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COVER NOTE

From: Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director

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To: Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union

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Subject: COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness

Delegations will find attached document SWD(2026) 80 final.

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Brussels, 5.3.2026
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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Accompanying the document

**Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the
European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions**

Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness

{COM(2026) 110 final}

1. Introduction

This staff working document accompanies the Communication on the Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness and provides a holistic overview of the procedure and results of the broad consultation process surrounding its development.

It summarises the results of the **call for evidence**, which was open for contributions from 14 October to 11 November 2025, contributions from the public from 25 February to 30 November 2025 on the **Citizens Engagement Platform**, and the **JRC-led co-creation process**. It also provides an overview of the results of the **European Citizens' Panel on Intergenerational Fairness**.

2. Call for Evidence

A call for evidence on the strategy on intergenerational fairness was published in all 24 EU languages on the Commission's Have Your Say portal¹ on 14 October 2025.

The consultation invited all interested parties to share their views, including policy makers from all governance levels, non-governmental and civil society organisations, researchers across the field, as well as the general public and any parties affected by, or with an interest in, intergenerational fairness.

The aim was to collect their thoughts and ideas to feed into the reflection process that led to the drafting of the strategy on intergenerational fairness.

By category of respondent

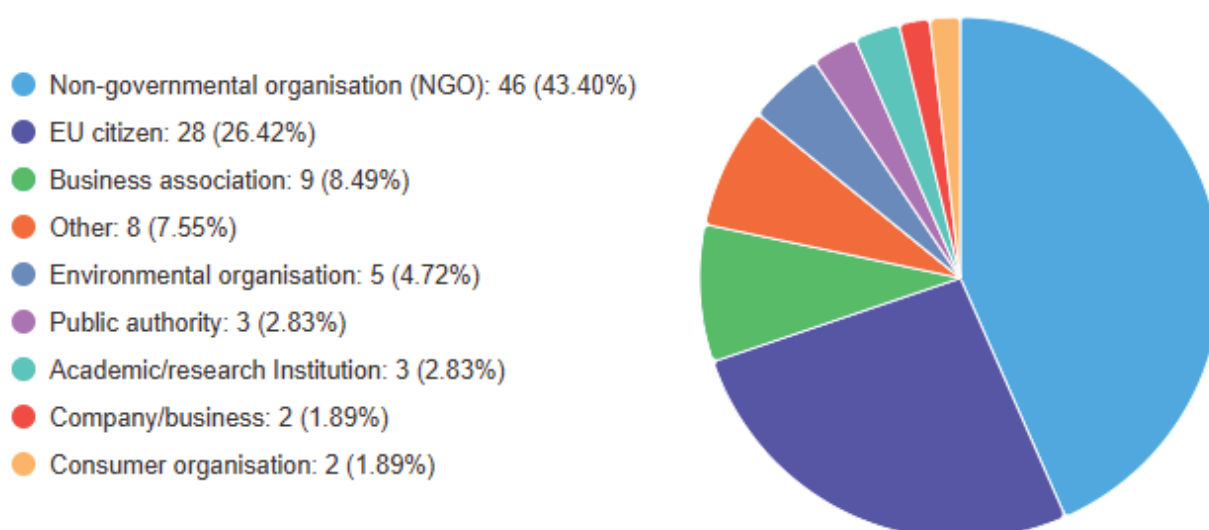


Figure 1. Graph by category of respondents.

Source: Call for evidence on strategy on intergenerational fairness

The call for evidence remained open for four weeks and closed on 11 November 2025. During this time, it received a total of 106 contributions, of which 28 came from EU citizens, 46 from NGOs, 3 from public authorities, 9 from business associations, 5 from environmental organisations, 3 from academic/research institutions, 2 from companies/businesses, and 2 from consumer organisations.

