



# Conference on the **Future** of **Europe**

## SUMMARY RECORD

### **Working Group on A stronger economy, social justice and jobs**

**Chaired by Iratxe García Pérez (replaced partially by Gabriele Bischoff), European Parliament**

**21 January 2022, 10:00-12:00**

#### **1. Introductory remarks of the Chair**

Chair Iratxe Garcia Perez opened the third meeting of the Working Group (WG) by noting that it was being webstreamed, as agreed in the previous meeting. She announced that on 25-27 February, the European Citizens' Panel would come forward with its recommendations to be discussed by this WG which will also be presented at the Conference Plenary in March. She mentioned that several national panels have completed their work and some recommendations they developed were relevant for this WG. These recommendations were already published on the online Platform.

#### **2. Discussion - A stronger economy for the future**

The Chair reported briefly recalled some of the Orientations developed by the European Citizens' Panel. A new inclusive growth model – that reconcile social issues with economic growth - is clearly needed for Europe. The taxation is a prominent issue for EU to take into account. Democracy should be fostered with EU institutions that are accountable and transparent, and the European Parliament and national parliaments should have an important role. Investments are necessary to improve resilience, deal with any future crises and tackle inequalities. In general there is a call for a more human-centered approach to the economy.

Many speakers stressed that competitiveness and social justice go hand in hand. Public investments in infrastructure are essential, for example in internet, railroads, education and(digital) skills to enable innovation and competitiveness, or in healthcare and other social services to fight poverty and improve the living conditions, of especially those who remain vulnerable. Some speakers called for more fiscal responsibility while others stressed that raising public debt might be necessary if investments are made towards meeting the goals behind the green transition and ensuring a solid recovery from the crisis. Speakers stressed the role of the single market to keep the EU economy



## Conference on the **Future** of **Europe**

competitive and called for single market test. Some speakers defended the use of competitiveness checks” that could be useful and discussions on what defines ‘competitiveness’ should continue. However, the design and how such “checks” could be put in place is not very clear at this stage. To ensure the just dimension of the recovery process, some speakers proposed to genuinely implement the social progress protocol and proposed to include in the European Semester and economic governance the “beyond the GDP” dimension (in particular social and environmental issues). Respect for social rights, well-functioning social dialogue, democracy at work, collective bargaining are at the center of well-functioning economy for several speakers. Research and innovation and youth entrepreneurship should further underpin the EU economy. For several members, the EU should have more competences on taxation, to correct inequalities across the EU economies as well as to fight tax evasion and tax avoidance. EU should boost its own production of strategic products. Gender issues should be integrated in all aspects of the economy and fighting gender-based violence should be a priority. The need to further strengthen the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights was raised. While still looking for coordinated ways to tackle common EU challenges, some mentioned that certain issues should remain a competence of national level (e.g. social benefits system).

A number of points regarding the process and working methods were made. Some members recalled their reservations about the third interim report, claiming a number of issues were missing. Documents for discussion need to be shared with WG members well in advance to allow for proper preparation. Citizens’ proposals/recommendations should be clustered in order to discuss them in the WG in an efficient way.. A traffic lights system was proposed by some members (red: out of EU scope, orange: already underway, green: new ideas within EU scope), to allow screening of citizens’ proposals. Other members warned that proposals currently out of scope of the EU should not be dismissed, as the Conference aims to define the future of Europe. WG conclusions should be drafted in writing, in order to feed into the Plenary in a clear way, however, the method of adopting the WG conclusions needs to be clarified. For several members, the calendar of the Conference is too tight and the closing Plenaries should be postponed to allow the citizens panels and the WG to finalize their work. For the future, one speaker proposed that EU institutions, possibly on an annual basis, would communicate to citizens how recommendations are put in place.

### **3. Concluding remarks of the Chair**



## Conference on the **Future** of **Europe**

The Chair announced she would bring the concerns and questions expressed regarding the working methods and the calendar to the attention of the Conference's Executive Board. The chair also pointed out that the postponement of the conclusion of the citizen panel related to the working group has slowed down the process. The timeline and the way of adopting conclusions should be clarified by the next WG meeting.

### **ANNEX. List of members of the Working Group on A stronger economy, social justice and jobs**

Chair: Iratxe GARCIA PEREZ (European Parliament)

Spokesperson: Eoin STAFFORD

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Title	First name	Last name	Component
Mr	Vincenzo	AMENDOLA	Council
Ms	Clotilde	ARMAND	Local/Regional representative
Ms	Manon	AUBRY	European Parliament
Ms	Regina	BASTOS	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Nicola	BEER	European Parliament
Mr	Markus	BEYRER	Social Partners
Ms	Gabriele	BISCHOFF	European Parliament
Ms	Maret Michaela	BRUNNERT	European citizens panels
Mr	Christian	BUCHMANN	National Parliaments
Mr	Jan	CHLUP	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Rosianne	CUTAJAR	National Parliaments
Ms	Elisa	GAMBARDELLA	Civil Society
Ms	Iratxe	GARCÍA PÉREZ	European Parliament
Mr	Wilm	GEURTS	Council
Mr	Roman	HAIDER	European Parliament
Ms	Eveliina	HEINÄLUOMA	National Parliaments
Mr	Michiel	HOOGEVEEN	European Parliament
Ms	Meira	HOT	National Parliaments
Ms	Camila Isabelle Chalotte	JENSEN	European citizens panels
Ms	Marina	KALJURAND	European Parliament
Mr	Siim	KALLAS	National Parliaments
Mr	Joémy	LINDAU	European citizens panels
Mr	Stefano	MALLIA	European Economic and Social Committee
Ms	Vladimíra	MARCINKOVÁ	National Parliaments
Ms	Andreja	METELKO-ZGOMBIC	Council



## Conference on the **Future** of **Europe**

Ms	Roberta	METSOLA	European Parliament
Mr	Radu-Mihai	MIHAIL	National Parliaments
Ms	Lucía	MUÑOZ	National Parliaments
Mr	Siegfried	MUREȘAN	European Parliament
Mr	Niklas Hendrik	NIENASS	European Parliament
Ms	Leverne	NIJMAN	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Marina	NIKOLAOU	National Parliaments
Mr	Władysław	ORTYL	Committee of the Regions
Mr	Kacper	PAROL	European citizens panels
Ms	Sirpa	PIETIKÄINEN	European Parliament
Mr	Neale	RICHMOND	National Parliaments
Mr	Vibe	RØMER WESTH	Council
Mr	Oliver	RÖPKE	European Economic and Social Committee
Mr	Christophe	ROUILLON	Committee of the Regions
Mr	Nicolas	SCHMIT	European Commission
Mr	Vladimír	ŠORF	European citizens panels
Mr	Eoin	STAFFORD	European citizens panels
Mr	Andres	SUTT	Council
Ms	Katja	TRILLER VRTOVEC	Council
Ms	Els	VAN HOOF	National Parliaments
Ms	Monika	VANA	European Parliament
Mr	Luca	VISENTINI	Social Partners
Ms	Ružica	VUKOVAC	National Parliaments