

## Conference on the Future of Europe

*A conversation between the EU and its citizens about the future of Europe*



Photo credit: ©European Commission

### What is it?

Despite its name, the ‘Conference on the Future of Europe’ is actually not a single event or meeting. Rather, it **a period of one year, where the institutions<sup>1</sup>** which make up the European Union (EU) **will reach out to the people living in the EU to hear their opinions about what the future of the EU should look like.** The Conference officially started on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 and will finish in May 2022.

*“People need to be at the very centre of all our policies. My wish is therefore that all Europeans will actively contribute to the Conference on the Future of Europe and play a leading role in setting the European Union’s priorities. It is only together that we can build our Union of tomorrow.”*

**Ursula von der Leyen**, President of the European Commission  
22 January 2020

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<sup>1</sup> The European Parliament, Council of the European Union and European Commission

## What will happen?

The Conference on the Future of Europe will mainly be organised by citizens themselves. The people living in Europe, organisations, cities and governments are encouraged to organise events and meetings to discuss the future of Europe. The EU has created an [online platform](#) where it is possible to share your opinions and experiences, find an event to attend or invite others to join your event.

It is important to note that **the Conference platform is created for adults. Children and young people below the age of 18 are encouraged to participate through an adult you trust.**

Next to the online platform, the Conference also hosts a series of Conference sessions, the so-called “**Citizens’ Panels**”. During each of these Panels, **EU citizens either meet in the European Parliament in Strasbourg or online**, to discuss their ideas, wishes, and hopes about the future of Europe, including all the things that have been posted on the platform. These Panels also include a large number of children and young people. To ensure diversity, the participants in the Citizens’ Panels have been pre-selected.

If you would like to **see how the Parliament in Strasbourg looks or how such a Citizens’ Panel is organised**, you can click on [this link](#) and re-watch the last session in a video.

The issues raised in the citizens’ panel will then be discussed by national and European policy makers and civil society organization within another forum called the “Conference Plenary”.

In May 2022, when the Conference finishes, **the EU institutions will collect all the contributions and write up a report**, which will be presented to the most important people in the EU. Based on this, they will then come together to decide how to improve the EU.



Photo credit: ©European Commission

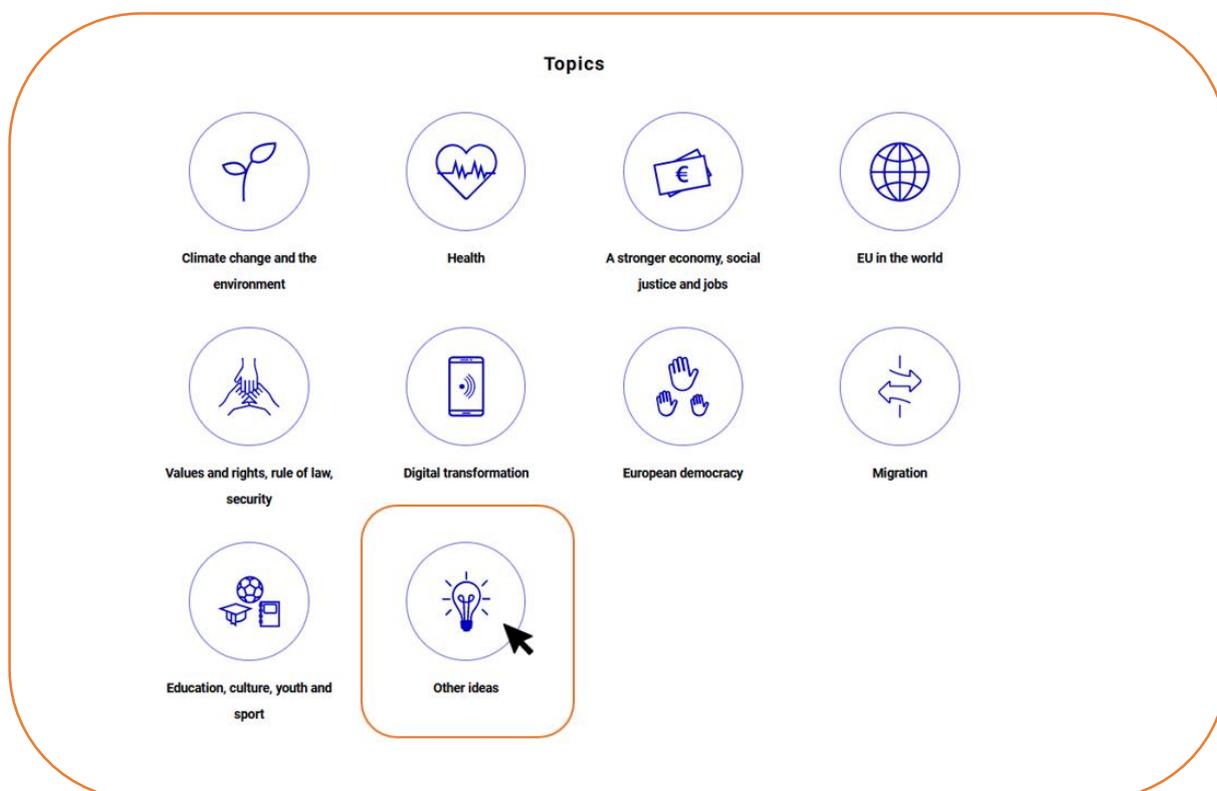
## How can children and young people participate?

It is important that children and young people are heard when we discuss what the future of the EU will look like. Whether or not you are already experienced with sharing your opinion in meetings, your participation is very much welcomed.

The [online platform](#) is the main tool for the Conference. **As the online platform is strictly created for people above the age of 18, you should use the platform via an adult you trust.** You can also reach out to an organisation working on children's rights in your city or country. With their help, you have a variety of options for participating in the Conference:

- **Share your opinions, ideas, experiences, etc. directly on the platform (see an example about inclusive education [here](#));**
- **Write a longer text, make a picture, song or video (either alone or with friends) and upload it to the platform;**
- **Find events to attend, where you can discuss about what you think is important. You can also organise your own events with organisations you work with;**

You are free to talk about any topic you find important for creating a better Europe. However, there are already some overall topics, which you can use for inspiration. These are separated into groups on the online platform and can help you find the place where your ideas and opinions fit best. These topics are:



No one knows what the result of the Conference will be, so feel free to be as creative as you like. Only our hopes, dreams and imagination set the boundaries for what the Future of the EU might look like.

### **Stay Safe and Have fun!**

Whatever way you choose to participate, we strongly encourage you **to do it with the support of an adult you trust**. Your safety is always the most important. As with anything else, we firstly encourage you to **discuss your participation with your parent/legal guardian to get their consent for your participation**.

It is important that you do not share anything you might later regret and that your private information remains safe and secure. We therefore encourage you **never to share any information that might help people identify you**, including your last name, your social media accounts, your school, town, friends, etc. It is very important that you **talk to your parent/guardian before uploading a video or picture of yourself or anyone you know**.

### **For more information, contact:**

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