

Citizens & the Conference on the Future of Europe - success story or lost cause?

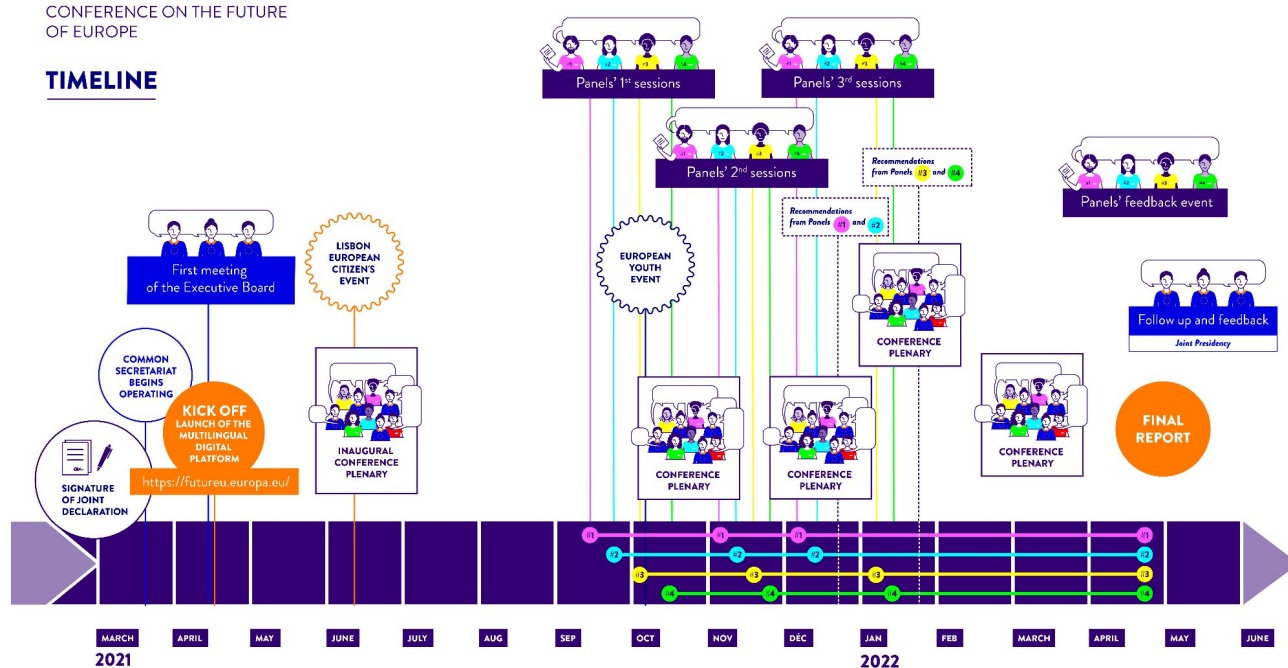
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Citizens Take Over Europe

Questions to be addressed

- What is the Conference on the Future of Europe?
- Why is the Conference happening?
- What is (supposed to be) the selling point of the Conference?
- How successful is the Conference in terms of 'inclusive deliberation'?
- What to expect in terms of follow-up?
- Conclusion: success story or lost cause?

What is the Conference on the Future of Europe?

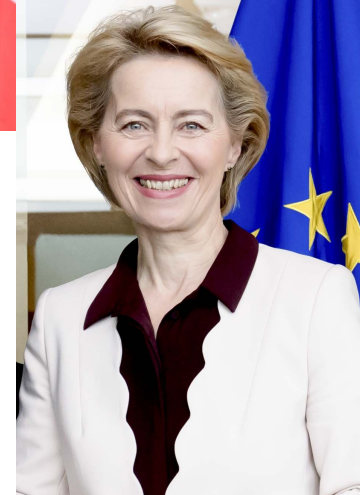
A 1-year process of (online and offline) events and dialogue among citizens and politicians at all political levels, with the purpose of arriving at (commonly agreed) reform proposals for the future of Europe.



Why is the Conference happening?