¹ [Call for evidence: strategy on intergenerational fairness](#)

By country

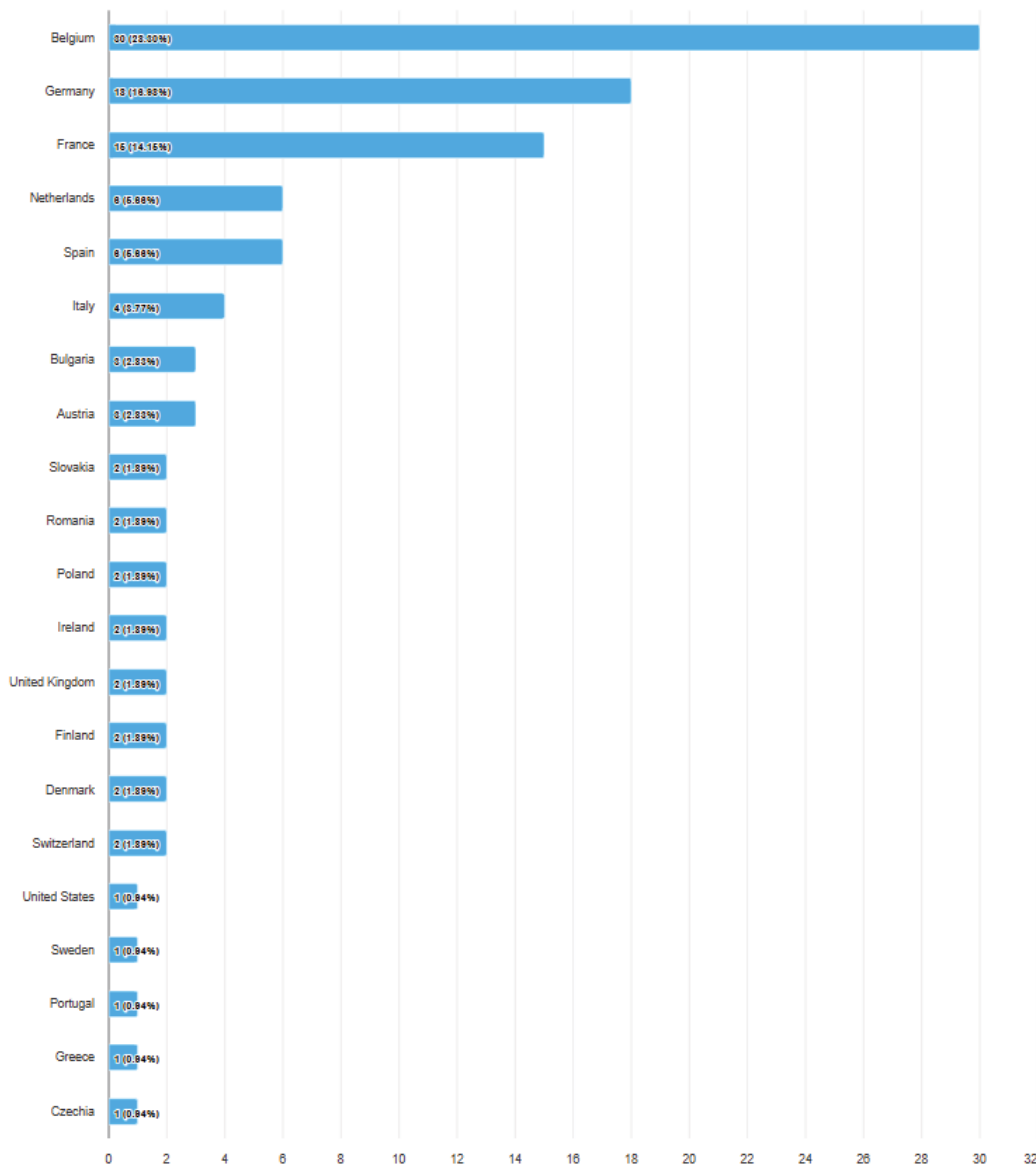


Figure 2. Graph by country of respondents.
Source: Call for evidence on "Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness"

Participants of 21 different nationalities responded to the call for evidence. Respondents from Belgium, Germany and France predominate, followed by the Netherlands, Spain and Italy. Of the 21 nationalities, 18 were from EU Member States, alongside contributions from the United Kingdom, the United States and Switzerland.

2.1 Overall feedback

The 106 contributions received reveal a rich tapestry of perspectives from stakeholders across sectors. The feedback is supportive of the strategy on intergenerational fairness overall; there is a shared call for a holistic approach that effectively bridges generational divides and addresses the complex realities of societal challenges across policies and ages.

