European Commission

CITIZENS' ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM DEBATE ON

PREPAREDNESS

Final Report - July 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of an analysis of the contributions submitted on the **Citizens' Engagement Platform on Preparedness** between 19 January and 30 June 2026. The analysis identifies the main priorities and proposals put forward by citizens to strengthen preparedness across the European Union.

The citizens' contributions were organised into **ten** overarching **dimensions** and **seventeen topics**, covering a broad range of issues related to crisis prevention, preparedness and resilience. Across these dimensions, participants consistently emphasised the importance of fostering a **proactive culture of preparedness** built on **coordination**, **cooperation** and **shared responsibility**.

In the contributions, a strong emphasis was placed on equipping citizens with **practical skills** through education, training and awareness-raising, while strengthening **community resilience**, **local preparedness** and **cooperation** between citizens, authorities and civil society. Participants also called for stronger **governance** and **coordination** across local, national and European levels, alongside greater EU cooperation in addressing cross-border and geopolitical challenges.

Many contributions also highlighted the need to reinforce the **resilience of critical systems**, including digital infrastructure, energy systems and public health. Participants stressed the importance of reliable and accessible **crisis communication**, effective alert systems and trusted public information. Other recurring priorities included **climate** adaptation and disaster preparedness, household and **material preparedness**, **economic resilience** and stronger European **security** and **defence** cooperation.

Overall, citizens envision preparedness as a **shared responsibility** requiring coordinated action by individuals, communities, public institutions and the European Union. Their proposals underline the importance of investing in **prevention**, strengthening **cooperation** across sectors and governance levels and building **resilient societies** capable of responding effectively to a wide range of future crises.

1. INTRODUCTION

To support the **European Citizens**' **Panel on Preparedness**, the European Commission launched a multilingual online consultation on the **Citizens' Engagement Platform**. Running from **19 January** to **30 June 2026**, the consultation invited citizens from across Europe to share their ideas on how the European Union and its Member States can better anticipate, prepare for, adapt and respond effectively to future crises. The results of the online consultation were presented to participants of the European Citizens' Panel on two occasions[1], to provide the Panel with inspiration for its deliberations.

During this period, the Preparedness debate space received **357 citizen contributions** and **69 comments**, covering a broad range of ideas related to crisis preparedness, resilience and the future of the Preparedness Union.

This report presents an analysis of all contributions submitted on the Citizens' Engagement Platform. Through a thematic content analysis, the contributions were organised into **ten overarching dimensions** and **seventeen topics**, reflecting the main priorities and proposals raised by participants. The ten dimensions are: (1) *Education & Skills*, (2) *Social Cohesion & Local Preparedness*, (3) *Governance & Institutional Coordination*, (4) *Critical Systems Resilience*, (5) *Crisis Communication & Alert Systems*, (6) *Environment & Climate Action*, (7) *Material Preparedness*, (8) *Health Preparedness & Public Health Resilience*, (9) *Economy* and (10) *Security & Defence Preparedness*.

Across these dimensions, participants consistently highlighted the importance of creating a **proactive culture of preparedness** based on **prevention**, **resilience** and **shared responsibility**. Their contributions emphasise the need to strengthen citizens' skills, community resilience, institutional coordination, critical infrastructure and crisis communication and alert systems, while improving preparedness for a **wide range of risks**, including natural hazards, health emergencies, cyberattacks, climate change and geopolitical crises.

The report begins by describing the **methodology** used to analyse the contributions, followed by an **overview** of participation and the identified dimensions and topics. It then presents an **in-depth analysis** of each dimension, discussing the individual topics and illustrating the findings with selected contributions from participants.

[1] 24 April and 22 May 2026.

2. METHODOLOGY

To analyse the content of the Citizens' Engagement Platform on Preparedness, a three-step qualitative analysis was carried out. This approach ensures both the accurate interpretation of citizens' contributions and the meaningful clustering and grouping of ideas, striking a balance between thematic coherence and analytical depth.

STEP 1. IDENTIFYING THE MAIN DIMENSIONS: All contributions were analysed using a theme-based, inductive approach, with thematic labels assigned to each one. Contributions addressing similar issues were grouped together into broad thematic dimensions.

STEP 2. IDENTIFYING TOPICS: Within each dimension, the contributions were analysed in greater detail to identify more specific topics. These topics reflect the main proposals and concerns raised by participants within each broader dimension.

