



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

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE WORKING GROUP ON MIGRATION

Friday 21 January 2022

1. Opening by the Chair

The Chair, Mr. Dimitrios KAIRIDIS (National Parliaments, EL), welcomed participants to the 3rd meeting of the Working Group, taking place in a hybrid format. He announced the webstreaming of the meetings of Working Groups, and the possibility of organising a meeting at the end of February.

The Chair also noted that no comments had been received on the draft summary record of the meeting held on 17 December, and therefore concluded that this summary record had been endorsed by the WG and will soon be available, in all languages, on the multilingual digital platform.

The Chair highlighted the state of play of the European Citizens' Panels, explaining that that the third session of Panel 4 had been postponed to 11-13 February, due to the sanitary context and related measures, and therefore Panel 4 did not have recommendations at this stage. He reminded participants the recommendations of European Citizens' Panel 2 and 3, as well as the recommendations of several National Citizens' Panels, were available on the platform. .

He recalled the debates held in previous meetings, which had been organised around three topics: legal migration, irregular migration and asylum. One member asked to adapt the subtitles in the first topic with more neutral language (for instance 'controlled migration' to be replaced by 'regular migration' and 'burden sharing' to be replaced by 'fair sharing'). The Chair then asked Senator Alfieri and MP Joseph Ellis to provide some information on some of those topics.

Senator Alfieri, the upcoming Chair, gave a presentation on the Commission's proposed New Pact on Migration and Asylum and on each of the legislative proposals, insisting on the need to find the right balance between responsibility and solidarity. MP Joseph Ellis focused on legal migration, emphasising the current and future demographic needs of the EU underlining the labour shortage, while in other regions, the population is increasing, leading to bigger migratory pressure in the future towards the EU. He considered that there has to be some 'soul searching' in the EU to determine whether the policies work.

The Chair then asked members of the European Parliament to outline the state of play of the discussion on these issues. Several members indicated that they would coordinate internally before providing this state of play at the next meeting of the Working Group.



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2. Report by citizens from European Citizens' Panel 4 and national panels and events on the state of play of their discussions relating to migration

The Chair introduced the work of the European Citizens' Panels, highlighting that, at this stage, Panel 4 has worked on orientations, which form the first step towards recommendations. He informed that the recommendations of Panel 4 will be available in February after the meeting of the Panel in Maastricht (11-13 February).

Citizens from the European Citizens' Panels and national citizens' panels presented the state of play of their discussions on migration:

- several citizens underlined the need to respect human rights and human dignity when it comes to migration and considered that migration was necessary to the EU and can be positive;
- they highlighted that that common rules are needed;
- citizens were critical about the situation in refugee camps;
- several of them also shared their concerns about the political instrumentalisation of migrants;
- they highlighted the need to provide for safe and legal routes to the EU;
- citizens also noted the importance of solidarity between Member States, taking into account countries' capacities;
- the need to tackle human smuggling, associated with the necessity of more legal pathways was also highlighted;
- they also mentioned the importance of ensuring swifter and easier integration, so that migrants can contribute to society with their skills;
- the need to prevent brain drain within the EU and in relation to third countries was also pointed out;
- a concern linking irregular migration with a specific recent attack was also voiced.

The Chair then opened the floor. In the following lively debate, the following points were raised:

- Scepticism towards the New Pact, considered to be too much focussed on returns and not on integration, was voiced. The challenge of bringing together the divergent positions of Member States and of unanimity voting was also raised.
- One member questioned the discrepancy between the migration friendly approach taken in the Panel and the opinions on the Platform, where calls against immigration from outside the EU are endorsed. The member suggested that the selection of citizens by Kantar was not random and that out of the 27 citizens in the first Plenary, several had certain affiliation to the EU.
- Citizens vehemently rebutted this allegation, describing that they had been randomly selected, and stressing that they had no prior link with the EU. A representative of the national panels and events explained that the 27 national citizens' representatives, who had been the only ones participating in the first Plenary in June, have been chosen in a different manner from the randomly selected citizens in the Panels and cannot be compared.



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- The role of regional and local actors was underlined, as well as the practical experiences of different regions working together and exchanging best practices.



