

CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE (CoFoE)

POSITIONS OF EU INSTITUTIONS – COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY OF KEY ELEMENTS

KEY ELEMENTS	EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT Resolution, 15 January 2020 Resolution, 18 June 2020	EUROPEAN COMMISSION Communication, 22 January 2020	COUNCIL OF THE EU Council position, 24 June 2020 Revised Council position, 3 February 2021	DRAFT JOINT DECLARATION ON THE CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE (Zero Draft, March 2021)
GENERAL ISSUES				
Start, duration & basic document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> launch: 9 May 2020 (initial resolution from January) as soon as possible in autumn 2020 duration: two years find common agreement on the establishment of the CoFoE before the summer break process, concept, structure, timing & scope should be agreed jointly by EP/COM/Council → memorandum of understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> launch: 9 May 2020 (kick-off event in Dubrovnik) completion: 4th semester 2022 → outcomes & recommendations of different debates should be presented & next steps considered concept, structure, scope & timing must be truly joint effort by EP/COM/Council → Joint Declaration Joint Declaration later to be opened to other signatories (incl. institutions, organisations & stakeholders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> launch: as soon as the conditions allow in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic formal kick-off on 9 May 2021 in Strasbourg, if COVID-19 conditions allow duration: two years until 2022 mandate could take form of Joint Declaration by EP/COM/Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of start/kick-off date conclusions by spring 2022
Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> renewed opportunity for EU citizens to have robust debate on Future of Europe (FoE) → bottom-up exercise make EU more democratic permanent mechanism for engaging with citizens on FoE identify what EU does well & what new measures it needs to do better increase EU capacity to act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give Europeans greater say on what EU does & how it works for them encourage European citizens & make it easier for them to get involved in decision-making beyond EU elections strengthening link between Europeans & institutions New Push for European Democracy create more vibrant, interactive & relevant democratic system forge a vision for our future opportunity for EU to showcase how it can further evolve through constructive engagement with its citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> inclusive platform bringing together different voices engaging in wide reflection & debate on challenges Europe is facing & on its long-term future opportunity to underpin the democratic legitimacy of European project & functioning of the European project as well as to uphold the EU citizens support for our common goals & values a further opportunity for citizens to express themselves opportunity to engage with citizens & other stakeholders as the EU seeks to emerge stronger from the COVID-19 crisis, & assess the EU's response to the crisis and address the citizens' concerns in this regard with the aim of strengthening European solidarity contribute to the development of our policies & instruments in medium & long terms so that we can better tackle current and future challenges contributing to joint vision of the direction EU should take in next decade & beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> open a new space for debate with citizens to address Europe's challenges and priorities and a further opportunity for citizens to express themselves citizens-focused, bottom-up exercise for Europeans to give citizens a say on what matters to them and a greater role in shaping the Union's future policies and ambitions, improving its resilience opportunity to underpin the democratic legitimacy and functioning of the European project as well as to uphold the EU citizens support for our common goals and values learn the lessons from past crises, closely involving citizens and communities shaping the Union's future policies and ambitions, improving its resilience