STEP 3. SELECTING ILLUSTRATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS: For each topic, contributions that best reflect the main ideas and proposals expressed by participants were selected as illustrative contributions. These examples are included throughout the report to showcase citizens' perspectives in their own words.

GLOSSARY

Participant. *A citizen who has submitted at least one contribution or comment on the platform.*

Contribution. *A single idea shared by a participant on the platform.*

Comment. *The participants' written reactions to an initial contribution. Comments open up a debate based on the initial topic, enabling participants to communicate with each other.*

Dimension. *A dimension is a headline that merges the thoughts of a large number of contributions.*

Topic. *A subcategory of a dimension, composed of several contributions.*

3. OVERVIEW

KEY PARTICIPATION FIGURES

Overall participation, from 19 January 2026 to 30 June 2026.

- **24.707** pages views (for the Preparedness debate space)
- **70.682** visitors (across all active participatory debate spaces)
- **357** contributions
- **69** comments

ALL DIMENSIONS AND TOPICS AT A GLANCE

The table below provides an overview of all the identified **dimensions** and **topics**. *Chapter 4.* (*In-Depth Analysis*) provides a detailed analysis of each topic. The table also shows the total number of contributions (∑) that fall into each dimension.*

* Many contributions on the Citizens' Engagement Platform discuss a variety of subjects, touching upon several dimensions. Therefore, the total number of contributions in the table below is greater than the total of contributions submitted.

DIMENSIONS	∑	TOPICS
1. EDUCATION & SKILLS	103	1.1 Promote training for crisis situations
		1.2 Strengthen crisis awareness and information
		1.3 Promote digital resilience and media literacy
2. SOCIAL COHESION & LOCAL PREPAREDNESS	58	2.1 Strengthen community resilience and cohesion
		2.2 Organise societal roles and responsibilities
3. GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION	44	3.1 Strengthen coordination across governance levels
		3.2 Increase EU competences in crisis governance
		3.3 Promote diplomacy and conflict prevention
4. CRITICAL SYSTEMS RESILIENCE	39	4.1 Secure digital systems and strengthen cybersecurity
		4.2 Ensure energy independence through diversified and decentralised energy systems
5. CRISIS COMMUNICATION & ALERT SYSTEMS	42	5.1 Develop resilient and accessible crisis communication systems
		5.2 Enhance public understanding, trust and responsiveness to crisis information
6. ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE ACTION	33	6.1 Improve climate resilience and disaster preparedness
7. MATERIAL PREPAREDNESS	32	7.1 Ensure physical resource security and household preparedness

8. HEALTH PREPAREDNESS & PUBLIC HEALTH RESILIENCE	27	8.1 Strengthen integrated and inclusive health crisis preparedness
9. ECONOMY	18	9.1 Strengthen Europe's economic resilience
10. SECURITY & DEFENCE PREPAREDNESS	15	10.1 Enhance European defence cooperation and strategic autonomy

4. IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

In the following chapter, each of the ten dimensions is examined in greater depth. Within each dimension, individual topics are analysed separately, bringing together different aspects of the contributions. Selected contributions are also included to illustrate these topics and provide more detailed insights.

DIMENSION 1: EDUCATION & SKILLS

Participants emphasise that building societal resilience requires embedding preparedness, digital resilience and crisis awareness into lifelong learning. They call for practical, accessible and inclusive education, supported by clear communication, regular training and reliable information, to equip citizens with the knowledge, skills and confidence to prevent, prepare for and respond effectively to crises.

Topic 1.1: Promote training for crisis situations

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants propose strengthening practical training for crisis situations across society, with a stronger focus on regular, hands-on learning. They call for integrating preparedness training into school curricula from an early age, while also expanding opportunities for adults through lifelong learning and community-based programmes. According to the citizens' contributions, simulations and drills should play a central role, helping citizens develop the skills and reflexes needed in real emergencies (e.g., first aid, emergency response, basic survival skills).

Vlad

"Unexpected disasters might happen everywhere. Schools should do more fire and earthquake simulations for the students to really understand the situations and how to be prepared."

European Youth Week 2026

"Crisis preparedness should focus more on practical experience. Simulation days for both citizens and institutions could be organised at pan-European level and adapted to different types of crises. These exercises would help people learn how to respond in an efficient and community-oriented way in real situations. By practising together, citizens and authorities can better understand their roles and improve coordination in times of crisis."

