



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

SUMMARY RECORD

**Working Group on Climate change and environment, Chaired by Ms Pasková, Council / Czechia
22 October 2021, 14:00-16:00**

1. Introductory remarks of the Chair

The Chair, Ms Anna Pasková, welcomed Members and outlined the main themes from the Multi Lingual Digital Platform (Platform). She also recalled the streams and subtopics identified by Panel 3 of the European Citizens Panels. Then the Chair gave the floor to citizens' representatives from the European Citizens Panels, after which the floor was given to all other Members of the Working Group who wished to take the floor.

2. Discussion

At the start of the exchange, the representatives of the relevant European Citizens' Panel (Panel 3) explained that the first meeting had been an introductory one, but that there already seemed some consensus on a number of areas such as boosting renewable energy and reducing energy consumption. Other ideas were also shared, such as reducing flights and focussing on high-speed rail links.

During the debate among Working Group Members, a wide variety of topics were raised:

- To have full understanding of the terminology when addressing 'renewable energy', and 'primary' and 'secondary energy';
- The urgency of the situation and the need to address energy savings and stimulate innovation in the short term;
- The need to guarantee just transition, with full involvement of social partners and key role for social protection systems and public services;
- The need for the EU to show leadership in the COP26, and also more generally lead by example;
- To look at both threats and opportunities in all areas, for example in the agricultural sector;
- Some raised that nuclear energy is clean and that cheap energy is vital for industrial development and technical innovation;
- To take a broad approach when looking at energy and resources savings;
- More generally, the importance to address the circular economy; addressing re-use of materials, environmental pressures driven by unsustainable consumption and the issue of rapid obsolescence of appliances;
- To focus in general on sustainability, also as a business model and prevent greenwashing;
- To be conscience of the effects of climate change - but also of measures taken in this context - for particular areas, communities, and vulnerable citizens. Equality is crucially important in this context (creation of quality jobs and respect of workers' rights in new value chains, employment, fighting against social dumping) as well as gender aspect;

- Adaptation measures should go hand in hand with mitigation effort;
- Regarding transport, green alternatives are often not available in the countryside; and you need a car to go to a doctor or for commuting to work for example;
- To address pollution and waste, water quality was also particularly mentioned;
- Aim for socially sustainable climate protection;
- The need for public access to nature, possibly a 'right of nature' but without excessive and unsustainable tourism;
- The importance of twin transition and IT sector especially, innovations and building of sustainable infrastructure (in order to face climate change impacts) and increasing investments into technological progress;
- Specific characteristics of each region, with all opportunities and limitations, should be kept in mind.
- The need to be aware that experts' predications have been wrong in the past and that all measures need to be balanced;
- To move from 'marketing to mattering' and develop sustainable business models;
- To focus broadly on communication and reduce fear of new ideas
- Critically look at current subsidies system for energy, but also the VAT systems for healthy and green products, ensuring a fair and sustainable system;
- The importance of education, but also the need for real consequences and penalties for those who harm the environment, enhance biodiversity protection and anchor a term of ecocide as a crime
- Measures and funds for facilitating a just transition to greener policies, including social conditionalities.

In relation to the expectations of Members on the outcome of the Working Group, the following points were also made:

- The need to listen carefully to the citizens in this process and to take into account applicability of ideas and their impact on people and society;
- Be clear about what can be achieved at what level; European, national, local.
- Clear commitments are needed from all levels and all involved (international) organisations;
- The need to acknowledge progress in past years, but still be ambitious for the future;
- The wish to come to clear recommendations of the Working Group, including very practical and easily implementable ones;
- Ensure proper reflection, and no rush to legislation or to conclusions of the Conference;
- Stressing the need to come up with concrete and practical proposals;
- The need to structure the Working Group work and to ensure proper provision of information for the Members;
- The need to come with concrete outcomes as a Working Group in order to provide input to Plenary;
- The input coming from the Digital Platform should not be classified;
- The Working Group's outcomes should be in written form.

