

Outcome of the Co-Chairs meeting on 9 February

Based on your comments and agreed position at yesterday's meeting, I am pleased to inform you about the following **issues that have been approved** by the Co-Chairs.

In general, all the issues raised by the Parliament have been agreed. An **extra Plenary** at the end of April will be added, to allow sufficient time to discuss the recommendations and to formulate the WGs proposals to the Plenary.. The **second Conference Plenary in March** (24-26) will also need to take place in Strasbourg.

Furthermore, a letter with **common guidelines** will be sent to the WG Chairs, regarding the working methods to move from **recommendations into WG proposals** for the Plenary. In this regard, the need for a **transparent process** will be duly taken into account.

(i) *Calendar of the Conference*

- Subject to the endorsement by the Executive Board,¹ an extra Conference Plenary will be added at the end of April in Strasbourg, as Parliament requested, to allow sufficient time to consider the recommendations from Panels 1 and 4, and the proposals from the Working Groups, in the Plenary.

There will therefore be **four plenaries** (two in March, and two in April, all in Strasbourg), as well as the concluding event to be held on 9 May.

- The three Presidents of the Conference will make a common political declaration, to be prepared by the three Co-Chairs, at the concluding event on **9 May**. Thereafter, the three Institutions should ensure an **appropriate follow-up**, with a GAC discussion, an EP resolution in June, at the European Council in June, as well as in the Commission's State of the Union debate and legislative programme in September. The **final report** of the Conference should be concluded by the end of this year/beginning of next year.
- Therefore, the **four plenaries** will focus on:
 - 10-12 **March I**: discussions on recommendations from Panel 1 (Dublin) and Panel 4 (Maastricht)
 - 24-26 **March II**: Presentation and discussion of the WGs' draft proposals
 - 7-9 **April I**: Presentation and discussion of the WGs' draft proposals
 - 28-30 **April II**: Plenary to adopt the Conference proposals
 - **9 May** concluding event (preceded by a social event/dinner on 8 May): Presentation by the three Presidents and the three co-Chairs of the Conference of the proposals and of a common declaration
 - European Citizens' Panels feedback event (date tbc)

¹ An Executive Board meeting will be convened at the end of February.

(ii) **Methodology - moving from citizens' recommendations to proposals - guidelines for the Working Group Chairs**

- A **letter with common guidelines** will be sent by the Co-Chairs to the nine WG Chairs to inform about the **procedure** to follow as regards the **written proposals** which each WG should present to the Plenary.
- The **WG proposals** should take account of the recommendations from the European Citizens' Panels, the recommendations from the national panels, the ideas stemming from the Digital Platform, as well as other ideas that emerge from the Plenary and the Working Groups. Each proposal should include a general objective and the concrete measures to achieve it.
- Each **component**, including the citizens, should, according to its own internal working methods, take a position on these proposals.
- The proposals require the **consensus among at least four components** (EP, Commission, Council and national Parliaments), in order to be part of the final conclusions of the Conference.

Citizens will be asked in Plenary to express their favourable opinion on the proposals.

If a proposal has obtained the consensus of the four components, but in the end, it does not have a favourable opinion by the citizens, this will be flagged up in the Conference's conclusions.

If a proposal does not obtain the consensus of all the four components it will consequently not form part of the Conference's conclusions. However, the position of each component on the individual proposals will be made public in order to ensure a **full transparent process**, as requested by the Parliament.

Guy Verhofstadt