Topic 1.2: Strengthen crisis awareness and information

Topic ANALYSIS

In their contributions, participants suggest strengthening access to clear and reliable information on crisis preparedness through broad awareness campaigns and multiple communication channels, including schools, media, digital tools and community hubs. They frequently emphasise that information should be practical, locally relevant and accessible to all, with particular attention to vulnerable groups, alongside efforts to improve trust in official sources.

European Youth Week 2026

"Crisis preparedness should be communicated in ways that are accessible and understandable for children. Information should be adapted to different age groups so that young people can learn how to respond in an emergency without fear. For example, dedicated materials such as comic books for kindergartens and schools could explain in a simple and engaging way how to prepare for crises and what to do when they occur. This would help build awareness from an early age and make preparedness part of everyday learning."

Γιώργος

"A better and more complete education of the citizens of the European Union on what to do in emergency situations, such as fires, earthquakes, floods, etc. , should be provided periodically throughout the year, with EU funds and support , from municipalities, educational communities and civil society. There should also be an online platform that will have all the information and educational material, accessible to all citizens with multimedia and continuous enrichment, in cooperation with every competent authority and organization and academia, depending on the emergency situation. Finally, in emergency situations, in every country or in the union in general, there will be direct and centralised information."

Topic 1.3: Promote digital resilience and media literacy

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants emphasise the importance of strengthening digital resilience and media literacy so that citizens can better navigate cyber threats, disinformation and emerging technologies. They call for the integration of digital and media literacy into school curricula from an early age, while also providing lifelong learning opportunities. Participants advocate practical training on identifying misinformation, AI-generated content, online

scams and cyberattacks, alongside developing safe digital habits, protecting personal data and using trustworthy sources.

Events Spain March-April

"To protect the entire population and especially the elderly, it is necessary to implement education and digital literacy measures. Thus, people will be able to better identify risks on the network and react faster if they suffer an attack."

Andrea

"We consider that we should organise a series of talks to raise awareness among parents of the use of IA and internet access for minors, especially due to their vulnerability in digital environments. These sessions would provide essential knowledge and practical tools to better understand the risks and opportunities associated with growing up using the internet. The talks could be held in educational institutions or neighbourhood community centres"

DIMENSION 2: SOCIAL COHESION & LOCAL PREPAREDNESS

Participants stress that effective crisis preparedness depends on strong, connected communities where citizens, local authorities and organisations work together. They not only advocate fostering trust and solidarity but also strengthening local networks and clarifying shared roles and responsibilities, making resilience a collective societal effort.

Topic 2.1: Strengthen community resilience and cohesion

Topic ANALYSIS

The importance of stronger local support networks and community-based activities, alongside improved cooperation between citizens and institutions to reinforce collective resilience and preparedness is frequently emphasised by the participants. In their contributions they also highlight the need to strengthen social cohesion through trust, solidarity and intergenerational support, ensuring that all groups are included in crisis preparedness and response.

Maria

"Regarding communities, it is necessary to be informed and cohesive, which implies promoting neighbourhood support networks, local emergency plans, drills, citizen training and clear communication between authorities and the population."

David

"In several countries in Europe, the community has lost strength from its ontological base, especially in urban sites. Good neighbourly practices have been displaced by the systematic scrolling of digital social media.

Resulting in a society that fears finding itself in the other. Added to this is the loss of trust in the community and the authorities. Inspired by the local units of survival and resilience existing in the different cultures of the world, especially in those of Latin America, known as Mingas or Mutirao, or in Japan as Moyai Naoshi, this project seeks the restoration of the community from the very basis of its existence: The social bond of proximity. It is only through the community social bond that populations can respond to the great challenges that are imposed after a disaster. (...) This not only prevents risks, but also motivates citizens to act together for the common welfare. This also implies the participation of the authorities in such collective events. Thus representation and trust in the political can be reweaved and established as a reference. These movements are intermittent and itinerant."

Topic 2.2: Organise societal roles and responsibilities

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants suggest that crisis preparedness should rely on stronger local community involvement, bringing together citizens, authorities and organisations to co-produce resilience. They also call for clearer definition and communication of responsibilities across society, ensuring that citizens are aware of how to act and contribute during different types of crises, making preparedness a shared societal effort rather than a purely institutional responsibility.