Some contributions called for intergenerational fairness to become a guiding principle in EU policymaking, as today's decisions shape tomorrow's opportunities and too often the costs of inaction fall on young people, children and future generations. The EU should therefore embed a long-term and foresight-based approach in all policies, supported by specific mechanisms (such as intergenerational fairness impact assessments) to counter short-termism and ensure that a number of considerations are systematically integrated into decisions. Future generations must be recognised as holders of rights, while the actions of local authorities, civil society and communities remain central to delivering change on the ground.

Other contributions said a strong focus on children and young people was essential, as they bear disproportionate impacts, particularly through climate harm. Improving the transition from education to the labour market, strengthening youth participation and expanding opportunities for lifelong and intergenerational learning, including through volunteering, mentoring and shared community spaces, were key elements of a fairer future, respondents said. At the same time, some contributions urged the strategy to promote the rights and contributions of older people and called for a dedicated action plan to fight age discrimination, ensure access to essential services for those not using digital tools and recognise the essential role of older generations in care, culture and community cohesion.

Many contributions highlighted environmental integrity as the foundation of intergenerational fairness. The EU should continue to pursue consistent climate action aligned with the Paris Agreement, phase out fossil fuels, and reduce harmful chemicals and pollution. Sustainable food systems, including support for organic farming, reduced meat consumption and accessible plant-based alternatives, would prove critical, alongside measures to revitalise rural areas and safeguard the EU's agricultural sector, respondents said.

The need for economic systems to evolve in order to support fairness between generations was also mentioned by participants in the process. This includes addressing resource overuse, environmental degradation and inequality, all while ensuring transparency and responsibility. Although pensions, are a Member State competence, they remain central to intergenerational equity and require sustainable models that balance solidarity, financial stability and demographic realities. Strengthening family-friendly policies and supporting parents, particularly mothers, would be essential to this balance, respondents said.

Other contributions also focussed on health and well-being across the life course to be prioritised. Prevention should be at the core of EU action, they said, from tackling chronic diseases and ensuring support for autistic people and those with disabilities, to promoting physical activity, combating sedentary lifestyles and supporting active ageing. Ensuring equal consumer rights online and offline will help protect those who face barriers in an increasingly digital world, respondents said

Some calls also underlined the need for the strategy to embrace culture as a driver of cohesion, participation and democracy. Cultural heritage, libraries, community centres and the creative sector play a vital role in bringing generations together and fostering resilience, they said.

These examples of responses capture some of the very rich feedback gathered through the call for evidence. They reflect the high level of engagement and diversity of perspectives received, itself a result of intergenerational fairness being understood and perceived differently depending on the contributor's background and expertise.

3. Co-creation process

To inform the development of the Strategy, the Joint Research Centre undertook a structured reflection process conducted in several phases. The first two phases, **scoping and visioning**, diverged to understand the framing and ensure all issues relevant to citizens and stakeholders were considered. The subsequent **ideation and co-creation** phases converged, narrowing those insights into specific policy ideas.

The design process employed a collaborative, system-based and forward-looking approach. Key methodological innovations included fostering international collaboration, breaking down siloed thinking and leveraging foresight and science. The process constituted a **co-creation of policy ideas**. It took place, among other settings, in **coalitions** that brought together Commission services with external experts representing a wide range of ages, geographies, disciplines, and knowledge (around 200 people in the coalitions, and around 500 people in total).

The participants established a unified framework for intergenerational fairness and outlined visions for its implementation within the EU, identifying necessary pathways and changes. Their contributions have informed the Commission's Communication work.

The framework they developed emphasises safeguarding fundamental rights, ecosystems and wellbeing across generations, allowing each generation to define wellbeing independently. Achieving fairness necessitates long-term thinking, cross-generational collaboration, and empowering care for vulnerable populations, supported by governance transformation across key dimensions.

Policymakers should prioritise long-term goals, integrate them into adaptable actions, and enhance responsiveness through policy pilots and assessments. Institutional accountability and guiding principles are critical for embedding fairness and fostering trust and citizen engagement. This enables regenerative policies that redefine wellbeing, promote equitable prosperity, and foster inclusive communities, while emphasising ecological integrity and resilience to guide societal transitions and maintain cohesion.