3. Concluding remarks of the Chair

Concluding the meeting, the Chair thanked all Members for their contributions, underlining that there are already some regularly emerging issues. There seems to be a broad support for the notion that it is necessary to act soon. It is also clear that any measures need to be socially

acceptable. In order to progress we need to educate and innovate, taking advantage of all available data and science.

The Chairs assured Members that the next Working Group meeting will be more structured, based on background documents and input from the European Citizens' Panels and the Interim Reports, and that Members will be asked to prioritise the subjects to be discussed at the next meeting. The Chair indicated that the next Working Group meeting will be during the December Plenary and closed the meeting.

ANNEX II. List of members of the Working Group on Climate change and the environment

Chair: Anna PASKOVÁ (Council)

Title	First name	Last name	Component
Mr	Pieyre-Alexandre	ANGLADE	National Parliaments
Ms	Muhterem	ARAS	Committee or the Regions
Ms	Alexandra	ATTALIDES	National Parliaments
Ms	Claudia	BANU	National Parliaments
Ms	Hildegard	BENTELE	European Parliament
Mr	Pascal	BOLO	Social Partners
Ms	Manuela	BORA	Local/Regional representative
Ms	Maria	CINQUE	European citizens panels
Ms	Esther	DE LANGE	European Parliament
Mr	Sándor	DÉNESI	European citizens panels
Mr	Herbert	DORFMANN	European Parliament
Ms	Eleonora	EVI	European Parliament
Ms	Claudia	GAMON	European Parliament
Mr	Olgierd	GEBLEWICZ	Committee or the Regions
Ms	Leonore	GEWESSLER	Council
Mr	Adam	GUIBOURGÉ-CZETWERTYŃSKI	Council
Ms	Elisabeth	GUIGOU	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Valentina	GUTKAS	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Patrizia	HEIDEGGER	Civil Society
Mr	Dorin	HELL	European citizens panels
Mr	Reiner Gerd	HOFFMANN	European Economic and Social Committee
Ms	Birgit	HONÉ	National Parliaments
Ms	Laura	HUHTASAARI	European Parliament
Mr	Jens	JOEL	National Parliaments
Ms	Hajnalka	JUHÁSZ	National Parliaments
Ms	Thilde	KARLSSON	European citizens panels
Mr	Bojan	KEKEC	National Parliaments
Mr	Alban	LAVAUD	European citizens panels
Mr	Cillian	LOHAN	European Economic and Social Committee
Mr	Jani	MÄKELÄ	National Parliaments
Ms	Éva	MÉSZÁROS	European citizens panels
Mr	Haus	MOLLENHAUER	European citizens panels
Ms	Anna	PASKOVÁ	Council
Mr	Marko	PAVIĆ	National Parliaments

Ms	Rossella	PELLARIN	European citizens panels
Ms	Zita	PLEŠTINSKÁ	National Parliaments
Mr	Augusts	REDOVIČS	European citizens panels
Ms	Caterina	RENDE DOMINIS	National citizens panels/events
Ms	María Eugenia	RODRÍGUEZ PALOP	European Parliament
Ms	Hélène	RYCKMANS	National Parliaments
Mr	Andreas	SCHIEDER	European Parliament
Ms	Jitka	SEITLOVÁ	National Parliaments
Mr	Virginijus	SINKEVICIUS	European Commission
Ms	Livia	SPERA	Social Partners
Ms	Beata	SZYDŁO	European Parliament
Ms	Vera	TAX	European Parliament
Mr	Nils	TORVALDS	European Parliament
Mr	László	TRÓCSÁNYI	European Parliament
Ms	Juliane	UNBEREIT	European citizens panels
Ms	Adina	VALEAN	European Commission
Ms	Judit	VARGA	Council
Mr	Miltiadis	VARVITSIOTIS	Council
Ms	Ana Paula	ZACARIAS	Council