

Conference on the Future of Europe **Franco-German non-paper on key questions and guidelines**

We believe that a **Conference on the Future of Europe** is prompt and necessary. All issues at stake shall be tackled to generate new concepts to guide the future of Europe. We welcome the initiative of the new European Commission for a conference starting in 2020 and ending in 2022, while stressing the necessity of **broad ownership** by all EU institutions, Member States and our citizens, to become a success with tangible results. France and Germany suggest the following **guiding principles** to be considered for an **interinstitutional mandate**.

1. Who should take the lead?

To ensure best possible ownership, the Conference needs to involve **all three EU institutions** on the basis of a common mandate, EU Member States and allow for broad consultation and participation of experts/civil society (academia, think tanks, professional unions and organisations etc.) and citizens. The Conference could be **chaired by a senior European personality**; the **Chair** shall be advised by a small **Steering Group**, consisting of representatives of the EU Institutions, Member States, experts/ civil society. The Steering Group, supported by a permanent secretariat, will be responsible for the overall coordination of the Conference.

2. Which issues shall be tackled?

The Conference should address **all issues at stake** to guide the future of Europe with a view to making the EU more united and sovereign - such as Europe's role in the world and its security/defence, neighborhood, digitalisation, climate change, migration, fight against inequalities, our "social market economy" model (including social rights, industrial and innovation policy, trade, EMU, competitiveness), the rule of law and European values.

The Conference should focus on policies and identify, by blocks of policies, the main reforms to implement as a matter of priority, setting out the types of changes to be made (legal – incl. possible treaty change, financial, organizational etc.).

Institutional issues could also be tackled as a cross-cutting issue to promote democracy and European values and to ensure a more efficient functioning of the Union and its Institutions.

3. What structure do we need?

As proposed by the new European Commission, the process should follow two phases, on the basis of an **interinstitutional mandate to be agreed in January 2020**. The mandate / institutional setting could be simplified for phase 1, to ensure an early start.

Phase 1 would start as early as February 2020, **until the summer of 2020**, and focus on issues related to **EU democratic functioning** (esp. regarding elections and designations in key positions – e.g. transnational lists and lead candidate system, issues related to citizens' participation in EU institutions/matters).

Phase 2 focusing on **policy priorities** should be **launched in mid-2020** (German EU presidency) and be **closed in early 2022** (French presidency). The involvement of all EU Member states (e.g. by thematic conferences in different EU Member States) and midterm reviews (PT and SI presidencies) would ensure ownership and structure the process.

4. Strong involvement of our citizens

We suggest a **bottom-up process**. EU-wide participation of our citizens on all issues discussed (taking into account the citizens' dialogues and consultations in 2018) along experts' input and guiding questions is key. Results will be fed into the further procedure, esp. the thematic as well as midterm reviews and closing conferences.

5. Which outcome do we expect?

The Conference should commit itself already in the interinstitutional mandate to **produce tangible and concrete results**. The final document with **recommendations** should be presented to the EUCO for debate and implementation.

ANNEX

We suggest the following **rough time table**:

12 th /13 th December 2019	First Discussion at the EUCO
January 2020	Conference concept / Interinstitutional mandate
February 2020	Kick-Off of Phase 1 (in particular transnational lists, lead candidate system, issues related to citizens' participation in EU institutions/matters)
July 2020	Kick-Off Conference of Phase 2 in Brussels
2 nd half 2020	Launch of EU-wide expert meetings and citizens dialogues (by EU institutions and member states)
2021	Thematic and midterm review conferences
1 st half 2022	Closing Conference