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Content & scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scope not limited to pre-defined policy fields or methods of integration • maximum, pre-defined but non-exhaustive policy priorities could be identified, such as: (i) European values, fundamental rights & freedoms; (ii) democratic & institutional aspects; (iii) environmental challenges & climate crisis; (iv) social justice & equality; (v) economic & employment issues incl. taxation; (vi) digital transformation; (vii) security & role of EU in the world • the COVID-19 crisis has made the need for the CoFoE more pressing • CoFoE should take into account the EU's existing recovery instruments and the solidarity that has already been established, while ensuring ecological sustainability, economic development, social progress, security and democracy • to prepare well in advance for next EP elections in 2024 → work on issues such as lead candidate system & transnational lists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two parallel strands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy strand: (i) fight against climate change & environmental challenges; (ii) an economy that works for people, social fairness & equality; (iii) Europe's digital transformation; (iv) promoting our European values; (v) strengthening the EU's voice in the world; (vi) shoring up the EU's democratic foundations • democracy/institutional strand: lead candidate system; transnational lists; electoral law reform → COM: role of facilitator & honest broker between EP & Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "policy first approach" → priority should be given to implementing the EU Strategic Agenda agreed in 2019 • focus on topics that truly matter to citizens, with long lasting impacts & wide outreach • Several key topics, including those from the EU Strategic Agenda and the relevance of which has been further highlighted in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges of economic recovery, such as (i) sustainability, including green transition & climate neutrality by 2050; (ii) societal challenges (public health, demographic challenges, generational, territorial and educational divides, gender equality, social protection, migration); (iii) innovation & digital transformation; (iv) fundamental values, rights & freedoms; (v) international role of EU • Important to focus also on cross-cutting issues related to the EU's ability to deliver on policy priorities (better regulation, subsidiarity & proportionality, transparency) • participants may raise other topics • following COVID-19, reflecting on the challenges, EU's future & resilience of societies & economies has become more important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scope should reflect the areas where the EU has the competence to act or where EU action would have been to the benefit of European citizens • key topics, reflecting the Strategic Agenda of the European Council, the Commission's Political Guidelines and the challenges brought about by COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. building a healthy continent, ii. fighting climate change & environmental challenges, iii. an economy that works for people, iv. social fairness, equality, intergenerational solidarity, v. Europe's digital transformation, vi. European rights and values, including Rule of Law, vii. migration challenges, viii. security, the EU's role in the world, ix. the Union's democratic foundations and how to strengthen democratic processes governing the EU x. Cross-cutting issues related to the EU's ability to deliver on policy priorities, such as better regulation, application of subsidiarity and proportionality, implementing and enforcement of the acquis and transparency • citizens may raise additional issues that matter to them
Communication & resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all existing & new communication tools for digital & physical participation should be coordinated among 3 institutions • all Conference meetings (plenary; Citizens' & Youth agoras) web-streamed & open to public • all Conference documents should be published (incl. contributions from stakeholders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EP/COM/Council to join forces with other EU institutions bodies & regional, national political representatives, institutions & stakeholders to promote CoFoE • all EU institutions should be ready to contribute resources, notably financial, for organisation & roll-out single conference identity → incl. common visual expression for all activities under umbrella of CoFoE • COM's Representations & EP Liaison Offices will have key role to play in raising awareness about CoFoE • Calendar of events, all contributions & supporting materials, including clear & educational information on the issues at stake, should be published online • meetings & large scale events to be web-streamed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective communication efforts will be essential in order to fulfil high expectations of citizens • Council welcomes the Commission's readiness to contribute to these efforts with various existing outreach tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • digital engagement efforts and activities are of key importance, but physical participation and face-to-face exchanges should constitute an essential part of CoFoE • reach out to citizens and promote broader, interactive and creative forms of participation • a single identity and a Conference Charter that all organisers of events have to subscribe to • based on inclusiveness, openness & transparency, while respecting privacy of people & EU data protection rules • European citizens' panels organised at European level are broadcasted; online submissions possible; documentation made available

