

Press release – Conference on Future of Europe should start “as soon as possible in autumn 2020”



In a resolution adopted with 528 votes for, 124 against and 45 abstentions, Parliament declares that “10 years after [...] the [Lisbon Treaty](#), 70 years after the [Schuman Declaration](#) and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the time is ripe for a reappraisal of the Union.” MEPs add that “the number of significant crises that the Union has undergone demonstrates that institutional and political reforms are needed in multiple governance areas”.

Parliament also reaffirms its [January 2020 resolution](#) highlighting that citizens’ voices should be at the core of broad discussions on how to tackle internal and external challenges that were not foreseen at the time of the Lisbon Treaty.

Acknowledging that the Conference has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MEPs call on the other two EU institutions “to engage in negotiations to find common agreement [...] before the summer break”. Albeit welcoming the Commission’s “readiness to go forward in a speedy fashion”, Parliament “regrets that the Council has not yet adopted a position”.

MEPs discussed the Conference with State Secretary Nikolina Brnjac on behalf of the Croatian Presidency of the Council, and EC Vice-President for Democracy and Demography Dubravka Šuica, on Wednesday during the plenary session. You can catch up with the recorded debate by clicking [here](#), starting at 19.05, or watch excerpts [here](#).

Background

The Conference on the Future of Europe is set to be organised by Parliament, Council and Commission and was expected to start in May 2020 and run for two

years. Parliament wants citizens of all backgrounds, civil society representatives and stakeholders at European, national, regional and local level to be involved in setting the EU's priorities in line with citizens' concerns in a bottom-up, transparent, inclusive, participatory and well-balanced approach.

Further, MEPs insist on a process of open-ended citizen participation that will establish the scope of the Conference itself, and call for meaningful follow-up to the Conference's conclusions, including an express commitment by the three major EU institutions to substantive EU reforms in line with citizens' concerns, potentially including a review of the EU Treaties.