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Conference
on the **Future**
of Europe

Multilingual Digital Platform of the Conference on the Future of Europe

Interim Report
August 2021



Disclaimer: this report is the sole responsibility of the authors and does not reflect the views of the EU Institutions nor the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Analysis carried out by Kantar Public.



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1. Introduction

With the Conference on the Future of Europe, the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission have created an opportunity for European citizens from all 27 Member States to engage in a debate on Europe's challenges and priorities in order to create together a Europe fit for the future. As part of the Conference process, a Multilingual Digital Platform (referred to in the following as 'the platform') was launched on 19 April 2021 (futureu.europa.eu) and will remain live throughout the work of the Conference.

The platform is a key component of the Conference; it gives every EU citizen the chance to participate in any of the 24 official EU languages. Citizens can put forward their ideas, endorse other peoples' ideas and comment on them. It is also the place where everyone

can share information on Conference events and report on their outcomes. All contributions on the platform are collected and analysed and serve as input into the work of the European Citizens' Panels and the Conference Plenary.

The aim of this report is to give a first overview of citizens' contributions on the platform notably in view of the European Citizens' Panels, which will start their work from mid-September. It covers findings on contributions during an initial period from 19 April to 2 August 2021.

Given the early stage of the Conference, these findings are in no way to be taken as predictive of the outcome of the discussions on the platform. Further reports and overviews of contributions will be made



available in the coming weeks and months, as new contributions are added over time to the platform.

When reading this report, it is also important to bear in mind that the contributions on the platform represent the views of the respective contributors and should not be regarded as representing the views of European citizens as a whole. They will be subject to further discussion and assessment during the European Citizens' Panels and the Conference Plenary.

The analytical results are presented in the report according to the topics defined on the platform:

- Climate change and the environment
- Health
- A stronger economy, social justice and jobs
- EU in the world
- Values and rights, rule of law, security
- Digital transformation
- European Democracy
- Migration
- Education, Culture, Youth and Sport

Bearing in mind the upcoming work of European Citizens' Panels, ideas mentioned on the platform under 'Other ideas' have been placed under one of the nine abovementioned topics, or several topics in case of cross-cutting issues. For each topic, an overview of the thematic clustering of submitted ideas and events in themes and sub-themes is provided. A mind map provides the visual representation of the content analysis per topic by themes and sub-themes.

Note on methodology

The main focus of this report is on a **qualitative analysis** of the contributions on the platform. This is done on the basis of ideas and comments of contributors to deliver a broad overview of the content of the platform. In practice, within each topic a manual textual analysis and clustering of the proposed ideas has been performed by a research team, aided by a computer assisted clustering tool. Subsequently, a summary of the common themes and possible sub-themes has been prepared. The cluster analysis into themes and sub-themes takes place within the pre-defined topics. This means that ideas cutting across topics or ideas submitted by contributors under multiple topics or under 'Other Ideas' may appear multiple times in this report under the relevant topics. This approach was chosen so as to give a holistic perspective on each of the conference topics.

The grouping of ideas into themes and sub-themes does not represent the volume of ideas or comments made in relation to that topic. That means that issues raised by a small number of contributors also figure in this analysis if they provide a new perspective compared to that of other contributors. The aim is to provide a general overview of the breadth and diversity of ideas proposed on the platform currently, rather than focusing on the relative support of the ideas or the size of identified themes and sub-themes at this stage.

Quantitative elements (number of ideas, comments, endorsements, events) are nevertheless mentioned in order to reflect the current state of discussions on the platform, including a high level of interest in or debate on some ideas.

Please also note that in the analysis provided in this report, the term '**contributions**' refers to a combination of ideas, comments and events, and '**interaction**' to a combination of ideas and comments.

Further details on the methodological approach are provided in **Annex II**.



2. Executive summary

This report summarises the activity on the Multilingual Digital Platform for the Conference on the Future of Europe from its launch up to 2 August 2021.

In this period 19,679 contributions, were recorded on the platform, with 6,115 ideas, 11,879 comments and 1,685 events covering all 10 topics. A clear peak in activity can be noted around Europe Day (9 May).

The topics of European Democracy and Climate Change attracted by far the highest volume of contributions during this initial period, followed by the open topic of 'Other ideas'. All EU countries have generated activity. When it comes to the profile of participants, the representation of age groups is fairly diversified, with 25-39 year olds being the most active. Approximately 63% of contributors have identified themselves as men and 15% as women. However, around one-fifth of contributors have not provided

information on their gender. In this regard, it should be highlighted that organisations can also contribute to the platform.



Climate change and the environment

Contributors highlight climate change and its effects and numerous environmental challenges and call for concrete action to address them. The ideas can be thematically grouped as follows:

- Pollution is defined as a major source of pressure on the environment. Contributors

suggest measures to tackle global carbon emissions, water pollution and light pollution;

- Transport is identified as a major source of pollution by participants who want measures to encourage the development and use of alternative, eco-friendly transport. Various formats of public transport are discussed here;
- Under the theme of agriculture a strong sub-theme is a call to eliminate the use of pesticides. Other measures in relation to the environment include the promotion of local farming, biodiversity, vegetarian or vegan diets and fair prices for farmers;
- Under the theme of consumption, contributors call for stronger measures to address waste, targeting both manufacturers and consumers. Additionally, they call for measures to promote more sustainable consumption in sectors ranging from tourism, fashion to electronic appliances;
- The halting of environmentally unfriendly subsidies and the proposal of a sustainability tax;
- Promotion of and investment in alternative energy sources.