Europe Direct General Meeting March 2026

"Citizens should be empowered to take an active role in crisis preparedness through practical activities at the local level. Until now, preparedness exercises have often taken place only in small groups, such as individual classes or schools. In the future, whole municipalities should be more involved in simulations and preparedness activities so that citizens can better understand how to react together in emergency situations."

Diogo

"Europe must move from a predominantly reactive emergency response model to an anticipatory, community-based preparedness model. Preparedness cannot be limited to response capacity or technical civil protection systems. It must include risk awareness, local leadership, social networks and trust between institutions and citizens. Disasters are becoming more frequent, intense and complex. Vulnerability is not only environmental but also social. Ageing populations, social isolation, unequal access to information and weak community networks increase exposure and reduce adaptive capacity. The citizens must be recognised as active resilience actors. They are risk observers, first responders, caregivers and mobilisers within their communities. Preparedness policies should therefore strengthen local support networks, integrate risk education from an early age and promote accessible risk communication systems."

DIMENSION 3: GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

Participants emphasise the need for stronger, more coordinated governance across all levels to ensure coherent, timely and effective crisis prevention, preparedness and response. They call for enhanced cooperation between institutions, clearer roles and responsibilities, stronger EU-level coordination and a more unified approach to diplomacy

and cross-border crises.

Topic 3.1: Strengthen coordination across governance levels

Topic ANALYSIS

In their contributions, participants call for stronger coordination across EU, national and local levels to ensure more coherent and efficient crisis management. They frequently highlight the need for clearer division of responsibilities and better cooperation, as well as mechanisms to avoid gaps or delays in response. In their contributions they also stress the importance of involving local authorities and citizens more directly in preparedness planning and evaluation, while strengthening trust in public institutions.

Alexander

“In the event of a crisis, we need to act quickly and know what to do. The more routine communication and processes are, the better. This is already a major challenge within each Member State! But the EU also has a lot of borders between the member states. So a lot of different areas of responsibility, legal situations and more. So it happens that communities and municipalities in close proximity cannot respond well together to a shared crisis, because they are simply not in the same state. However, a forest fire, a flood or even a pandemic is not interested in a country border. As a citizen of a border region, in my opinion, crisis preparedness also includes the establishment and maintenance of a transnational action plan, as well as joint exercises and the establishment of local networks. This is where the EU has the biggest leverage: By providing targeted support to border communities, we can better prepare all Member States for crises.”

Syria

“Reinforce EGTCs and propose cooperation for disasters especially between local authorities directly as subthemes of programme priorities (interreg and regional programmes for cohesion)”

Topic 3.2: Increase EU competences in crisis governance

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants suggest strengthening EU-level crisis governance through more coordinated decision-making, such as harmonised rules and faster joint responses to cross-border crises. They demand clearer common frameworks and improved coherence between Member States. Participants also highlight the need for stronger EU coordination on security, foreign policy and hybrid threats to ensure faster, more unified responses.

Presentations Spain March 2026

“The European Union should have the power to react quickly and immediately to crises in one of the Member States. Similarly, crisis management and preparedness within the European Union should be the competence of the European Union over that of the Member States. The rapid and centralized response to natural disasters and the luncheon against climate change are of particular relevance.”

Presentations Spain March 2026

"The European Union should have exclusive competence to manage the prevention of and reaction to geopolitical crises. It is essential that the European Union has powers of external relations over those of the States."

Topic 3.3: Promote diplomacy and conflict prevention

Topic ANALYSIS

In this topic, participants call for strengthening diplomacy and international cooperation to prevent crises before they escalate. In their contributions they advocate reinforcing multilateral institutions, international law and conflict prevention mechanisms, while promoting a more unified and autonomous European foreign policy capable of acting quickly and coherently in response to geopolitical threats.

Presentations Spain March 2026

"To prevent geopolitical crises, bodies such as the EU need to monitor and take serious and effective measures to prevent conflicts."

Presentations Spain March 2026

"Improve European diplomacy and strengthen international law through treaties to try to avoid certain geopolitical crises."

DIMENSION 4: CRITICAL SYSTEMS RESILIENCE

Participants emphasise the need to strengthen the resilience of critical systems by securing essential infrastructure and reducing strategic dependencies. In addition, they call for greater EU coordination to reinforce cybersecurity, protect critical digital and energy systems and ensure reliable, autonomous and continuous delivery of essential services during crises.