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3. Presentation by the Chair on the ongoing exchanges on the Multilingual Digital Platform

The Chair presented the findings on the platform. He invited everyone to further promote the platform. In the debate:

- One member considered that there is a bias in the platform report, which seems to start with the rather negative contributions in relation to migration, while there are equally other voices present. Another supported criticism of the report and in particular that the number of most endorsed proposals were not covered in the executive summary and that a full list had been shared with the Executive Board.
- It was stressed that migration should not lead to a brain drain from third countries and should not hinder their development.
- The need for to support a human rights based approach to migration, based on EU values - not religious values, was underlined, together with the need to protect the role of NGOs.

Regarding the next meeting of the Working Group, one member from the citizens' panel underlined the importance of receiving the Working Group's feedback on citizens' recommendations.

4. Closing by the Chair

The Chair welcomed the lively discussions and urged citizens of Panel 4 to come up with concrete recommendations. The Chair concluded that, while there is no politics without disagreement, in the end consensus must be found.



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Annex: list of members

Mr	Carmelo	ABELA	Council
Mr	Arnoldas	ABRAMAVICIUS	Council
Mr	Alessandro	ALFIERI	National Parliaments
Ms	Abir	AL-SAHLANI	European Parliament
Mr	Konstantinos	ANDREADAKIS	European citizens panels
Mr	Marc	ANGEL	European Parliament
Mr	Malik	AZMANI	European Parliament
Mr	Pernando	BARRENA ARZA	European Parliament
Mr	Gunnar	BECK	European Parliament
Mr	Magnus	BERNTSSON	Local/Regional representative
Ms	Marjolijn	BULK	European Economic and Social Committee
Mr	Jaroslav	BŽOCH	National Parliaments
Mr	Luís	CAPOULAS SANTOS	National Parliaments
Ms	Liina	CARR	Social Partners
Ms	Iness	CHAKIR	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Laura Maria	CINQUINI	European citizens panels
Ms	Gabriella	CÍVICO	Civil Society
Mr	Angel	DZHAMBAZKI	European Parliament
Ms	Karoline	EDTSTADLER	Council
Ms	Julia	EICHBERGER	European citizens panels
Mr	Joseph	ELLIS	National Parliaments
Mr	Harris	GEORGIADES	National Parliaments
Mr	Vasil	GEORGIEV	Council
Ms	Elsie	GISSLEGÅRD	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Sunčana	GLAVAK	European Parliament
Mr	Ľudovít	GOGA	National Parliaments
Ms	Hafida	GUELLATI	European citizens panels
Ms	Gabriela	HEGENBERG	European citizens panels
Ms	Ylva	JOHANSSON	European Commission
Mr	Dimitris	KAIRIDIS	National Parliaments
Mr	Jeroen	LENAERS	European Parliament
Mr	Cees	LOGGEN	Local/Regional representative
Ms	Oudekki	LOONE	National Parliaments
Mr	Arminas	LYDEKA	National Parliaments
Ms	Aurora	MEJÍA ERRASQUÍN	Council
Ms	Augusta	MONTARULI	National Parliaments
Ms	Nathalie	OBERWEIS	National Parliaments



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Mr	Oszkár	ÖKRÖS	Council
Mr	Philippe	OLIVIER	European Parliament
Mr	Laurentiu	PLOSCEANU	European Economic and Social Committee
Ms	Yoomi	RENSTRÖM	Committee of the Regions
Ms	Desislava	SIMEONOVA	European citizens panels
Mr	Andrzej	SKIBA	National citizens panels/events
Ms	Sara	SKYTTEDAL	European Parliament
Mr	Jordi	SOLÉ	European Parliament
Ms	Petra	STEGER	National Parliaments
Mr	Tuomas Heikki	SUIHKONEN	European citizens panels
Ms	Kata	TUTTO	Committee of the Regions
Mr	Nils	USAKOVŠ	European Parliament
Mr	Hubregt	VERHOEVEN	European citizens panels
Mr	Dragan	VOLAREVIĆ	European citizens panels
Mr	Krasimir	ZLATINOV	European citizens panels