Health

The topic of health covers a wide variety of themes. Contributors call for more harmonisation and integration, also influenced by the experience of COVID-19 and its impact. The main themes are the following:

- More cooperation or even a strengthened EU healthcare system, ensuring healthcare access for everyone;
- The need for EU coordinated innovation and investment in health research, particularly in relation to the EU's ageing demographic profile;
- Means and measures to promote health literacy, healthy lifestyles and diets as well as a more preventative public health approach; An assessment of the impact of COVID-19 and lessons to be learned.



Stronger economy, social justice and jobs

Contributors stress the importance of Europe becoming more inclusive and socially just, especially in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the contributors believe that the well-being of various groups of people, especially the most disadvantaged ones, is pivotal to EU's successful functioning and further growth. The most prominent themes debated under this topic are:

- Various taxation formats for a fair and inclusive economy, such as tax measures to ensure a fair competition between companies, environmental taxes and a minimum EU-wide tax to counter tax havens;
- Contributors consider that social security measures are important to achieve social justice. The Unconditional Basic Income is the most frequently discussed idea;
- Suggestions to build a more inclusive, socially just Europe, in accordance with the European Pillar of Social Rights, such as social protection measures, eliminating the gender pay gap, LGBTI rights and representation;
- A common tax policy with European fiscal reform for a more united European future, including more EU own resources or a budget independent from the Member States;
- Economic recovery, including concerns about rising public debt in the EU, discussions about the role of the European Central Bank, calls for a review of the Stability and Growth Pact and for an expansion of the Recovery Fund, as well as support for local production and local consumption to boost the EU economy;
- Working conditions with clearer rules for home working (and also working from abroad), shorter working weeks, ban on unpaid internships;
- Specific measures to further facilitate labour mobility within the EU and boost the rights of mobile Europeans;
- Boost job growth by investing in innovation, education and R&D.



EU in the world

Overall, contributors call for a stronger EU presence in the global political arena: in its neighbourhood policy as well as in the relations with, for instance, African and Latin American countries. Contributors to the platform feel that the EU should be bolder in both its exercise of soft and hard power. Ideas include:

- A more assertive foreign policy stance with various means and mechanisms in order for the EU to be valued and taken seriously on the global political stage; this includes exerting soft power as a partisan of multilateralism, but also hard power, with much discussion about common defence policy to be able to intervene, but also dissuade and represent geopolitical power vis-à-vis other global powers;
- Creation of an EU army;
- Actions so that the EU is viewed with the EU institutions acting as one in the global political arena; a more visible presence, with Member States ceasing internal competition between each other. This ties in with the equally discussed call elsewhere for a federal Europe; and
- A common foreign policy with increased powers for the European Parliament and a rethinking of the unanimity rule.



Values and rights, rule of law and security

A substantial proportion of interactions under this topic discuss what is described as the “dangers of the rise of illiberal democracies” within the EU and the need to protect EU values. The main themes and ideas are the following:

- A group of contributors focus on what constitutes EU values, with calls for greater gender equality and discussions over the role of Christian values;
- The protection of privacy in the rapidly changing technological environment is brought up often, as well as the need to return to normality as soon as the COVID-19

situation allows for it. There are also calls to better protect LGBTI and to take the lead in protecting animal rights;

- A number of concrete suggestions are made on how to improve the protection of EU values and the rule of law in the EU, as well as human rights more generally;
- Under the security theme a number of participants discuss the idea of an EU army, and the need for closer cooperation on internal security matters is raised.



Digital transformation

In general contributors stress the importance of facilitating and establishing digital transformation across a wide range of areas, from the economy to health. However, they also highlight several challenges related to digital transformation, such as ethical considerations, GDPR shortcomings and cyber threats. The main themes are the following:

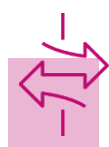
- Digitalisation of the economy with measures relating to cryptocurrency, and a call for a digital euro;
- Means and measures to support digital innovation, such as Artificial Intelligence and boosting digital sovereignty. This covers a diversity of sub-themes: sustainable manufacturing, social media and platforms that comply with EU standards in terms of privacy, and more broadly building a European digital ecosystem that is competitive and open to the world, but that is also safe and respects privacy;
- Digital skills for employees and support to companies to adapt to digital transition;
- A cyber army to defend the EU against cyber threats;
- Increasing the use of digital voting to make voting more accessible, in particular in the context of the pandemic. Some commenters on the other hand call for caution in this area;
- Data privacy in the digital environment;
- Investing in digital education and digital health in order to promote healthy and conscious use of technology.



European Democracy

Ideas under this topic cover a broad diversity of issues. Contributors call for a restructuring of European institutions or even a federalisation of the European Union. Various suggestions call for increased citizen participation and engagement. The most prominent themes are:

- The topic of federalisation of the EU is frequently raised, it is equally present in other topics on the platform. Some participants argue for decentralisation with greater power for Member States;
- Institutional reforms are suggested, with the aim of making the EU institutions more efficient and transparent and bringing them closer to the citizens. Contributions most frequently suggest qualified majority voting rather than unanimity in the Council and a greater role for the European Parliament;
- Mechanisms to improve the participation of EU citizens, by electing an EU President, transnational party lists for European Parliament elections or transnational campaigns. Other measures are suggested to make citizen consultations and participation a structural part of EU governance;
- Mechanisms and means to better engage EU citizens and ensure that they are more connected and better informed about the EU and its decisions. Suggestions regarding better communication, common EU media platforms and fostering a European spirit also appear in the topic of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport;
- Mechanisms and means to protect democratic values with regard to lobbying, corruption and measures against governments violating democratic principles.



