



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

## SUMMARY RECORD

**Working Group on 'Health', Chaired by Mr Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President, European Commission**

**Friday 11 March 2022, 9:00 to 11:00**

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

The fourth meeting of the Working Group was held in hybrid format and was webstreamed on the Conference [Multilingual Digital Platform](#).

The debate was structured around the four thematic clusters. For each cluster, the Chair, Mr Maroš Šefčovič outlined the recommendations and summarised previous discussions in the Working Group, the debate in the Plenary on 22 January 2022 and the related contributions on the Digital Platform. He then invited Members to react and share their comments.

Some Members underlined that several recommendations (especially: recommendations 1, 4, 5, 6, 15 and 16 and possibly 8, 10, 13) which have been allocated to the "Climate change and the environment" Working Group also have an important health dimension which should be taken on board.

### **2. Discussion**

#### **Cluster 1: "Healthy food and healthy lifestyles"**

A Member underlined that the right to food should be a standard human right. Another Member said that information campaigns on prevention and healthy lifestyles should be further developed. Some expressed doubts about Recommendation 19<sup>1</sup>, underlining the need to assess the impact of this kind of measure and to pay attention to the implications that it could have on activities in some Member States. The Chair replied that impact assessment is the standard practice for the Commission before adopting legislative proposals.

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendations are available [here](#)

## **Cluster 2: “Reinforce the healthcare system”**

A Member underlined the importance of minimum quality standards in the health area. Another Member highlighted the need to draw the lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic and the important role of the regional and local authorities for citizens’ quality of life.

Referring to recommendations 39 and 40, a Member said that minimum standards for health workers were key.

Referring to Recommendation 40, a Member suggested a proposal to establish a list of essential medicines at EU level and to provide for their joint procurement and/or stockpiling. Greater focus on rare diseases should be included. Cross-border treatments should be made more easily available for citizens to benefit from state of the art medicine.

Some Members could agree with recommendation 41 but said that healthcare data should be protected and cannot be used for market analysis, hence the need to work with appropriate data sets. A member said that the “Health passport” - as outlined in recommendation 41 – was a good idea to boost EU competences while it should not limit the freedom of people. However, another member stressed that Member States’ competences should be respected in this respect.

Some members could support recommendations 42 and 43 on health research with one member suggesting to increase the budget at EU level.

## **Cluster 3: “A broader understanding of Health”**

A Member suggested that Recommendation 44 should not be limited to mental health, e.g. through an annual rotation on various subjects.

Several members highlighted the need to act on mental health. A member said that mental and physical health should be part of a holistic approach. Another member mentioned that support to mental health should start from the early childhood, e.g. through early diagnostic.

Regarding recommendation 45, a member asked to take on board period poverty and baby products.

Another Member said that budgetary support would be needed to implement recommendation 46. While supporting recommendation 46, another one stressed the need to also address healthy ageing, healthcare for the elderly and for disabled people. The need to identify gender-specific issues was also raised.

A member considered that sexual health was an important issue deserving attention, while another said that reproductive and sexual health belong to Member States’ competences.

A Member said that a Recommendation<sup>2</sup> of another panel was related to euthanasia, which is a very delicate issue on which Member States have different laws, approaches and sensitivities.

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<sup>2</sup> Recommendation 24 of Panel 1: “We recommend the EU should support palliative care and assisted death [euthanasia] following a concrete set of rules and regulations”

Some Members stressed the global dimension of health and the importance of the “One Health Approach”.

#### **Cluster 4: Equal access to health for all**

Referring to recommendation 48, a member deplored that an important part of the population cannot afford dental care and also raised problems of availability of dental care.

Some Members suggested that more should be done on cancer, rare diseases, to ensure access to health at fair prices and to make cross-border treatments more accessible. Support to people with disabilities, notably through technologies, was also underlined.

On recommendation 49, a Member considered that EU competences should be shared with the national and regional level but that EU competences should be bolstered. Another Member insisted on Member States’ competences in this policy field. Another proposed the idea of a health and well-being pact aiming to fight against inequalities and of a European health guarantee.

Some Members stressed the need for strategic autonomy in this area. It should not only relate to basic treatments but should also concern future treatments, innovation and research.

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

Concluding the meeting, the Chair indicated that he intends to prepare, together with the Working Group Spokesperson and the Common secretariat, draft proposals, which will be based on all the input received so far within the rules of the Conference. These proposals will be shared with the Working Group Members ahead of the next Working Group meeting on 25 March.

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## ANNEX: List of Members of the Working Group on Health

### CoFE Plenary Working Group on Health (49)

Chair: Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ (European Commission)

Title	First name	Last name	Component
Mr	Pascal	ARIMONT	European Parliament
Ms	Alina	BÂRGĂOANU	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Katerina	BAT'HOVÁ	Council
Ms	Linette Eleni	BLANKENSTEINER	European citizens panels
Ms	Claudette	BUTTIGIEG	National Parliaments
Ms	Anda	ČAKŠA	National Parliaments
Ms	Susanna	CECCARDI	European Parliament
Mr	Roberto	CIAMBETTI	Committee of the Regions
Mr	Alain	COHEUR	European Economic and Social Committee
Ms	Nathalie	COLIN-OESTERLÉ	European Parliament
Ms	Margarita	DE LA PISA CARRIÓN	European Parliament
Ms	Isabel	DÍAZ AYUSO	Committee of the Regions
Ms	Ewa	NOWACKA	Council
Ms	Ines	GASMI	European citizens panels
Ms	Camille	GIRARD	European citizens panels
Ms	Daniela	GÎTMAN	Council
Mr	Ilenia Carmela	GRECO	European citizens panels
Mr	Sebastián	GUILLEN	European citizens panels
Ms	Kinga	JOÓ	National citizens panels/events
Mr	Louis	TELEMACHOU	Council
Ms	Boudraa	MAGHNIA LINDA (MOUSTAKIM)	European citizens panels
Ms	Radka	MAXOVÁ	European Parliament
Ms	Rūta	MILIŪTĒ	National Parliaments
Mr	Alin Cristian	MITUȚA	European Parliament
Ms	Dolors	MONTERRAT	European Parliament
Mr	Nicolas	MORAVEK	European citizens panels
Mr	Renaud	MUSELIER	Local/Regional representative
Ms	Ria	OOMEN-RUIJTEN	National Parliaments
Mr	Dimitrios	PAPADIMOULIS	European Parliament
Ms	Troels de Leon	PETERSEN	European citizens panels
Mr	Mark	PLEŠKO	National citizens panels/events
Mr	Jean-François	RAPIN	National Parliaments
Mr	Ivo	RASO	European citizens panels
Ms	Michèle	RIVASI	European Parliament
Ms	Valeria	RONZITTI	Social Partners

Ms	Christa	SCHWENG	European Economic and Social Committee
Mr	Maroš	ŠEFČOVIČ	European Commission
Ms	Elisaveta	SIMEONOVA	Council
Mr	Ivan Vilibor	SINČIĆ	European Parliament
Ms	Niamh	SMYTH	National Parliaments
Ms	Paola	TAVERNA	National Parliaments
Mr	Jesús	TERUEL TERUEL	European citizens panels
Mr	Zoltán	TESSELY	National Parliaments
Ms	Patrizia	TOIA	European Parliament
Ms	Kathleen	VAN BREMPT	European Parliament
Ms	Assya	KAVRAKOVA	Civil Society
Ms	Anna	VIKSTRÖM	National Parliaments
Mr	Claude	WISELER	National Parliaments
Mr	Stefan	ZRINZO AZZOPARDI	Council