



Where are education and training in the follow-up of the Conference on the Future of Europe?

With the upcoming EU Elections, citizens have another chance to make their voice heard: but not all recommendations of the Conference of the Future of Europe were followed up on...

Two years have passed since the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE) delivered its outcomes. The European Commission has acted upon many of the measures within its competence, already in 2023. When it comes to education and training, for instance, the recommendations adopted during the Citizens' Panel have come together in the Commission's proposal dubbed Europe on the Move. However, citizens put forward many more ideas and proposals that go beyond the current Treaties, showing a heartfelt commitment to European democracy. Ahead of the EU Elections on 6-9 June, LLLP wishes to reiterate its commitment to the CoFoE conclusions; these elections are critically important to shape the EU's political agenda for the forthcoming term, including (or not) a proper follow-up to the citizens' demands. As elections symbolise democracy, we hope that political leaders will show commitment to the democratic principles that made the CoFoE possible in the first place.

Because of this, we call upon the highest political representatives to ensure the demands of citizens in the CoFoE are taken into due account, including those that require treaty changes. In particular, we draw the attention to the recommendation to establish citizenship education as an EU competence, which was critically overlooked. To accomplish this, the essential institutional processes and tools must be effectively activated to facilitate the required changes in the treaties for the full implementation of the proposals. It is imperative that these processes adhere to a transparent and inclusive participation procedure, integrating the perspectives of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and appropriately engaged expert individuals. So far, by neglecting those measures that require treaty changes, EU Member States have shown none. It is crucial that every effort is made and all necessary resources are provided to effectively

usher in these changes, which entails optimising the protocols and prioritising these matters at the highest political level. Continuing to hide behind the cumbersome bureaucratic and institutional machinery without making intelligent and efficient use of it would mean squandering the potential of our institutions to build a better future for all.

Following up with civil society networks that have been engaged in the CoFoE and setting up structural collaboration to explore how the recommendations of the CoFoE should be an ongoing effort. These processes should be tackled in a manner that breaks silos, rather than reinforcing them, all the while bringing a holistic perspective on citizens' participation that is reflected in all areas of the CoFoE. At the same time, it is imperative to move away from tokenistic dynamics in favour of giving voice and necessary space to CSOs. Organised civil society is capable of empowering, educating, and facilitating understanding of processes as important as the CoFoE, to enable full and informed citizen participation, where they are empowered to freely discuss and propose the elements that will shape the Europe they want to live in.

The official reports prepared and circulated by the institutions are vague when it comes to non-achieved goals and fail to specify the status of certain proposals that have not been successfully implemented. From here, we discern a conspicuous lack of clarity regarding the procedural steps to catalyse action, alongside an absence of delineation concerning the diverse stakeholders charged with effectuating these measures. We suffer from the absence of a proper roadmap for the implementation of the proposals, as well as a realistic timeline that takes into account the full participation of representatives from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

Cherry-picking citizens' recommendations is not a proper way to ensure that their demands to current common challenges are taken into account, nor a coherent way of preserving European democracy. We feel that the political will and commitments shown before and during the CoFoE got lost after the results surpassed their ambitions. Europe called, and citizens responded: it is time for Europe to answer back and step up the follow-up on the Conference on the Future of Europe. This is all the more true if we consider that citizens will be coming to vote for their European representatives very soon, with their vision of Europe in mind; it would be important for all running candidates to reassure them that their demands are kept up high in their agendas.

Marta Concepción Mederos, *Vice President of the Lifelong Learning Platform and External Representative of the World Organization of the Scout Movement.*



Lifelong Learning Platform

Rue de l'Industrie 10
1000 Brussels - Belgium
info@llplatform.eu
www.llplatform.eu

For further details, contact:
policy@llplatform.eu