Migration

Interactions under this topic are polarised. It is the most polarising of all the topics with strong voices against any migration and others advocating for more human rights centric migration policies. The interactions can be divided into:

- Those that object to migration towards the EU and express their disagreement, disappointment and feeling of threat to their own cultural identity;
- Those who debate and suggest specific measures and means to decrease migration or various forms of controlled migration;
- Those who call for a migration policy respecting human rights, with greater solidarity and better integration;
- Means and measures to facilitate integration and support the rights of permanent residents in the EU.



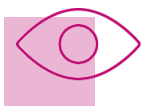
Education, culture, youth and sport

Content under this topic is for the moment very fragmented, including many diverse ideas with the strongest focus on education and culture. The themes under this topic are cross-cutting and also appear elsewhere in the platform.

- For the moment, ideas relating to education, culture and sport are mostly discussed as a means of fostering the development of a European identity and European citizenship; this includes various proposals for promoting exchange and interactions, such as through the Erasmus Programme and inter-European sport events;
- When it comes to education, contributors mention the need to rethink education, with increased digitalisation, inter-European educational mobility and the promotion of soft skills;
- There is a strong emphasis on the role of media and European journalism as well as European productions in diffusing European values and culture;
- The suggestion for a unifying, common language is widespread across the platform in various topics;
- In addition, ideas discussing specific actions relating to youth and youth unemployment are present in this topic.



3. Overview of contributions on the platform



Overview of activity

During the period under review, in total 19,679 contributions were collected on the platform, representing ideas, comments and events. The activity can be broken down as follows:

- Ideas: 6,115
- Comments: 11,879
- Events: 1,685

Over the course of July daily contributions were at an average of 89 ideas, comments and events submitted

per day. This compares to an average of 111 contributions in June, 262 in May and an average of 308 contributions a day in April. Looking at the trendline (see Figure 1), two peaks in contributions can be observed. The first peak coincides with the launch of the platform and a second peak occurred around the inauguration of the Conference on the Future of Europe on the Europe Day (9 May).

Figure 1 – Timeline indicating daily contributions (19/04/2021 – 01/08/2021)



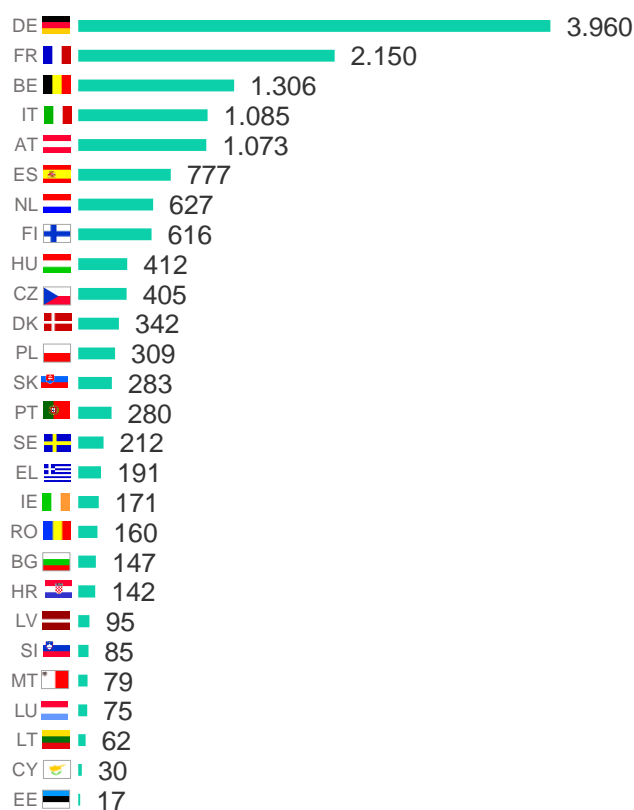


Prior to engaging with the platform contributors are asked to provide information on their country of residence, educational background, age, gender and employment status. The data are processed anonymously. As this information is shared voluntarily, there are limitations on the insight that can be provided on this basis and that are presented in the following. For example, 27% of the contributions are from participants who did not disclose their country of residence.

All EU countries have generated activity, as can be noted from Figure 2

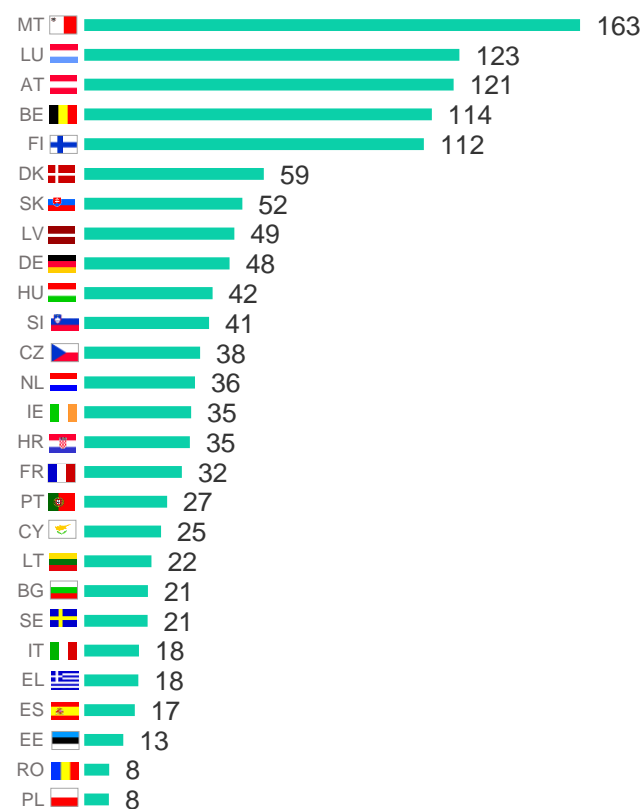
Figure 2, which presents the total number of contributions per country.

