



European Citizens' Panel on a new European budget fit for our ambitions

Summary of Session 1

[28-30 March 2025]

In a few words...

A promising first session

What priorities and actions funded by the EU bring the most added value to Europeans? On what priorities should the EU budget be spent in the future? Which types of activities should the EU budget support to help deliver on those priorities? Over three weekends, 150 randomly selected EU citizens, representative of EU diversity, brought together by the European Commission, will aim to answer these questions. The citizens will ultimately submit a list of recommendations that will feed into the European Commission's future work on the EU budget.

The first session of this new Citizens' Panel took place from March 28 to 30 in Brussels. The goal? To develop a common understanding of the EU budget and the scope of the Citizens' Panel. Experts on the topic explained the nature of the EU budget, including its evolution, what it funds, where the money comes from, and how it is decided.

The citizens then discussed common priorities and different financing needs that require support from the EU budget. They also reflected on which criteria should guide the next EU long term budget.



Session 1: Day by Day

Day 1 - Plenary

Understanding the EU Budget

The first day of the Panel explored various aspects of the EU Budget through, notably, a quiz, a timeline of its historical milestones, and an illustrated pie chart of the current budget, all commented and explained by members of the Knowledge Committee.

Day 2 - Working Groups

Discuss individual priorities and set a list of criteria

On Saturday, citizens split into 12 smaller groups to discuss their individual priorities for the EU Budget and collectively decide on criteria to guide the drafting of their recommendations and priorities in the upcoming sessions.

Based on their individual backgrounds and knowledge as well as specific challenges in their country or region, citizens discussed on what and why they would like to put an emphasis on specific aspects for the future EU Budget.

Stéphanie Riso, Director General of the Directorate General for Budget: *“We are working for you. This EU Budget is your object.”*

Dana Spinant, Director General of the Directorate General for Communication: *“You are experts of real life. Don’t be shy, make your voice and opinions heard.”*

Click [here](#) to watch the recording of Friday’s plenary!

Day 3 - Plenary

Sharing and reflecting

In an activating debate format, citizens from all working groups discussed the variety of topics coming from their group discussions. They were joined on stage by members of the Knowledge Committee.

Quote from a citizen: *“The budget cannot go ahead without hearing the citizens, we should respect the needs of our fellow citizens and hope to contribute to both present and future issues.”*

Georgios Papakonstantinou: *“Across all groups, citizens found a common language to communicate. Despite our differences, we’ve managed to agree on so many things. We may have our national or regional perspectives, but we’re also striving for cohesion and inclusion. That’s a real strength of the European approach.”*

Sophia Eriksson, Deputy Director General of the Directorate General for Communication: *“I’m very impressed by the outcomes of your work. And I really encourage you to share this experience with others – talk about what you’ve learned and take part in the ongoing debate on the Citizen Engagement Platform.”*

Click [here](#) to watch the recording of Sunday’s plenary!

Expert interventions during the plenaries

Leokadia Oręziak, Professor at the SGH
Warsaw School of Economics

Marco Buti, Professor at the European
University Institute

Paweł Śliwowski, Deputy Director at the Polish
Economic Institute

Romy Hansum, Research Associate at the
Jacques Delors Centre

Alexei Jones, Head of Foreign and
Development policy at the European Center for
Development Policy Management

Daniel Tarschys, Professor Emeritus in Political
Science at the Swedish Institute for European
Policy Studies

Georgios Papakonstantinou, Professor at the
European University Institute

Ana Feu Basilio, Policy Coordinator at the
Directorate General for Budget

[Check out the Citizens’ Engagement Platform!](#)

Reminder: Objectives of all 3 sessions

- **Session 1, 28-30 March:** Develop a common understanding of the EU budget and the scope of the Citizens' Panel. Examine the common priorities and different financing needs that require support from the EU budget. Reflect about which principles should guide the next EU budget.
- **Session 2, 25-27 April:** Building on the work of session 1, agree on political priorities and draft first recommendations. Develop ideas on how to best support those common priorities and tackle the identified common challenges.
- **Session 3, 16-18 May:** Refine these ideas and recommendations with the support of experienced facilitators and experts. Eventually, these ideas become the final recommendations for an EU budget fit for our ambitions. The results will be voted on and adopted in the last plenary session.