



European Committee
of the Regions



YEP Forum

17, 18, 23 November 2021



**Young Elected
Politicians
for the Future
of Europe**

The Conference on the Future of Europe is a unique opportunity for citizens to debate Europe's challenges and priorities. The role of local and regional politicians is crucial in feeding the Conference with messages and priorities coming from Europe's cities and regions. For the first time, young people are fully involved in the discussion, through the participation of their representatives in the Conference's plenary and in the Citizens' Panels, and their involvement in events and initiatives going on all around Europe. Furthermore, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has announced that 2022 will be the European Year of Youth.

In this context, the participants in the Young Elected Politicians (YEP) Programme of the European Committee of the Regions, which includes politicians elected at local and regional level who are less than 40 years old, have decided to actively contribute to the work of the CoR by sharing views and recommendations on four key topics for the Future of Europe.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We, as Young Elected Politicians, call for action on the following recommendations.

Building resilient and inclusive communities

1. We call upon the EU to provide a framework for empowering citizens by enhancing education processes and providing accessible and credible information to help them find sustainable solutions for their individual life situations – particularly for young people and vulnerable groups.
2. We recommend the implementation of fair European-level taxation policies for companies, to strongly encourage them to take more sustainable approaches.
3. We recommend that EU decision-makers take account of the different starting points within Member States and their regions (energy mix) when shaping green transformation policies using the Social Climate Fund.
4. We call upon the EU to encourage Member States to look into how taxation policies, at European, national and local level, can encourage the spread of more sustainable approaches in all daily activities (e.g. avoiding double taxation of products).
5. We call upon the EU to encourage Member States to establish participatory processes at local and regional level to decide on priorities for resilience building that fit the specific characteristics of different regions. We call on the European Union to concretely involve EU mayors and local and regional representatives in debates and decisions that regard municipalities.

Digital transformation

1. We endorse a vision of European cities, towns and villages where there are reliable, secure, robust, simple, user-friendly, effective, and compatible digital services, and call upon the CoR to provide guidelines on how to achieve this vision in the digital transformation of local administrations.
2. We call on the European Union to provide sufficient planning and funding for digital transition, especially in remote and rural areas, to ensure a widespread and effective Internet fiber optic infrastructure. The EU could use incentives for private and public companies. The EU should do its utmost to bridge the digital divide.
3. We call upon the Member States, as well as regional and local actors, to enhance education in digital skills and ensure that digital skills are taught at all levels of education. We stress the need for inclusive programmes of digital education and for the integration of older people and of women and girls into digital education and digital technology sectors. We call for robust European cooperation to further enhance digital education programmes in all cities, towns and villages.
4. We call upon the European institutions to fund IT activities and innovation in the private and public sectors by supporting incentives, tax cuts, venture capital etc. We stress the importance of keeping the personal data of European citizens within the EU in order to create new jobs in digital technology sectors in the EU (given that most software platforms come from the United States at the moment).
5. We call upon the EU to encourage women to go in STEM careers and fight the prejudices that push women and men into different career paths.

A lively local democracy for a healthy European democracy

1. We recommend establishing a budget drawn up by the EU and local and regional authorities for democracy-building exercises targeting schools and other stakeholders, using gamification methods.
2. We recommend that the CoR's 2018 proposal for developing an Erasmus programme for local elected officials be supported and implemented. We also suggest the establishment of a European mentoring programme between young and experienced elected officials, which may include a study visit in Brussels.
3. We recommend that the EU hold and support regular initiatives such as the Conference on the Future of Europe, including at local and regional level, to ensure a permanent dialogue with citizens.
4. We call upon the JRC's Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy to involve local and regional authorities in regular dialogue in order to share their experiences and best practices and to promote at EU level the lessons learned at local level, in a mutual learning effort.

Jobs and education for young people

1. We call upon the EU to share information on the best methods of informing job seekers of the opportunities at local level, for instance regarding the organisation of local job fairs. The EU could support those job fairs by providing simple and easy to access funding opportunities.
2. We call upon the EU to support and fund the sharing of information through dedicated platforms that could centralise job, training, internship and apprenticeship opportunities at EU level. Such platforms should be more strongly promoted.
3. We recommend that the EU support Member States in reducing the cost of labour, and we ask the EU to be faster in authorising changes to national laws and to allow some flexibility in the Member States' labour policies for the duration of the pandemic.
4. We recommend that the EU make cross-border work easier, remove bureaucratic obstacles to mobility and harmonise national laws concerning people working in one country and living in another.
5. We invite the EU, Member States and local authorities to put in place innovative ways of promoting cooperation between public and private sectors, and of facilitating and financing the setting up of companies, including start-ups, social enterprises, social impact start-ups and business created by young people.

Participants in the YEP Forum

Ioannis	Antonakis	City councillor of Alimos	Greece
Miroslav	Behúl	Councillor of Bratislava - Petržalka Municipality	Slovak Republic
Michal	Braun	City councillor of Kielce	Poland
Marcin	Bubicz	City councillor of Lublin	Poland
Mateusz	Cebula	City councillor of Dębica	Poland
Luca	Cecchinato	City councillor of Cernusco sul Naviglio	Italy
Susanna	Croci	City councillor of Venegono Superiore	Italy
Diana	Finkelstain	City councillor of Iasi	Romania
Lorenzo	Galligani	City councillor of Pistoia	Italy
Ramona	Goga	City councillor of Zalau	Romania
Polina	Gordienko	Member of a local parliament in Munich	Germany
Martin	Heinen	City Councillor of Mönchengladbach	Germany
Julia	Heinrich	Member of the local parliament in the 19th district of Vienna	Austria
Morten Siig	Henriksen	City councillor of Syddjurs	Denmark
Carolin	Holz Müller	City councillor of Weingarten	Germany
Esther	Ingabire	City councillor of Ath	Belgium
Tilen	Jeraj	Municipality councillor of Vodice	Slovenia
Danko	Kočiš	City councillor of Dakovo	Croatia
Dávid	Könczöl	Municipal councilor of Józsefváros	Hungary
Evangelia	Koumandraki	City councillor of Kalives Apokoronou	Greece
Katarzyna	Krężlewicz	District councillor of Nowy Dwor Mazowiecki	Poland
Silvia	Manfredini	Vice President Neighborhood Borgo Panigale Reno	Italy
Matteo	Marchesi	City councillor of Sangiano	Italy
Daisy	Marcolongo	City councillor of Brembate di Sopra	Italy
Emmanouil	Mavrommatis	Deputy mayor of Dorida	Greece
Alexandru	Nazîru	City councillor of Constanța	Romania
Timea	Orban	City councillor of Miercurea Ciuc	Romania
Despina	Pastou	City councillor of Athienou	Cyprus
Lorenzo	Polidori	Deputy Mayor of Fossato di Vico	Italy
Giorgio	Ripani	City councillor of Tortoreto	Italy
Eduard	Rivas Mateo	Mayor of Esparreguera	Spain
Sandra	Schneeloch	City councillor of Cologne	Germany
Alessia	Scotti	City councillor of Carate Brianza	Italy
Daniele	Terzariol	Deputy Mayor of San Donà di Piave	Italy
Sara	Tomsic	Deputy Mayor of Novo Mesto	Slovenia
Gregor	Unfried	City councillor of St. Pölten	Austria
Niels	Vandeweyer	City councillor of Tongeren	Belgium

Andrés	Villa Fernández-Mayoralas	City councillor of Collado Villalba	Spain
Konrad	Wojnarowski	Councillor of the Masovian Voivodeship	Poland
Johanna	Wyckman	Member of the regional council of Kalmar County	Sweden