Figure 2 – Volume of contributions per country (19/04/2021 – 01/08/2021)



In order to paint a more detailed picture of the volume of contributions in proportion to population, the figure below gives an overview of the number of contributions from each country per one million inhabitants.

Figure 3 – Volume of contributions per country, proportional reflection per 1M inhabitants (19/04/2021 – 01/08/2021)





Who engages in the debate?

Around two-thirds of the people contributing to the platform have identified themselves as men (62.7%) and 15% as women. However, one in five contributors (22%) did not provide information on their gender and 0.3% identified as 'other', so these figures only give a limited view. In this regard, it should be noted that organisations can also contribute to the platform.

The representation of age groups is currently fairly diversified, with 25–39 year-olds being the most active age group in terms of contributions (26.1%), followed by 55-69 year-olds (16.8%).

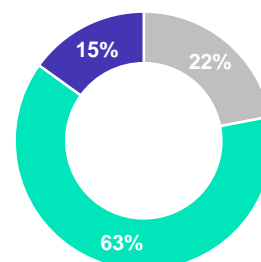
In terms of occupation, professional workers (17.4%), students (15.7%) and managers (12%) are the most active on the platform. Retired people are also fairly active (9.9%). Manual workers (7.5%), self-employed (7.3%) and unemployed people (2.5%) have been relatively less active on the platform to date.

When it comes to education, people with higher education have been very active (44%) in the period between 19 April 2021 to 2 August 2021.

Figure 4 – Age, gender, education and occupation of participants (19/04/2021 – 01/08/2021)

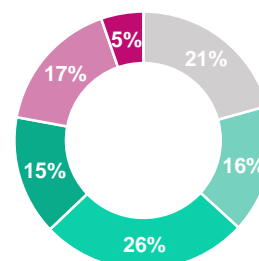
Gender of participants

- no answer
- man
- woman



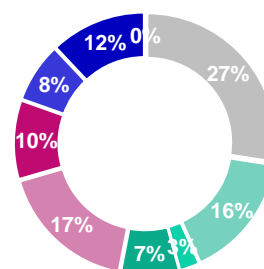
Age of participants

- no answer
- 15-24 y.o.
- 25-39 y.o.
- 40-54 y.o.
- 55-69 y.o.
- 70+ y.o.



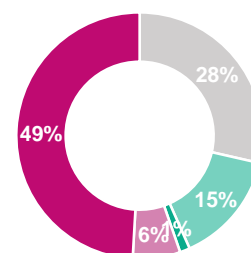
Occupation of participants

- no answer
- student
- unemployed
- self-employed
- professional worker
- retired
- manual worker
- manager
- house worker



Education of participants

- no answer
- still studying
- no full time education
- under 20 - basic or upper secondary education
- 20 plus - tertiary education





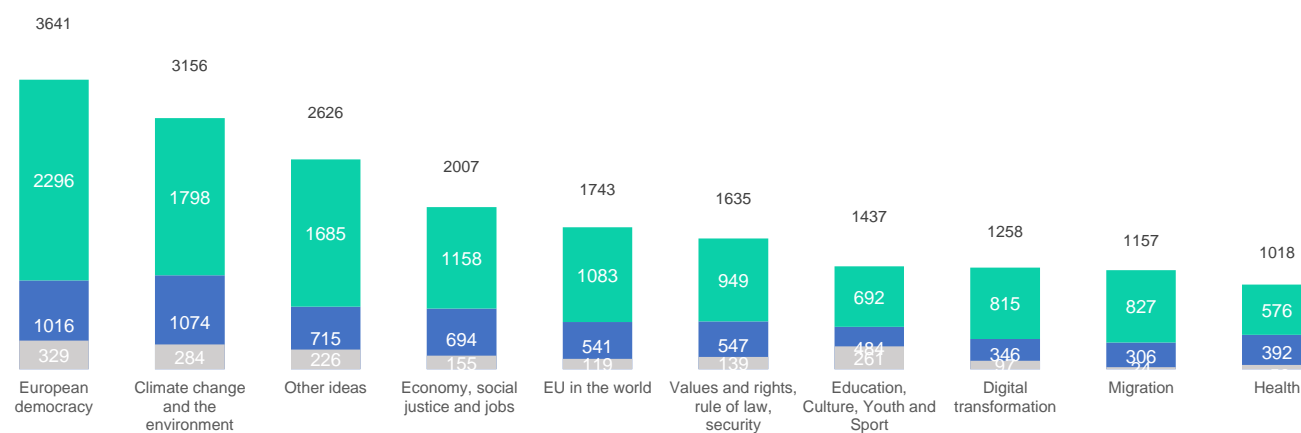
Trending topics in terms of contributions

Since the early months of the Conference the subject of European Democracy has recorded the highest level of contributions (ideas, comments and events) (3,641), followed by Climate change and environment (3,156). Contributions under “other ideas” are at the 3rd place, followed by A stronger economy, social justice and jobs (4th) and EU in the world (5th) (see Figure 5). As stated earlier, the contributions made under “other ideas” were distributed across the other topics during the analysis. Some topics garner more comments or ideas than others, for example, the topic of Climate change and the environment has the highest number of ideas (1,074). Similarly, the topic of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport has a total of 261 events which is significantly more than under any other topic.