- Federalist wish for EU reform
- Promise that got EC President Von der Leyen elected in 2019
- Others could not say 'no' to a proposal for transnational debate and citizen participation

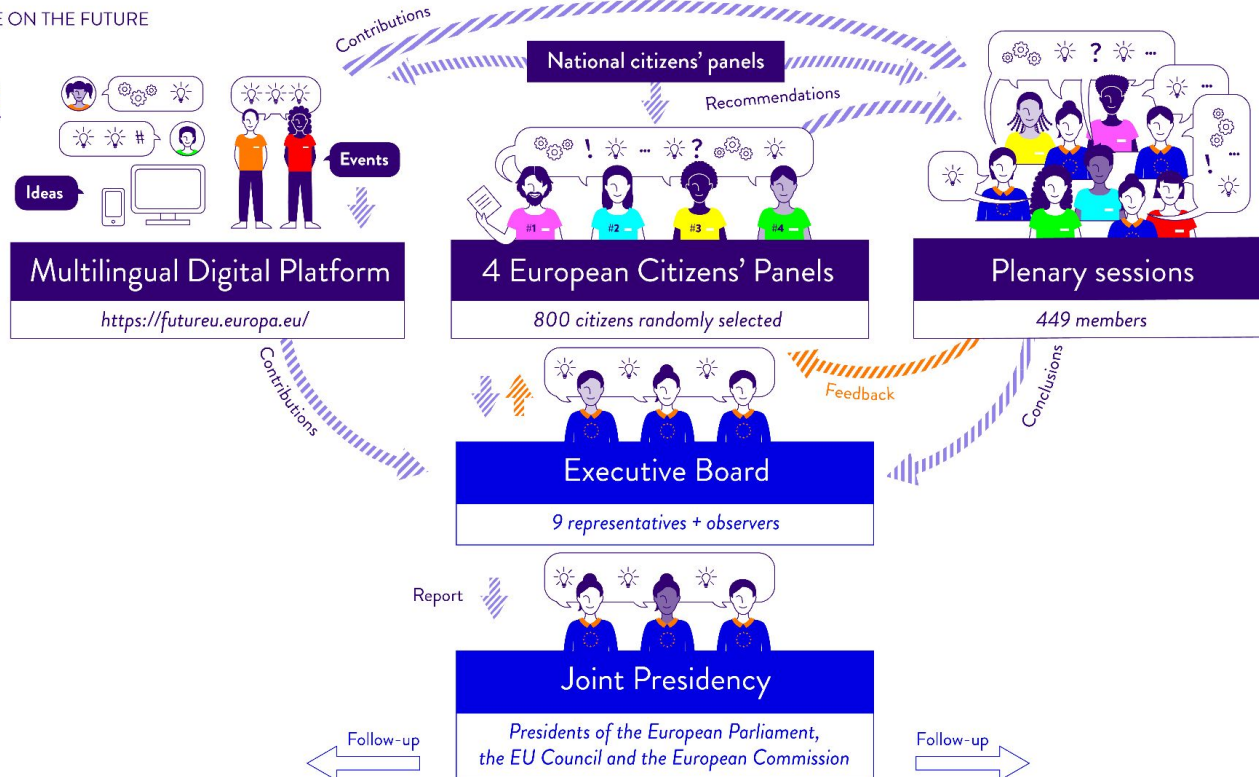
Note: citizen participation in the Conference was no end in itself



The selling point of the Conference: inclusive deliberation

CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE
OF EUROPE

PROCESS



How inclusive is the Conference *really*?

- Citizens' panels: exclusion of EU residents without EU citizenship, gender binary approach to participant selection, no quota for racialised and other marginalised communities
- Plenary: no representation of marginalised communities, apart from President European Disability Forum
- No strategy on including marginalised communities and creating a safe space for all



*Campaign supported by
60+ civil society organisations*

What to expect from the follow-up?

“[T]he **Plenary** will on a consensual basis put forward its **proposals to the Executive Board**. [...] Based on the Conference Plenary’s discussions and proposals, the **Executive Board**, acting on a consensual basis, shall **draw-up a report**, in full collaboration and in full transparency with the Conference Plenary, which will then be published on the Multilingual Digital Platform. [...] The final outcome of the Conference will be presented in a report **to the Joint Presidency**. 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.”

Rules of Procedure of the Conference on the Future of Europe

My conclusion: success story or lost cause?

- **EU needs fundamental self-reflection** on past & present actions - how it has contributed to perpetuating global inequality and injustice - in order to shape a better future for itself and for the world
- **Marginalised communities need to be at the center** of any such reflection & participation exercises: “when they enter, we all enter” (Kimberlé Crenshaw)
- **Conference in current form is symptomatic of what is wrong with the EU**
 - it deflects from the root causes of European societal problems, it further marginalises those already marginalised and it keeps the people divided
- **Civil society should reflect on its own role and responsibility** in the way the EU has been shaped up until today - it should prioritise building ties of solidarity with the most marginalised and push itself, the Conference and the EU as a whole to do better

More info on Citizens Take Over Europe?

www.citizenstakeover.eu



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Want to get/stay in touch?

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Happy to answer any questions! ? ☐

Thank you for listening! ☐ ☐