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STRUCTURE & COMPOSITION				
Key Elements & phases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference Plenary (adopts working plan at 1st meeting) • Citizens' agoras • Youth agoras • start with listening phase to enable citizens to express ideas, make suggestions & propose vision of what Europe means for them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issue-specific deliberative panels organised by EU institutions • event under each rotating Council Presidency could take place outside capitals → events could provide opportunity to present any intermediate milestones • multilingual digital platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • main conferences (kick-off, mid-term & final) in Brussels and in countries of Council Presidencies • specific thematic conferences in MS • citizens' panels in MS and at European level • each member state can organise events in line with their own national specificities when deciding on the format(s) of events & make contributions to the CoFoE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference plenary • European Citizens' panels in each MS and at European level • MS and institutions can organise additional events in line with their own national or institutional specificities, such as national citizens' panels or thematic events bringing together input from different panels • interactive multilingual digital platform to collect, analyse and publish input throughout the Conference & as place for citizens to share ideas • multitude of Conference-events and debates across the Union • gatherings can be organised at European, national, transnational and regional level
Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • equal partners & strict parity between EP & Council/national parliaments • composition of Conference Plenary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ European Parliament → max. 135 MEPs (ensure balanced political representation) ◦ Council → 27 members representing EU27; ministerial level ◦ National Parliaments → 2-4 members per MS (ensure balanced political representation) ◦ European Commission → 3 Commissioners ◦ EESC & CoR → 4 members each ◦ EU-level social partners → 2 members per side • despite the pandemic, the direct engagement of citizens, civil society organisations, social partners and elected representatives must remain a priority • Well-established CSOs, NGOs, experts, universities, research centres & TTs across Europe are invited to support CoFoE process 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inclusive process with all MS involved equally • participation should be open to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ representatives of MS ◦ national parliaments, ◦ European Parliament ◦ European Commission ◦ CoR & EESC, High Representative to be associated when international role of the EU is discussed • participation of representatives from civil society and citizens should be actively sought and facilitated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EP, Council and Commission as equal partners together with MS • composition Conference Plenary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Representatives of EP, Council and Commission ◦ Representatives of all national Parliaments ◦ Representatives on equal footing with citizens ◦ Representation of CoR, EESC and social partners ◦ High Representative associated when EU's international role is discussed ◦ Representatives of key stakeholders may be invited

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Observers & candidate countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> representatives from Citizens' & Youth agoras invited to Conference Plenary to present & discuss their conclusions seek ways to involve EU candidate countries 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific events on EU level should be dedicated to young people no involvement of candidate countries
GOVERNANCE				
CoFoE leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Coordination Board composed of the three main EU institutions under leadership of EP 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CoFoE under authority of an eminent European personality as its independent and single chair, who is able to represent the joint interests of all three EU institutions, to be selected by mutual agreement among them CoFoE under authority of the three European Institutions, represented by the President of the EU, the President of the Council and the President of the European Commission acting as a Joint Chairmanship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Presidency: Conference placed under the authority of the three institutions, represented by their presidents
Responsibility within institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high-level patronage by three main EU institutions at highest level → Presidents EP/COM/EUCO → should guarantee process & provide oversight & kick off Conference process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VP Šuica to lead COM's work on CoFoE, supported by VP Jourová (institutional strand); VP Šefčovič (foresight) EP & MS could also designate points of contact to act as public faces or as ambassadors for the debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council will be represented by the MS holding the rotating Presidency, acting upon a mandate from the Council 	
Organisation & governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> process governed by range of bodies with defined/ad hoc responsibilities → gender balanced composition governance of CoFoE process ensured by Steering Committee (SC) & Executive Coordination Board composition SC: (i) EP representatives (all political groups & AFCE representative & representative of EP Bureau); (ii) Council representatives (presidencies); (iii) COM representatives (3 Commissioners) → all components shall have equal weight, → Executive Coordination Board members are part of SC as well responsibilities SC: (i) preparation of plenary meetings (drafting agendas, plenary reports & conclusions); (ii) preparation of Citizens' & Youth agoras; (iii) oversight of activities & organisation of Conference process responsibilities Executive Coordination Board: daily management of Conference process 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> governance should be lean and streamlined and should respect the main guiding principles listed below while also taking into account the principle of subsidiarity based on key principles: (i) equality between institutions at all levels; (ii) respect for institution's prerogatives; (iii) effectiveness & avoidance of unnecessary bureaucracy; (iv) effective citizens' involvement shared ownership and participation on equal footing by MS, COM & EP, also ensuring gender equality & in full respect of interinstitutional balance & respective roles as defined in Treaties National parliaments should be closely associated Steering group executive board composed of representatives of each institution on an equal footing, representatives of other bodies participating (CoR, EESC) invited as observers, where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> equal representation of three institutions in governance structure Executive Board consisting of 3 representatives of each institution (EP, Council, Commission) and up to 4 observers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible observers: presidential Troika of COSAC, CoR, EESC, other EU bodies & social partners Co-chaired by 3 institutions Will report regularly to Joint Presidency Taking decisions (by consensus) regarding the work of the CoFoE, processes and events, overseeing the Conference as it progresses and preparing the meetings of the Plenary, citizens' input and follow up Common Secretariat to assist work of Executive Board gender-balanced leadership