**Figure 5 – Contributions per topics on the platform
(19/04 –01/08/2021)**

Overview of contributions per topic

■ Ideas ■ Comments ■ Events





4. Climate change and the environment

The topic of 'Climate change and the environment' has generated a total of 3,156 comments, ideas and events since the inception of the platform (1,074 ideas, 1,798 comments and 284 events). The concept of climate change and awareness of its effects underlies a number of suggestions, with contributors highlighting the numerous environmental challenges and calling for concrete ongoing action to address them. The ideas within this topic are diverse and can be grouped in the following themes:

- **Pollution**
- **Transport**
- **Agriculture**

- **Consumption**
- **Subsidisation, taxation**
- **Energy**
- **Creating change in attitudes and behaviour**



Pollution

Pollution is identified as a major source of pressure on the global environment by contributors. A green transition is discussed with a variety of solutions to decrease pollution (see [event](#)). For instance, one of the most endorsed ideas on the platform suggests that



the EU should provide a strong and inclusive governance approach where both workers and trade unions are involved in the design and implementation of adaptation policies at all levels. It is stressed that the EU strategy to deal with climate change should include concrete policy measures that maintain jobs and protect workers' health and safety as well as active labour market policies and reskilling and trainings to prevent job losses (see [idea](#)).

Several areas of pollution are discussed, with the following sub-themes: emissions, deforestation, water pollution, light pollution and plastic use.

With regard to emissions, one of the most discussed issues concerns taxing emissions, more specifically, to encourage businesses to lower their greenhouse gas emissions by opting for cheaper renewable energy sources, leading, in turn, to customers making more sustainable choices (see example of [idea](#)). Additionally, there is a call for the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) to be expanded.

A sub-theme of ideas concerns deforestation with calls to invest in reforestation of Europe (see example of [idea](#)) or globally to save the lungs of the planet, namely, the Amazon rainforest and other world rainforests, in order not only to slow down global carbon pollution and save species, but also to reduce migratory pressures on Europe (see example of [idea](#)).

On the sub-theme of water pollution, there is a strong emphasis on the need to ensure the future security of drinking water resources and clean ecosystems (see [event](#)). Moreover, there are concrete proposals for combatting rising ocean levels and river pollution (see example of [event](#)). One of the ideas suggests to create facilities for recycling plastics taken out from rivers and oceans (see [idea](#)).

Lastly, some ideas on the platform want to limit light pollution (see example of [idea](#)).



Transport

A large group of ideas under the theme of transport focuses on the relationship between transport and pollution. Some of the suggestions listed below

concern changing the transport system in order to reduce pollution.

Ideas submitted on the platform to change the transport system call first and foremost for a ban of short-distance flights in the EU in order to reduce pollution (see example of [idea](#)). Contributors highlight that the pandemic has already led to a shrinking aviation industry.

In general, there is strong support for public transport systems in Europe to be improved (see example of [idea](#)) as more environmentally friendly alternatives to short-distance flights. Specifically, a common European railway network is widely discussed (see example of [idea](#)). One contributor proposes the Euro Trainscanner search engine to make travelling by rail more attractive (see [idea](#)) and another suggests introducing an integrated EU ticket and making it free of charge in cities (see [idea](#)).

Other ideas concern a common cycling network, proposing, for instance, an extension of cycling routes or the creation of a Europe-wide cycling junction network (see example of [idea](#)).

Another pool of ideas focuses on innovation and the development of electric vehicles, such as cars and bicycles, and their integration into the current environment, for example by providing for a charging station network (see example of [idea](#)).

On the question of the decarbonisation of transport and more environmentally friendly transport, the participants also emphasise the importance of cross-border projects to foster shipping and rail transport (see example of [idea](#)). There is also a call to develop programmes to encourage R&D and innovation, in order to produce means of transport, both public and private, individual and collective, that are non-polluting and 100% energy self-sufficient (see example of [idea](#)).



Agriculture

Under the theme of agriculture, the concept of ecological farming and more small farms (see example of [idea](#)) is fairly frequently advocated by contributors, with calls for the use of pesticides and



intensive farming to be banned (see example of [idea](#)). Some contributors go even further, suggesting that the ban should be extended to private use: while farmers must document their use of pesticides, there is no such requirement for private garden owners, who can legally purchase such products, and are often unaware of their harmful effects (see example of [idea](#)).

Other ideas suggest that the EU should do more to promote a plant-based diet on the grounds of climate protection and the preservation of our environment. Some contributors add ethical concerns to motivate such action (see example of [idea](#)). This is also addressed under the Health topic.

The need to ensure food sovereignty and security by promoting local farming is also strongly emphasised by contributors (see example of [idea](#)). Local farming could be promoted, for example, by creating food belts around cities, requiring fruit trees to be planted in urban areas, supporting the acquisition of land by producers and farmers by limiting the price of such land, requiring part of the rooftop space of public buildings to be used for urban agriculture, limiting housing pressure on agricultural land (see [idea](#)).

Additionally, contributors want to promote biodiversity in Europe, for example, by concrete measures such as green roofs (see example of [idea](#)).

Lastly, there is a discussion about the income of farmers, with some contributors calling for farmers to receive a guaranteed income through fair prices instead of subsidies (see example of [idea](#)).



Consumption

Within the theme of consumption, there is a general call to change the current system of the mass consumption of goods and services (see example of [idea](#)). Some contributors go even further by proposing to have quotas for maximum consumption and production (see example of [idea](#)).

A number of contributors on the platform point to the considerable volume of waste produced and propose several measures to avoid and combat such waste, such as recycling (see example of [idea](#)), opting for

zero or low waste product packaging in order to decrease the negative impact on the environment (see example of [idea](#)). In addition, there is a strong call to stop imports of products that cause tropical deforestation (see example of [idea](#)).