Topic 4.1: Secure digital systems and strengthen cybersecurity

Topic ANALYSIS

In their contributions participants frequently demand strengthening the resilience and security of digital systems by improving cybersecurity, protecting critical infrastructure and enhancing safeguards against cyberattacks, misinformation and information manipulation. They advocate for stronger EU-level coordination, secure digital infrastructure and trusted digital services to ensure continuity and reliability during crises.

Dade

"Cyberattacks are rapidly increasing across Europe, affecting institutions, businesses, and citizens, causing data theft and major disruptions. To address this, the EU must ensure strong, effective, and comprehensive protection of data through a secure, unified system. Actions:
1) Establishment of a unified European Cyber Defence Framework, consolidating existing national cybersecurity agencies under a common operational structure coordinated by ENISA (the EU Agency for Cybersecurity).
2) Implementation of mandatory cybersecurity literacy programmes across all EU member states, integrated into both formal education curricula and professional training frameworks, with the goal of equipping citizens, public servants, and business operators with the foundational knowledge to identify, report, and mitigate cyber threats at every level of society.
3) Development of a comprehensive EU Data Protection and Digital Resilience Act, reinforcing and expanding upon the existing GDPR framework to address emerging threats such as AI-driven data breaches, ransomware targeting healthcare systems, and state-sponsored espionage, while establishing binding minimum security standards for all entities — public and private — operating within the European digital single market."

Events Spain March-April

"Banks should be considered as an infrastructure strategy. They must have the obligation to implement the best protection systems against cyberattacks."

Topic 4.2: Ensure energy independence through diversified and decentralised energy systems

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants call for greater EU energy independence through increased investment in renewable energy and diversified energy sources to reduce dependence on external suppliers and improve energy security. They also support a more coordinated and decentralised energy system to ensure a resilient and stable energy supply during disruptions, while lowering costs and strengthening long-term sustainability.

Cristina

"Given the geopolitical situation, our energy capacity is being threatened. We are very dependent on third-country sources of energy. How could we cope with this? 1. Sources of energy premises, to deal with emergencies. 2. Prioritize the use of renewable energy, easy consumption and generation. For example solar in Spain."

Vendula

"The Commission should focus on the diversification of resources across the energy mix. First, we need to reduce unsustainable energy consumption as such. In the second place, there is a need to promote green transition in countries that do not yet have renewable energy sources. Thirdly, it should fully decouple itself from dependence on fossil fuels that come from states that may pose a security risk. Just as we have been able to get rid of our dependence on Russian energy sources, we should also address other states that pose a security risk in the future."

DIMENSION 5: CRISIS COMMUNICATION & ALERT SYSTEMS

Participants emphasise the need for reliable, accessible and resilient communication systems that provide clear guidance before, during and after crises. They stress that transparent communication from trusted authorities, supported by robust alert systems and both digital and offline communication methods, is essential to maintain public trust, counter misinformation and ensure that crisis information reaches all groups effectively.

Topic 5.1: Develop resilient and accessible crisis communication systems

Topic ANALYSIS

In their contributions participants advocate strengthening crisis communication through accessible, multi-modal systems that provide clear guidance before and during emergencies. They call for communication that combines digital and offline channels to ensure inclusivity, while relying on resilient and decentralised infrastructure to maintain the flow of information when digital systems are disrupted.

European Youth Week 2026

“Crisis communication should be accessible to all citizens, including people with disabilities. Information should be provided in formats such as sign language interpretation, subtitles, and easy-to-read versions. This would help ensure that everyone can understand important messages and act accordingly in emergency situations.”

Roger

“We propose creating a single EU-wide crisis app that provides reliable, real-time information during emergencies. This app would act as a personal safety assistant, guiding users step by step depending on their location. Instead of just sending alerts, it would tell people exactly what to do, where to go, and what to avoid. One key feature would be an interactive map showing safe zones, shelters, hospitals, and dangerous areas using simple colours and icons. The app would also include a “What should I do now?” button, giving clear instructions in seconds. For example, in a fire, it would say: leave the building, avoid elevators, and follow exit routes. It would work offline, so users can still access essential information without the internet. It would also offer multilingual support, making it accessible to everyone in Europe. To reduce panic, users could quickly contact family or share their location with one tap. Finally, the app would only provide verified information from official sources, helping to fight misinformation. Overall, this app would help citizens stay informed, act quickly, and feel safer during any crisis.”