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → practical organisation of Conference, working groups, Citizens' agoras & any other initiative CoFoE 'secretariat' (members from 3 main EU institutions) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive board will take decisions (by consensus) regarding the Conference, including organisational issues and invitations of observers, processes, events, overseeing CoFoE joint secretariat of limited size with personnel from EP/COM/General Secretariat of Council 	
Frequency of meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plenary meetings at least twice per semester at EP minimum of two meetings per thematic Citizens' agora to provide input for CoFoE Plenary 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conference Plenary will meet at least every six months
CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION				
Citizens' selection & support for participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> diversity of societies should be fully represented reach all parts of EU → guarantee that any citizen can have a say ensure youth participation open, transparent process taking inclusive participatory & well-balanced approach to citizens & stakeholders involvement of citizens, organised civil society & range of stakeholders at EU, national, regional & local level representative composition of Citizens' agoras in terms of geography, gender, age, socio-economic background, education level random selection of participating citizens by independent institutions in MS elected politicians, senior government representatives & professional interest representatives cannot participate in Citizens' agoras individual thematic Citizens' agoras to be composed of same participants at each meeting to ensure coherence & consistency minimum of two meetings per thematic Citizens' agora to provide input for CoFoE Plenary reimbursement of travel & accommodation costs; arranging of authorised absence from workplace; compensation for social costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CoFoE will be new public forum for an open, inclusive, transparent & structured debate with citizens bottom-up forum, accessible to all citizens, from all walks of life & from all corners of EU & should reflect Europe's diversity open to civil society, EU institutions & other EU bodies (incl. CoR & EESC) as well as national, regional & local authorities, parliaments & other stakeholders promote widest possible participation & inclusion of views from across EU → all Europeans should be given equal opportunity to engage (young/old; rural/urban etc.) reaching out to silent majority gender equality, representation of minorities & persons with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> involvement of citizens & civil society needs to ensure wide representation of different groups of society, especially of young people broad debate with citizens vital role of our citizens & their active participation & contribution in framing our future vision of Europe needs to be clear & strong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> multitude of Conference-events and debates organised across the Union & on multilingual digital platform citizens' participation should aim at mirroring Europe's diversity organised on different levels, including European, national, transnational and regional level involvement of citizens, civil society and stakeholders on European level representative in citizens' geographic origin, gender, age, socioeconomic background and/or level of education specific events should be dedicated to young people National and European events will be organised along a set of principles and minimum criteria to be defined by the Conference structures