The second strand of ideas advocates a more advanced product labelling system (see example of [idea](#)) that would detail the environmental impact of production or indicate whether the products contain microplastics and thus have a negative long-term effect on the health of consumers (see example of [idea](#)).

The third strand revolves around the fast fashion and the textile industry, with the aim of making it more eco-friendly; contributors highlight the huge quantity of resources used in the production of clothing and that clothes are often unsuitable for recycling (see example of [idea](#)).

Additionally, participants highlight the need to promote green and sustainable tourism instead of mass tourism, since the latter is considered to have a considerable impact on natural and cultural resources (see example of [event](#)).

A last group of comments and ideas under this theme expresses concerns about the waste generated by new electronic appliances, and calls *inter alia* for an increased mandatory warranty for them and the need to ensure reparability (see example of [idea](#)). Some participants also want energy consumption to be limited - especially since electricity is largely produced with fossil fuels - by imposing a monthly quota of electricity for consumption, with the surplus being taxed (see example of [idea](#)).



Subsidisation, taxation

Within this theme contributors call for a halt to environmentally unfriendly subsidies, such as harmful fishing subsidies (see [idea](#)) or fossil fuel subsidies (see [idea](#)). Similarly, suggestions advocate increasing subsidies for biodiversity and climate change projects that would lead to a long-term positive outlook.



Contributors also propose introducing a sustainability tax (see example of [idea](#)) that would make unsustainable products more expensive, thus making such products less attractive for both consumers and producers. Moreover, it is considered to provide the EU with additional revenue to invest in sustainability.



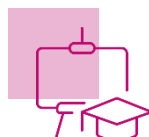
Energy

Contributors on the platform suggest boosting both the small-scale and large-scale use of renewable energy, as well as limiting the use of nuclear energy, or, alternatively, developing safe nuclear energy and using it in countries and places where it is not possible to use renewable energy sources (see example of [idea](#)).

Additionally, the second most endorsed idea since the launch within the topic of climate change calls for a halt to all fossil fuel subsidies (see example of [idea](#)).

Simultaneously, there is a call to investigate alternative sources of energy (see example of [event](#)), such as thermonuclear fusion, geothermal energy or hydrogen that would contribute considerably to energy diversity (see example of [idea](#)). However, contributors emphasize that even alternative sources, such as wind energy, should be accepted by local populations and that it must be ensured that they have a positive impact on the biodiversity, human beings and landscapes (see example of [idea](#)).

call to engage older Europeans with climate change initiatives, especially because of the increasing population ageing in Europe (see example of [idea](#)). Additionally, some contributors stress the need to promote eco-responsible communication by the European institutions. For instance, they propose to develop communication kits on "how to be an eco-responsible European" and to strengthen environmental education in order to create neighbourhoods responsible for the environment (see [idea](#)).

