



New generation of European Citizens' Panels: Commission hosts panel on learning mobility

Brussels, 3 March 2023

Today, the Commission is opening a new Citizens' Panel, during which citizens from the 27 Member States will discuss how learning mobility can be made available to everyone in the EU. The Citizens' Panel on learning mobility will meet three times between March and April 2023. This is part of a new generation of Citizens' Panels, following-up on the Conference on the Future of Europe, to foster citizens' participation in the Commission's policy-making process on certain key policy areas.

The Citizens' Panel is part of the consultation strategy ahead of the Commission's proposal later this year. Citizens will contribute to the public debate in sharing their thoughts and providing recommendations on learning mobility, including the need to open possibilities to people with fewer opportunities and less mobile groups, or the need to keep mobility as environmentally friendly as possible, as well as the opportunities digitisation might offer in this context.

The first session is taking place on 3-5 March in Brussels, and will be opened by Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya **Gabriel**. The second meeting of the panel will take place online on 24-26 March. The final session will be held on 28-30 April in Brussels, and Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis **Schinias**, will take part in the closing session.

The panel is composed of about 150 randomly selected citizens. They are representative of the EU's diversity in terms of geography (national and urban/rural origin), gender, age, socio-economic background and level of education. Moreover, one third of the participants in the Panel are under 25 years old. The inclusion of young people and their priorities in policymaking has been a clear request made in the framework of the Conference of the Future of Europe and was a key objective of the European Year of Youth. The Commission shall ensure that all Citizens' Panels will include at least a third of young participants.

Learning mobility is already a reality for many thanks to Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes, which have offer mobility opportunities in school education for pupils and teachers, in vocational education and training, higher education and adult education, as well as projects for apprentices, young people, youth workers, and sport coaches for many years. Despite this and although interest in learning mobility is high, citizens in Europe face a range of obstacles in accessing and participating in learning mobility opportunities. Identifying and tackling these obstacles is vital in order to make learning mobility opportunities accessible for everyone.

Learning periods abroad for everyone should become a norm, regardless of age, level of education, background and financial means. Consequently, the Commission announced an update of the Learning Mobility Framework in its [Work Programme](#) for 2023. In addition to this Citizens' Panel, the Commission opened a public consultation for citizens and stakeholders to share their thoughts on the matter. Contributions can be made on the [Have your say portal](#), from 8 February to 3 May.

Background

Citizens' Panel

President **von der Leyen** called for a Conference on the Future of Europe in her Political Guidelines of July 2019, as part of a new push for European democracy – and committed to following up on its results.

Building on the success of the Conference, the Commission is embedding participatory and deliberative practices in its policy-making toolbox, and Citizens' Panels are now part of the Commission's policymaking in certain key areas. Besides the Panel on learning mobility, two other Citizens' Panels have been set up, a first Citizens' Panel on [Food Waste](#) has concluded in Mid-February 2023, and one on [Virtual worlds](#) is currently ongoing.

Learning Mobility

The European Union has a record of accomplishment over 35 years in fostering programmes and strategies to enhance the mobility of citizens, and promote cross-border exchanges and cooperation on learning. Programmes like [Erasmus+](#) were created because the learning mobility of pupils, students, and educators is a way to increase mutual understanding and cultural exchange among European citizens, and helps them acquire the skills and competences they need in a globalised world.

Learning mobility is a key factor to achieving the [European Education Area](#), the EU's shared vision for the education and training sector. It will promote the employability of EU citizens and competitiveness of the economy. It is also closely linked to the EU's broader goal of fostering a more inclusive European Union.

Through even greater mobility within the EU, all learners, educators and staff in all sectors (school education, vocational education and training, higher education, adult education, youth and sport) and at all levels of learning, could be enabled to move between education and training systems in different countries.

Learning mobility experiences develop employability, skills and knowledge for people all over Europe. And travelling across borders to learn and gain unique experiences is an important aspect of a borderless and interconnected Europe.

Under Erasmus+ alone, nearly 13 million people have studied, trained, worked and volunteered abroad since the programmes creation in 1987. 95% of the participants reported to be either satisfied or very satisfied about their mobility, and 99% recommended the experience. 78% have improved their foreign language competences, 75% have gained better career opportunities and 76% have developed a better idea about their future career.

The Commission and EU Member States are working together to achieve their shared vision of establishing a [European Education Area](#) by 2025, increasing quality of education and training, inclusion and gender equality, boosting the green and digital transitions, improving the situation of teachers, strengthening the higher education sector, and continuing to promote the EU as a partner in education for countries and regions around the world.

For More Information

The discussions of the Citizens' Panel can be followed live:

- [Plenary discussions on 3 March from 14:30 to 18:30](#)
- [Plenary discussions on 5 March from 12:00 to 13:40](#)

[Citizens' Panel on Learning Mobility](#)

[Learning Mobility in the European Education Area](#)

[About the European Education Area](#)

[Erasmus+](#)

[Conference on the Future of Europe](#)

[Factsheet on the final outcome of the Conference](#)

[European Citizens' Panels: a new phase of citizens' engagement](#)

[Commission Work Programme 2023](#)

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Quotes:

The direct participation of citizens in the elaboration of European public policies is becoming a regular feature of the EU's democratic life where citizens have a direct say on EU policy-making. This is a tangible outcome of the Conference on the Future of Europe, where we saw in very real terms how valuable it is to bring citizens to the very heart of policy making on initiatives that impact their daily life.

Dubravka Šuica, Vice-President for Democracy and Demography - 03/03/2023

Learning mobility is crucial for a borderless and interconnected Europe and to achieve the European Education Area. This life-changing personal experience can be a powerful instrument to develop employability, skills and knowledge. We look forward to engaging with citizens through panel discussions and public consultation to make learning mobility a real possibility for each European, regardless of age or background.

Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth - 03/03/2023

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