Topic 5.2: Enhance public understanding, trust and responsiveness to crisis information

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants stress that trust in public institutions is key to ensuring citizens follow crisis guidance. Therefore, they call for transparent, consistent and accessible communication from trusted authorities, including local leaders. Furthermore, they highlight the need for clear information channels and education to counter misinformation and ensure that crisis information is understandable and reaches all groups.

Gauthier

"In times of crisis, obtaining reliable information is an absolute necessity. Created at European level an independent administrative authority would allow the citizen to have confidence in this institution because of its status, and a total independence of its members. It would be at the origin of a European press watch focusing mainly on issues of crisis or weak signals (war in Ukraine, natural disasters ...). In times of crisis, it must be widely identified by European citizens in order to obtain reliable information. It should communicate through various channels, allowing everyone to have the necessary information, whatever the tools at their disposal (not only digital)."

Stand Up For Europe

"Strengthening social trust in government is essential for effectively managing crises. If EU citizens do not trust official guidance or warnings, they are more likely to disregard them, increasing their vulnerability and amplifying the impact of crises. Addressing this issue requires transparent and consistent communication that builds confidence in public institutions. One idea is the development of a Civic Response Service Platform (app) led by the EU, which provides clear, step-by-step updates on how the EU is responding to a crisis. By openly outlining actions and decision-making processes, this service can enhance transparency and accountability."

DIMENSION 6: ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE ACTION

Topic 6.1: Improve climate resilience and disaster preparedness

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants call for strengthening climate resilience by placing a larger focus on long-term prevention and adaptation. They not only advocate greater investment in climate-resilient infrastructure, but also in early warning and monitoring systems, sustainable water and land management as well as wildfire prevention. Participants also emphasise accelerating the green transition through clean energy, sustainable agriculture and resilient food systems, while improving disaster preparedness with better emergency infrastructure, innovative technologies, coordinated planning and support for vulnerable regions and communities.

Morgann

"With global warming, natural disasters are becoming more frequent and intense in Europe. The 2021 floods in Germany and Belgium, the recurrent droughts, and the current storms in Portugal and Spain are striking examples. These events are no longer exceptional: they are now a structural risk for which the European

Union must prepare. In this context, readiness can no longer be considered as secondary expenditure, but as a strategic investment. The cost of inaction is already visible: loss of life, destruction of infrastructure, sustainable economic impacts and increased pressure on public finances. In the long run, these costs far outweigh those of prevention and anticipation. It is therefore essential to integrate a greater share of environmental and climate risk prevention policies into European policies, including the EU budget. This includes adapting insurance systems to take better account of climate risks, while encouraging vulnerability reduction measures rather than only after-the-fact repair. Strengthening preparedness requires a long-term vision rather than short-term responses."

Ariadna

"Development of protocols for action in climate and weather emergencies. Our idea is to place informational posters in community and residential locations to inform people about the protocols to follow in case of an emergency, so that anyone can take appropriate action. Example: residences, educational institutions, day and night recreational centres and venues, parks, healthcare centres…"

DIMENSION 7: MATERIAL PREPAREDNESS

Topic 7.1: Ensure physical resource security and household preparedness

Topic ANALYSIS

In their contributions on the platform participants call for greater household preparedness through the stockpiling of essential supplies, emergency kits and practical guidance to help citizens become more self-sufficient during crises, with particular support for vulnerable groups. They also emphasise the need for public authorities to strengthen the resilience and availability of essential resources, including food, water and agricultural systems, to ensure reliable access during emergencies.

Events Spain March-April

"The entire population should have sufficient reserves of clothing, medicines, communication equipment, flashlights, etc. in the houses. There should be help for those who can't afford it."

Andrea

"We propose an ad campaign and general awareness campaign that encourages people to have basic survival kits (food, basic medicine, matches, period products, radios, etc) in their homes, emphasising the need for bottled water and non-perishable or canned food. We also propose that the European Union makes more available and accessible these items by subsidising standard kits (making them available for reduced prices in supermarkets, for example)."

DIMENSION 8: HEALTH PREPAREDNESS & PUBLIC HEALTH RESILIENCE

Topic 8.1: Strengthen integrated and inclusive health crisis preparedness

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants call for a stronger and integrated health crisis approach linking human, animal and environmental health expertise in disease prevention and outbreak control. In addition, they emphasise faster, prevention-focused responses to emerging diseases and improved planning for health threats. Inclusive preparedness is also highlighted, ensuring population groups with specific needs are fully considered in planning, resources and emergency care.