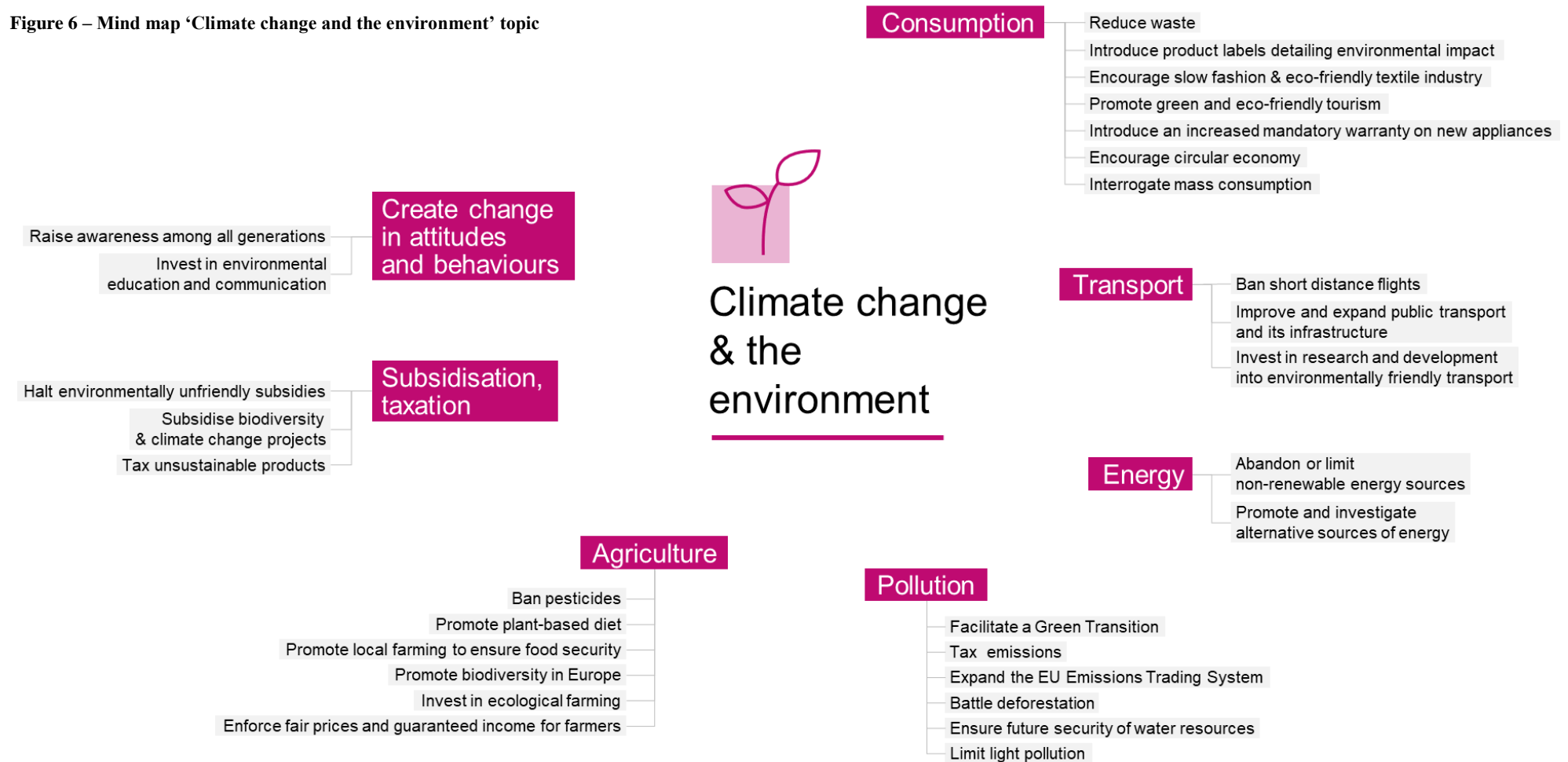


Creating change in attitudes and behaviours

Another focus is on education and raising awareness among Europeans of all generations (see [event](#)). While most of the ideas address the education of young people (see example of [idea](#)), there is also a



Figure 6 – Mind map ‘Climate change and the environment’ topic





5. Health

Under the topic of health contributors address a wide variety of themes. They suggest more harmonisation and integration at European level; this is also influenced by the experience of COVID-19 and its impact. This topic has generated 1,018 contributions: 392 ideas, 576 comments and 50 events. The main themes explored under this topic are:

- **Integrating EU healthcare systems**
- **Healthcare access for everyone**
- **Healthy ageing**
- **Healthy lifestyles**
- **Responses to COVID-19**
- **Prevention, rather than intervention**
- **Health in a digitalised era**
- **Health research**
- **Sexual and reproductive health**
- **Other ideas**



Integrating EU healthcare systems

Participants on the platform advocate closer cooperation among Member States to strengthen European healthcare systems in various ways. Ideas include pooling knowledge and capacities by, for example, allowing intensivists to move freely and take care of critically ill patients across the EU (see [idea](#)), standardising pre-hospital emergency care (see [idea](#)), recognising carer qualifications across the EU (see [idea](#)), setting up a European hospital for rare diseases (see [idea](#)) and improving legal regulation on transplantation to create a unified transplantation coordination system (see [idea](#)).

Accordingly, discussions underline the need to equip the EU with more emergency competences and powers in the area of public health through a revision of the Treaty of Lisbon (see example of an [idea](#)). These suggestions are most often put forward in connection with how Member States dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic and the related shortage of medical equipment, the challenges of vaccine development and joint vaccine purchases.



Healthcare access for everyone

Ideas put forward regarding healthcare access support the introduction of a European medical insurance scheme (see example of [idea](#) and [idea](#)). The idea of de-privatising the healthcare industry is also put forward as a way to make healthcare affordable for all (see [idea](#)). On a different note, a further idea to make healthcare practically more accessible to everyone is that of expanding the mobile health system, in the form of health buses which would facilitate high-speed and low-barrier access to medical systems (see [idea](#)).



Healthy ageing and anti-ageing

In light of the ageing populations in Europe, citizens highlight the importance of good health during the “silver age”. One highly endorsed and commented idea promotes science-intensive healthy longevity research and technologies (see [idea](#)), such as rejuvenation therapies and clinical trials in this field and implement effective legal, budgetary, regulatory and institutional commitments, with the objective to increase healthy life expectancy in the European Union.

One citizen raises the potential of rural areas as hubs of innovation for healthy ageing strategies, as these “struggling areas” are generally more densely populated by elderly citizens and the quality of healthcare is not as high as in urban areas, therefore requiring innovative solutions (see [idea](#)). Taking the topic even further, one citizen advances cryonics as an opportunity to delay care until a cure is found, by freezing terminally ill people (see [idea](#)).



Healthy lifestyles

Several ideas underline the importance of healthy diets, with many citizens suggesting that the EU should promote vegetarian diets (see [idea](#)) because of their health and environmental benefits. In this context, one idea is to increase taxes on meat while reducing VAT on healthy foods (see [idea](#)). Further contributions call for an investigation into the effects of emulsifiers (see [idea](#)), for a ban on artificial trans fats (see [idea](#)) and regulation of agricultural techniques impacting nutrition and health, such as antibiotics in intensive farming (see [idea](#)). Similar ideas are also brought up under the topic of Climate change and the environment.

The idea of integrating natural remedies in medicine is widely discussed on the platform (see example of an [idea](#)). Specifically, contributors suggest that non-medicinal interventions can demonstrably benefit the health and autonomy of patients (see example of an [idea](#)). One citizen also highlights the benefits derived from northern berries with high antioxidant content in enhancing cancer treatments (see [idea](#)). Similarly, alternative therapies are suggested, such as sylvotherapy to counter stress, burnout, depression and anxiety (see [idea](#)).

Support for promoting health literacy (see [idea](#)) and instilling health-related practices from an early age, as a key factor to a healthy lifestyle are also proposed on the platform (see [idea](#)). For example, several citizens point to the need to discourage tobacco consumption at European level, by increasing the price and

reducing selling points to pharmacies (see example of an [idea](#)).



Responses to COVID-19

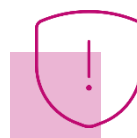
The effects of COVID-19 are widely discussed by participants who, overall, feel that there is a need to restore rational and scientific credibility and confidence in medicine and politics, vis-à-vis the widespread diffusion of misconceptions and fake news during the pandemic. When discussing COVID-19 related measures, citizens on the platform agree that any COVID-19 measures in the EU should be implemented in an evidence-based manner, in order to achieve a cost-benefit analysis that is as realistic as possible (see [idea](#)).