Further details can be found on the dedicated website².

² [Intergenerational fairness - EU Policy Lab - European Commission](#)

4. Citizens' Engagement Platform

As part of the co-creation process and in order to inform the design of the strategy on intergenerational fairness, a multilingual online consultation was held, using the Citizens' Engagement Platform³. The process was open to all EU citizens, was structured in four phases (scoping phase – vision building – strategy ideas – co-creation), and ran from February to November 2025, in parallel with the JRC co-creation process.

During all four phases, the Citizens' Engagement Platform gathered a wide range of contributions from across the EU, reflecting people's views on the key challenges to intergenerational fairness and the concrete, innovative proposals they put forward to strengthen intergenerational dialogue and embed the interests of both present and future generations in EU decision-making. Between 25 February and 30 November 2025, the platform recorded strong levels of engagement, with 354 041 page views, 215 000 visitors, 179 contributions, 132 comments, and 323 endorsements. This demonstrates active participation and meaningful interaction on the issues and opportunities shaping intergenerational fairness.

The contributions that received the most endorsement call for the following an EU action plan to combat ageism, in order to address age discrimination and promote intergenerational fairness; the establishment of cross-sectoral, long-term, and participatory governance to balance the interests of current and future generations; reforms to the economic system to deliver intergenerational justice; and the development of an EU action plan for both inter- and intra-generational flourishing.

An analysis of the 179 contributions submitted by EU citizens allows for their categorisation into four broader dimensions:

- **Social cohesion and inclusion**
- **Democracy and governance**
- **Environmental and socio-economic sustainability**
- **Care and education systems**

Broadly, the first dimension, **social cohesion and inclusion**, consists of contributions calling for improved intergenerational relations through the promotion of dialogue and solidarity between generations, as well as measures to combat ageism and other forms of discrimination to ensure equality and social cohesion.

The second dimension, **democracy and governance**, covers contributions advocating greater participation and representation of all generations in democratic systems. It also includes calls to strengthen long-term and intergenerational decision-making across all policy areas.

The third dimension, **environmental and socio-economic sustainability**, includes contributions highlighting climate change as a central challenge to the achievement of an intergenerationally fair future and exploring ways to foster forward-looking economic

³ [Intergenerational Fairness - Citizens' Engagement Platform](#)

behaviour. These contributions also emphasise the importance of sustainable youth employment and of ensuring decent living conditions for all.

The fourth dimension, **care and education systems**, groups together recommendations underlining the importance of providing public services, such as care and education in upholding intergenerational fairness, with a focus on integrated care and support systems and equal access to high-quality education.

Overall, the consultation through the Citizens' Engagement Platform underscores the need for a more equitable, sustainable and cohesive EU that empowers all generations to tackle the key challenges to intergenerational fairness. These challenges include short-term thinking, exclusion and inequality, and limited intergenerational solidarity. Participants consistently linked specific policy areas to broader societal objectives, stressing that social cohesion, environmental and socio-economic sustainability, inclusive and long-term governance, and access to high-quality public services must be pursued in an integrated manner to secure a fair and sustainable future for both current and future generations.

5. European Citizens' Panel

Building on the final recommendations of the Conference on the Future of Europe, the European Commission reaffirmed, in the 17 June 2022 Communication “Putting Vision into Concrete Action”⁴, its commitment to establish citizens’ panels that would deliberate and provide recommendations in advance of certain key policy proposals. This approach reflects the Commission’s broader ambition to embed public participation more systematically into the EU’s policymaking process.

The European Citizens’ Panel on Intergenerational Fairness⁵ was organised by the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture together with the Joint Research Centre and the Directorate General for Communication between 12 September 2025 and 16 November 2025. The citizen’s panel was convened as part of the preparatory work for the forthcoming strategy on intergenerational fairness. Over three weekends, the panel brought together 150 randomly selected citizens from all 27 Member States, ensuring a diverse and inclusive cross-section of EU society, with the task of answering the following remit question:

What should we do today to make the European Union fair for all current and future generations?

