ultimately into the report on its final outcome.

1. Random selection of citizens, representative of EU sociological diversity

- In order to ensure diversity by applying a credible methodology, and now based on evidence coming from numerous experiences of citizens' assemblies at local, national and European levels, the selection of participants has been done by **randomly selecting citizens, with the aim of constituting "panels" representative of EU sociological diversity** (different groups represented on the basis of 5 criteria: nationality, urban/rural, socio-economic background, gender and age)**.**

- The selection of the 800 citizens (and 200 citizens as a reserve) took place (from May until mid-August) covering the entirety of the population (limited to EU citizens). Citizens were mainly contacted by phone (**random generation of phone numbers** – fixed and mobile) in several rounds in order to explain the purpose and obtain their consent. Following their agreement, they have received an invitation letter explaining exactly what is expected from them. Citizens will receive professional support and guidance throughout the process.

- Each European Citizens' Panel will be composed of **200 citizens** in order to strike a balance between diversity (facilitated when number is higher) and the easiness of the deliberation process (as optimal work is done through a combination of plenary meetings and working groups), and to take into account the **degressive proportionality** applied to the composition of the EP.

- As the Conference aims at allowing a specific focus on youth, **one third of the citizens composing a Citizens' Panel will be between 16 and 25 years old**. Furthermore, a special link between this youth group and the European Youth Event will be created**.**

- The random selection dimension should lead to the participation of a wide range of citizens, including those who do not usually engage in European affairs. The **selection has therefore followed a methodology that will ensure the appropriate engagement**, through professional and well-trained teams, **with the contacted citizens**. The Commission has signed a contract with an external company for this random selection of participants. They are supported in these efforts also by the "methodology" contactors (see below).

- General information on the composition of the European Citizens' Panels is available in the following document: "Kantar - Selection of citizens - overview per criterion and quota."

2. Design and methodology

- There will be **four European Citizens' Panels.**

- **The topics for discussion for each of the Panels are based on the themes of the Multilingual Digital Platform** and will be clustered in the following way and order:
  (1) Stronger economy, social justice, jobs/ education, youth, culture, sport/ digital transformation;
  (2) European democracy/values and rights, rule of law, security;
  (3) Climate change, environment/health;
  (4) EU in the world/migration;

- The Panels shall take on board contributions gathered in the framework of the Conference through the Platform and formulate a set of recommendations for the Union's institutions to follow-up on and which will be debated in the Conference Plenary. To achieve this goal, the Citizens' Panels will be **structured around the main topics that are discussed during the Conference. The European Citizens' Panels will also be informed of any recommendations by National Citizens' Panels.**

- The thematic clusters being very broad, there is a need to **frame the topics in a way that strikes the right balance between the efficiency of the process** (reaching quality and relevant recommendations in the time allocated) **and the need to leave enough room for a true bottom-up and citizens-driven deliberation.** Given the necessity to maintain the best possible geographical and sociological diversity as well as to keep interpretation needs manageable, the option to divide each panel into sub-panels has not been considered as feasible.

- The first sessions will be dedicated to the "definition of the agenda" with the objective for the citizens to identify streams (i.e. headline thematics) of work they want to concentrate on. The second and third sessions will aim at deepening these streams and their subtopics to progressively design their collective recommendations.

- The **thematic clusters will therefore be scaled down by the citizens participating in the European Citizens' Panels themselves at their first session** which will be divided into **two phases:**

  (1) A "blank page phase" concentrating on their vision (which Europe they would want to see for them and their children in 2050, in relation to the theme of the Panel).
  (2) A phase where the citizens will be asked to cross-examine their work on their vision with the first report from the platform. Citizens will then receive expert input and subsequently work on the sub-topics they would like to concentrate on, identifying priority issues. On that basis, streams or clusters of work will be identified and will provide a framework for the remaining sessions of the panels.

- **Information material provided to the Citizens prior to the event remain therefore basic** and similar to the platform topic pages.

- In accordance with the Joint Declaration, **citizens remain free to raise additional issues** that matter to them: if during their work, an issue/question that has not yet been identified emerge from their discussions and is strongly supported by their panels, it should then be able to be transformed into a recommendation.

- A **rigorous methodology and a clear deliberative protocol**, built up from the now numerous experiences of citizens' assemblies, with input from experts, facilitators and fact-checkers, will guide the participants towards a progressive scaling down of the issues and a series of **collectively designed and owned recommendations**. The Panels will be accompanied by **independent experts**. A list of experts and stakeholders will be made available to the citizens participating in the European Citizens' Panels and they will be able to select them from this list according to their topics and specific needs, whilst for the first session of each panel, experts will be present to introduce the topic, highlighting the main issues and challenges faced by the European Union.

- To convince citizens to engage, especially those who are not familiar with EU public affairs, there is a need to develop a **clear narrative for the citizens to understand their role, the purpose of their participation and the commitment that is expected of them**. This has been expressed in an invitation letter by the Co-Chairs to citizens, to detail the purpose of the panels and the commitment to follow-up, based on the Joint Declaration.

- The Co-Chairs will inform in advance the Executive Board of the development of the practical modalities for the organisation of the European Citizens' Panels.