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Citizens' involvement – transnational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • several thematic Citizens' agoras reflecting policy priorities • max. 200-300 citizens → min. 3 per MS (calculated in accordance with principle of degressive proportionality) • Citizens' agoras shall be held in different locations across EU • two Youth agoras (16-25 years) → one at beginning of CoFoE & one towards the end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build on well-established citizens' dialogues • build on useful experience of EU institutions & MS from their active engagement with European citizens • existing tools allowing citizens to contribute to EU policy-making should be promoted as part of CoFoE (ECI; 'Have your say'; Erasmus; DiscoverEU; European Solidarity Corps) • multilingual digital platform = main hub for all information & activities → should aim to maximise participation, accessibility & transparency (livestreaming debates; gathering outcomes of debates; promoting interactive ways for public debate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building on methods & results of citizens' dialogues & consultations, CoFoE, with assistance in particular of COM, CoR & ESSC, should ensure effective involvement of citizens & stakeholders through debates, incl. at MS and regional level, as well as through the internet/digital platforms and citizens' panels in MS and at European level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European institutions commit to organise European citizens' panels • representative in citizens' geographic origin, gender, age, socioeconomic background and/or level of education • specific events should be dedicated to young people • panels provide input to the Conference Plenary by formulating a set of recommendations for the Union to follow-up on • institutions can organise additional events, in line with their own institutional specificities
Citizens' involvement – national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uniform & consistent methodologies used to collect & process citizens' inputs across all MS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national & regional parliaments & actors should be encouraged to hold Conference-related events • citizens' assemblies organised in MS • national partners, as well as social partners, regional & local authorities & civil society must play a fundamental role throughout the Conference • all institutions & civil society partners that wish to participate in CoFoE should be asked to subscribe to principles & objectives defined in Joint Declaration • interactive & creative forms of participation: sporting events; festivals; hackathons • Europe Direct networks can help in stimulating & organising regional conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building on methods & results of citizens' dialogues & consultations, CoFoE, with assistance in particular of COM, CoR & ESSC, should ensure effective involvement of citizens & stakeholders through debates, incl. at MS and regional level, as well as through the internet/digital platforms and citizens' panels in MS and at European level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each MS can organise additional events, in line with their own national specificities, such as national citizens' panels or thematic events bringing together input from different panels
DECISIONS				
Decision-making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens' agoras: seek to find agreement by consensus → where not possible: minority opinion can be voiced • Conference Plenary: seek consensus on recommendations of Conference Plenary <i>or</i>, at a minimum: recommendations should represent views of majority of representatives of each of 3 EU institutions & national parliaments 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the structures of the Conference will agree from the outset and on a consensual basis on the modalities for reporting on the outcomes of the various activities undertaken in the context of the Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European citizens' panels: provide input to the Conference Plenary by formulating a set of recommendations for the Union to follow up • Executive Board will draw & publish Plenary conclusions • structures of the Conference will agree on the modalities for reporting the outcomes of the various activities undertaken in the context of the Conference • Executive Board taking decisions by consensus

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Outcomes/output & input	<p>Type of outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no predetermined outcome • CoFoE shall produce concrete recommendations → addressed by institutions & turned into action to meet expectations of citizens & stakeholders • keep the scope of the Conference open to all possible outcomes, including legislative proposals, initiating treaty change or otherwise <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plenary report after each meeting with conclusions & working group reports (public docs) • final conclusions adopted at final meeting of Conference Plenary → summarising outcome of process as a whole <p>Follow up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general commitment from all participants to ensure proper follow-up of outcome (in accordance with respective role & competencies) • EP commits itself to a genuine follow-up of the Conference, with legislative proposals, initiating treaty change or otherwise & calls on other two institutions to make the same commitment 	<p>Type of outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoFoE cannot be simple stocktaking exercise → must be way of enabling citizens to shape EU policies <p>Follow up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COM committed to taking most effective actions to ensure that what citizens debate is translated into EU policy-making • follow-up with real action & tangible results → President UvdL pledged to follow up on what is debated & agreed during CoFoE • feedback mechanism should ensure that ideas expressed result in concrete recommendations for future EU action • as part of feedback mechanism, it will be important to determine how to integrate citizens' feedback into coherent set of recommendations • COM ready to take into account citizens' feedback & proposals in setting of legislative agenda. • commitment to follow-up should be formalised from very beginning of process in Joint Declaration 	<p>Type of outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Union framework offers potential to allow challenges to be addressed in an effective manner. • CoFoE not within the scope of Article 48 TEU <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcome of CoFoE should be reflected in report to European Council in 2022 <p>Follow up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In light of the EUCO conclusions, EU institutions would commit to examine swiftly how to effectively follow up to this report, each within their own sphere of competence in accordance with the Treaties 	<p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final outcome will be presented in a report to the Joint Presidency <p>Follow up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three institutions will examine swiftly how to follow up effectively to this report, each within their own sphere of competences and in accordance with the treaties • Feedback mechanism will ensure that the ideas expressed during the Conference events result in concrete recommendations for EU action