The question was approached from two main angles:

How can we ensure that decisions taken today do no harm to future generations while respecting the interests of both present and future generations?

How can we strengthen communication, solidarity, and engagement between generations?

As a result of this process, the participating citizens submitted 24 recommendations to the European Commission on 16 November 2025⁶.

5.1 The Panel

The panel assembled a diverse range of individuals in terms of gender, age, socio-economic background, attitudes towards the EU, educational background and regional origin. Participants were selected through a democratic lottery using a door-to-door approach to ensure that every EU citizen had an equal chance of being invited. Participants met over three sessions between September and November: on 14–16 September and 14–16 November in person in Brussels, and on 17–19 October online.

As support for their deliberations, participants were provided with information materials, professional moderators and facilitators, input from Commission experts, and guidance from a

⁴ [EUR-Lex - 52022DC0404 - EN - EUR-Lex](#)

⁵ [Citizens' Panel on Intergenerational Fairness - Citizens' Engagement Platform](#)

⁶ [Recommendations from the Citizens Panel on Intergenerational Fairness](#)

‘knowledge committee’ of external experts. Through plenary and working group discussions, they developed ideas and principles to inform the strategy on intergenerational fairness.

The panel’s deliberations focused on identifying key challenges and opportunities to ensure fairness between generations. People exchanged ideas and perspectives on how to address these challenges, which were consolidated into an introductory statement with a list of five principles and 24 final recommendations, presented on 16 November 2025 to Glenn Micallef, Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport.

5.2 The Recommendations

While developing the recommendations over the course of the three weekends, citizens demonstrated a strong commitment to the task and engaged in thoughtful and constructive exchanges, despite the complexity of the subject. For many, it was both their first experience with participatory democracy and their first direct involvement in a European Commission initiative. Despite the group’s diversity, participants converged on a shared set of expectations and aspirations around the strategy on intergenerational fairness and in relation to the EU more broadly.

The panel’s 24 recommendations adopt a forward-looking perspective and identify key challenges that the participants consider must be addressed most urgently for the EU to be fair for both current and future generations. Seven recommendations place particular emphasis on education, underlining its central role in promoting an intergenerationally fair future. These recommendations address a wide range of issues, including improving lifelong learning opportunities, embedding civic education in school curricula, funding learning initiatives between young and older generations, ensuring access to high-quality education for all, promoting healthy, nutritious and sustainable diets, strengthening crisis resilience, and addressing the societal impacts of AI.

The horizontal nature of intergenerational fairness is reflected in the breadth of the recommendations, which cover a wide range of policy areas beyond education. As such, the panel members highlighted the need for fair and affordable housing, including the expansion of social housing and other measures to ease pressure on the housing market. They also emphasised the importance of improving political representation for all generations, with particular attention to youth and future generations, as well as establishing boundaries for AI, ensuring responsible access to the technology, mitigating technological risks and developing AI capacities. Environmental issues were also prominent, with calls for clean energy for all, the creation of an EU-level environmental accountability committee and strengthened support for sustainable farming.

Remaining recommendations touched on the need for food security, the preservation of peace and increased EU defence capabilities, the strengthening of European identity, a harmonised tax equity system across borders, fair and sustainable pension systems across Member States, and the need to ensure equal access, sustainable funding, cooperation and knowledge exchange in public health systems.

5.3 Next Steps

The recommendations gathered from participants through the European Citizens' Panel on Intergenerational Fairness converged strongly on three messages: (i) that decisions should be assessed for their long-term consequences and fairness across all age groups; (ii) that opportunities must be strengthened across the life course, including through education, skills and dignified living conditions; and (iii) that intergenerational cohesion depends on places and institutions that enable connection, participation and trust. The principles outlined by the panel also called for a renewed intergenerational contract where each generation carries both moral and practical responsibilities towards others, to protect dignity, create opportunities and ensure stability for all present and future generations. These inputs informed the strategy's three dimensions of fair policymaking, fair opportunities and fair places, as well as the subsequent framework showcasing intergenerationally fair policies promoted by the Commission.