3. <u>Languages, timing and location</u>

- In addition to the necessary time for preparation, information sharing and feedback, the panels shall meet during **at least three deliberative sessions of minimum two days, including a minimum of two in-person sessions if the health context allows**.

- **A hybrid European Citizens' Event took place on 17 June 2021** in Lisbon. A **final event in order to give feedback** to the European Citizens' Panels on the follow-up will be organised in 2022.

- **All Panels will take place in the same overall period from autumn 2021 to spring 2022** (see calendar under point 5 below). For logistical reasons, the sessions of all Panels will not take place at the exact same time. They would therefore present their conclusions to different meetings of the Plenary (2 Panels would present their recommendations to the Conference Plenary in December and 2 in January).

- The **panels will be multilingual** (24 EU official languages in Panel plenaries and the necessary languages in the breakout sessions of the panels).

- A contract with an **external service provider has provided support to design the methodology** of these panels, moderate and facilitate them, **and organise their logistics**, including the possibility to provide interpretation. Nevertheless, **these European Citizens' Panels are fully co-ordinated and** **overseen by the Common Secretariat and the Executive Board of the Conference.**

- The **first sessions** of the four Panels will take place in-person in the premises of the European Parliament **in Strasbourg**.

  The **second sessions** of the Panels will be held in **remote format** over a weekend.

  The **third and final sessions of the Panels** will take place in-person in the following educational institutions:

  - Panel 1 "Stronger economy, social justice, jobs/ education, youth, culture, sport/ digital transformation" on 3-5 December 2021 in **Dublin, Ireland (Institute of International and European Affairs and partners);**

  - Panel 2 "European democracy/values and rights, rule of law, security" on 10-12 December 2021 in **Florence, Italy (European University Institute);**

  - Panel 3 "Climate change, environment/health" on 7-9 January 2022 in **Natolin (Warsaw), Poland (College of Europe);**

- Panel 4 "EU in the world/migration" on 14-16 January 2022 in **Maastricht, the Netherlands (European Institute for Public Administration and partners).**

Online sessions might take precedence depending on the health situation.

- The **plenary meetings of the European Citizens' Panels will be live-streamed**, while the documents of their discussions and deliberations will be made publicly available on the Multilingual Digital Platform. There will also be **a dedicated section for the panels on the Multilingual Digital Platform**, which will be used also for communication and deliberation purposes.

4. Panel results and their input into the Conference Plenary

- The Panels' recommendations **will be debated in the Conference Plenary meetings, feed into the final Conference report** and constitute a part of the Conference output on which basis EU institutions will organise the follow-up, in accordance with the Joint Declaration.

- The European Citizens' Panels should foresee **an adequate interaction with the Conference Plenary,** as well as with other relevant input from citizens, in particular into the Conference Multilingual Digital Platform, the main hub for collecting all the Conference information and data, and analysing them in order to produce regular reports.

- Citizens' delegations from each Panel will take part in the Conference Plenary meetings. **20 representatives,** ensuring gender balance, from each of the European Citizens Panels, **of which at least one third would be younger than 25,** will **take part in the** Conference **Plenary sessions**, will present the outcome of their discussions and debate them with other participants. **These representatives of the Panels will attend Conference Plenaries.**

- The European Citizens' Panels will lead to a **specific analysis/report** based on the original citizens' ideas as expressed during the deliberations. It will contain the **final recommendations but also a detailed account of the content of the discussions.** This will include the argumentations and debates as well as the different deliberative steps that led to these. The reports will be prepared by the service providers in charge of the design and facilitation and endorsed by the respective European Citizens' Panels, before being made available to the public on the Multilingual Digital Platform.

- A questionnaire will also be submitted at the beginning and at the end of the process to assess the diversity of the panels, the degree of satisfaction with the process, and the **learning curve** they may have experienced due to the deliberative methods of the panels.

- In addition to the feedback meeting, panel **participants will be kept informed about the process** and the follow-up directly and via the digital platform, through regular newsletters and *ad hoc* emailing.

5. **Calendar of the European Citizens' Panels**

	Topic	**When**	**Where**
PANEL 1	**Stronger economy, social justice, jobs/ education, youth, culture, sport/ digital transformation**	Session 1: September 17th - 19th	Strasbourg, France
		Session 2: November 5th - 7th	Online
		Session 3: December 3rd - 5th	Dublin, Ireland (Institute of International and European Affairs and partners)
PANEL 2	**European democracy/values, rights, rule of law, security**	Session 1: September 24th - 26th	Strasbourg, France
		Session 2: November 12th - 14th	Online
		Session 3: December 10th - 12th	Florence, Italy (European University Institute and partners)
PANEL 3	**Climate change, environment/health**	Session 1: October 1st - 3rd	Strasbourg, France
		Session 2: November 19th - 21st	Online
		Session 3: January 7th - 9th	Natolin, Poland (College of Europe and partners)
PANEL 4	**EU in the world/migration**	Session 1: October 15th - 17th	Strasbourg, France
		Session 2: November 26th - 28th	Online
		Session 3: January 14th - 16th	Maastricht, Netherlands (European Institute for Public Administration and partners)