Vivian

"It would be helpful to have a first emergency centre for people with health conditions that need daily medications like people with diabetes who may need their insulin shots which are sensitive to keep"

Beatriz

"Plans must be put in place to ensure faster and more effective countermeasures to be able to deal with future health crises, as we live in a Europe full of uncertainty, and we must be prepared for any upcoming scenario."

DIMENSION 9: ECONOMY

Topic 9.1: Strengthen Europe's economic resilience

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants suggest strengthening the EU's economic resilience by reducing strategic dependencies, investing in innovation and building more integrated and competitive European industries and supply chains. They advocate greater economic autonomy through support for local production and critical technologies, while promoting stronger industrial cooperation and joint investment. In addition, participants also emphasise the importance of common European financial instruments, support for businesses and households during crises and social policies that enhance long-term economic stability and resilience.

Event Sevilla May

"We need to invest in local economies and implement bilateral tariff policies to protect us from other countries and ensure our economic independence. We must do it carefully so as not to provoke trade wars and inflation, but we must defend ourselves if others pressure us."

Events Spain March-April

"Ensuring grant and support mechanisms for small businesses across Europe in the face of a crisis. This may include tax reductions, direct aids or aids for specific items such as rents, workers, etc."

DIMENSION 10: SECURITY & DEFENCE PREPAREDNESS

Topic 10.1: Enhance European defence cooperation and strategic autonomy

Topic ANALYSIS

Participants call for stronger EU defence cooperation and greater strategic autonomy in response to rising security risks. They demand improved crisis preparedness and stronger coordination to manage rapidly escalating threats. Additionally, they emphasise the need for deeper international cooperation, a more unified foreign policy and expanded strategic partnerships. Views differ on the balance between developing stronger common EU defence capabilities and maintaining existing alliances.

Stand Up For Europe

"The evolving international landscape, particularly in the United States and given Russia's continued aggression, has made it clear that the EU can no longer approach foreign policy in the same manner as before. As alliances continue to shift, the EU must adapt its strategies if it intends to remain competitive alongside other global powers. The EU must diversify its alliances and partnerships to remain competitive in an evolving global landscape. Expanding relationships to include countries that may not have been traditional partners can open new opportunities and strengthen the EU's strategic position. While broadening alliances is a valuable step, actively cultivating and maintaining strong, cooperative relationships with foreign nations is even more impactful. This includes new trade agreements, engaging in consistent dialogue, fostering trust, and collaborating on shared global challenges such as security, climate change, and economic stability."

María

"The European Union should be more united and have its own army that can be mobilised in different types of crises from the defence of Europe to emergencies due to natural disasters."

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5. CONCLUSIONS

The **Citizens' Engagement Platform debate on Preparedness** provided valuable insights into citizens' views on how the European Union and its Member States can better anticipate, prepare, adapt and respond to future crises. Conducted between **January** and **June 2026** in parallel with the European Citizens' Panel on Preparedness, the online participatory process enabled citizens to contribute a broad range of ideas and proposals that helped inform the Panel's deliberations and enriched the wider discussion on strengthening preparedness across Europe.

Participants engaged with a **wide range** of **preparedness-related topics**, highlighting that effective preparedness requires coordinated action across society. They emphasised the importance of equipping citizens with practical **skills**, reliable **information** and **digital literacy**, while strengthening **community resilience**, **trust** and shared **responsibility**. Additionally, they called for better **coordination** between local, national and European authorities, paired with stronger **EU cooperation** to address cross-border and geopolitical challenges. Finally, participants stressed the need to invest in resilient **infrastructure** and **critical systems**, effective **crisis communication**, **climate adaptation**, **public health**, **economic resilience**, and **security** and **defence** to better prepare for future crises.

Overall, this consultation demonstrates that citizens view **preparedness** not as a single policy area, but as a **comprehensive approach** that spans society, institutions, infrastructure and governance. Across all dimensions, participants consistently called for a **proactive culture of preparedness** based on prevention, resilience, coordination and shared responsibility. Their contributions highlight that strengthening preparedness requires investing simultaneously in citizens' capabilities, resilient public systems, effective governance and European cooperation, ensuring that the European Union is better equipped to face a wide range of future crises.