The recommendations also informed the strategy's strong long-term governance and youth dimension, intergenerational learning and dialogue, housing affordability and community cohesion, and human-centred management of the digital and green transitions. Some of the panel's recommendations called for measures that go beyond EU competence. Here, the strategy invites the European Parliament and the Council of the EU to consider, within their respective roles, how intergenerational aspects can be further taken into account in policymaking. EU Member States are encouraged to continue embedding long-term thinking in public decision-making, in line with national contexts and competences and to increase the awareness of various aspects of intergenerational fairness.

Citizens highlighted the **value of learning and exchange across generations** (recommendations A, B and V). The strategy responds by promoting intergenerational dialogue and partnerships with local institutions such as libraries, museums, community centres and sports organisations. The Commission also wants to support possible actions under the recommendations on **learning without age: inspiring connection, empathy and shared knowledge across generations**, and **improving political education for all generations** (recommendations A and G), in particular by boosting citizens' engagement and supporting participation in democratic life through participatory and consultative tools.

The citizens' recommendation on **bridging nations, celebrating cultures: the path to a stronger European identity** (recommendation B) is acknowledged within the strategy's proposed action to promote intergenerational cultural exchange and inclusion through the **Culture Compass for Europe**. The publishing of the **Longevity Roadmap** will support the mapping of age-specific policy issues for all age groups.

With the strategy on intergenerational fairness, the Commission also aims to mainstream and further embed the use of strategic foresight across governance levels. Through proposed actions such as **building futures literacy in public administrations across Member States**, and the **reinforced use of strategic foresight in policymaking**, the Commission seeks to encourage the institutionalisation and strengthening of the ability of institutions to proactively tackle ongoing challenges and megatrends. By doing so, it aims to address several cross-cutting issues

put forward via the citizens' recommendations in a horizontal and systemic way, from considerations related to sustainability and the use of AI, to the way we conceptualise our public health systems (recommendations C, D, E, F, O, P, W and X).

Furthermore, linked to recommendation H (**improving and balancing the representation of all generations in the political system**), the Commission confirms its commitment to the Commission Youth Check. The Commission will strengthen the intergenerational fairness dimension in EU youth policy and create meaningful and proportionate opportunities for youth to contribute to policy discussions that shape their future.

The Commission also welcomes the ideas reflected in the recommendation on the **local intergenerational pact to unite generations** (recommendation V) to enable intergenerational participation and seeks to support these by launching the **Voices of the Future** initiative, which was already announced in the European Democracy Shield initiative and will be implemented in collaboration with the Committee of the Regions. Related to this, the Commission will share best practices through an **EU-level repository** of initiatives related to intergenerational fairness on local and regional level.

Beyond the actions included within the strategy, it should be noted that the panel's recommendations also overlap with broader Commission action, both ongoing and prospective.

For example, an overarching priority highlighted by the panel was the importance of **education**, in particular ensuring inclusive, lifelong and job-oriented learning (recommendations A, K and R). In this regard, the Commission has put forward the **Union of Skills**, which aims to ensure that our education and training systems have the right tools to prepare Europeans of all generations. The Commission will continue its action with a dedicated education package, including a Basic Skills Support Scheme and a Teachers and Trainers Action Plan.

Panel members also underlined the importance of **sustainable food & farming and of food security** (recommendations C, D and F). Building on the Communication on a Vision for Agriculture and Food, the Commission will introduce a new livestock strategy, update rules to tackle unfair trading practices in the food chain and will launch a new "buy European" food campaign. It will also follow-up on the strategy for generational renewal in agriculture. As for the call to **strengthen EU defence capabilities** (recommendation E), the Commission is actively seeking to address capability gaps and strengthen the EU defence industry. It has already launched the SAFE instrument to speed up major investments and will this year propose a simplification of defence and security procurement rules.

Housing also featured in the discussions of the citizens' panel, with recommendations calling for affordable and dignified living for all (recommendations I and J). A dedicated housing package was put forward by the Commission on 16 December 2025, aimed at boosting supply, mobilising investment, driving reforms and protecting those most concerned. In the package, the Commission detailed its future action, which will include an Affordable Housing Act, including a central component on short term rentals and a Construction Services Act.

The Commission is planning a feedback event to inform the participants of the citizens' panel about the follow-up to their recommendations.