Further ideas highlight the need to develop inclusive strategies to deal with future pandemics at EU level, protecting the rights of people with a disability (see [idea](#)). One suggestion put forward is to carry out research on the impact of COVID-19 measures on residents and staff of homes for the elderly in the different EU countries, in order to have first-hand accounts of the experiences of elderly people with COVID-19 measures (see [idea](#)).

One contribution addresses the procedures relating to vaccine purchases at EU level, calling for greater disclosure and transparency with respect to the contracts with the pharmaceutical companies (see [idea](#)). Furthermore, debates on the vaccination programme reveal conflicting views, ranging from the idea that vaccination should be mandatory for everyone (see [idea](#)), to suggesting that citizens should be free to choose (see [idea](#)). Another contributor argues that vaccines should not be mandatory for young people and that the EU should not “blackmail” them by enabling “facilitated” transnational travel in exchange for vaccination and that if PCR tests are required they should be provided for free (see [idea](#)). It is also proposed that EU Member States should agree to recognise the relevant WHO standards and the national document certifying the level of antibodies (or vaccine/refreshment) (see [idea](#)). The green pass certificate is also widely discussed, pitching those who

fear the rise of two classes of citizens (see [idea](#)) and suggest that Europe should defend the right to choose not to be vaccinated (see [idea](#)) against those who support such a health pass and obligatory vaccination as part of a collective effort to defeat the virus and ensure viability of the healthcare systems (see example of an [idea](#)).

Several citizens call for greater solidarity and the establishment of a global partnership and funding to fight and eradicate diseases globally and suggest that Europe can be the world leader in fighting and winning against pandemics, cancer and heart disease (see [idea](#)). One citizen suggests that the European Commission, in cooperation with World Health Organisation, should promote an international agreement to enable the worldwide production and distribution of medicines in the context of pandemics (see [idea](#)) and another contribution underlines the need to vaccinate the world to prevent the rise of new strains (see [idea](#)). At the same time, contributors propose that measures should be taken to safeguard the patents of the companies and suggest that the European Commission could play a significant role as mediator and ambassador (see [idea](#)).

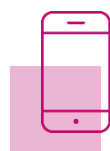


Prevention, rather than intervention

Several ideas put forward by citizens concern raising awareness about mental health and its consequences, such as burnout, stress, depression and anxiety, and call for a European Plan to tackle this issue (see [idea](#)), especially in view of the impact of the restrictive measures imposed due to COVID-19.

The influence of air pollution on citizens' health is also raised as a pressing issue (see [idea](#)), as is the need to tackle noise pollution by defining strict levels on permitted noise emissions for car tires (see [idea](#)). In addition, there is a call to lower exposure to substances of very high concern, including PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) (see [idea](#)).

A cross-cutting sub-theme on the platform is a criticism of the EURATOM Treaty, which is considered to favour nuclear power compared to other energy sources and to not adequately protect European citizens against the dangers of nuclear power, with some citizens advocating the abolition of the EURATOM Treaty (see example of an [idea](#)).



Health in a digitalised era

A group of citizens discuss the opportunities and threats relating to increased digitalisation during the past decades. Several ideas see digitalisation, compatibility and integration of European eHealth systems as a way of providing citizens with interoperable health records across the EU (see example of an [idea](#)). However, some contributors are cautious and emphasise the vulnerability of such sensitive data and the need to limit both nationally and Europe-wide the size of the health data set, e.g. for research purposes, to a fixed number of given records or patients (see [idea](#)). One citizen calls for the prohibition of national genome databases which are used for medical research purposes, but may be accessed by other entities, such as government services, for other purposes thereby violating privacy rights (see [idea](#)).

Another idea suggests to prioritize funding for research on exercise and in relation to eHealth points to digital solutions that help citizens to remain physically active, thereby combating a diverse range of chronic conditions that are due to inactivity (see [idea](#)).

On a different note, digital addiction is discussed and an EU action plan against digital addiction is suggested (see [idea](#)) with some contributors suggesting that training should be introduced in schools, as well as information campaigns for adults to limit digital interaction.



Health research

Various citizens endorse the idea of creating a centralised European Health Research Institute, to coordinate health research across national institutes and invest in pharmaceutical research (see example of an [idea](#)). A citizen underlines the necessity for the purchase, production and supply of protective clothing and medicines to become more Europe-based (see [idea](#)). The proposal to encourage research on the pathomechanisms of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis within Horizon Europe (see [idea](#)) has been endorsed by a number of participants. The need for Europe to join forces with universities on research to develop a new antibiotic against super resistant bacteria is also put forward (see example of an [idea](#)). Some citizens also call for a law making it obligatory for pharmaceutical companies which are distributing vaccines to publish full data from the clinical trials for those vaccines to encourage evaluations of their safety and effectiveness (see [idea](#)). Other ideas include the creation of a European laboratory for infectious diseases (see [idea](#)).



Sexual and reproductive health

An idea proposes that free menstrual items should be made available in public spaces to combat so-called 'period poverty' (see [idea](#)). Other proposals suggest the introduction of tax relief on sanitary pads and the full reimbursement of female contraceptives. In addition, the need for more research into female reproductive health and the development of less invasive female and male contraceptives is raised (see [idea](#)). There are also calls on the platform to ban male genital mutilation without consent and before the age of majority (see [idea](#)). A proposal suggests instituting EU sponsored and promoted sexual health clinics (see [idea](#)).

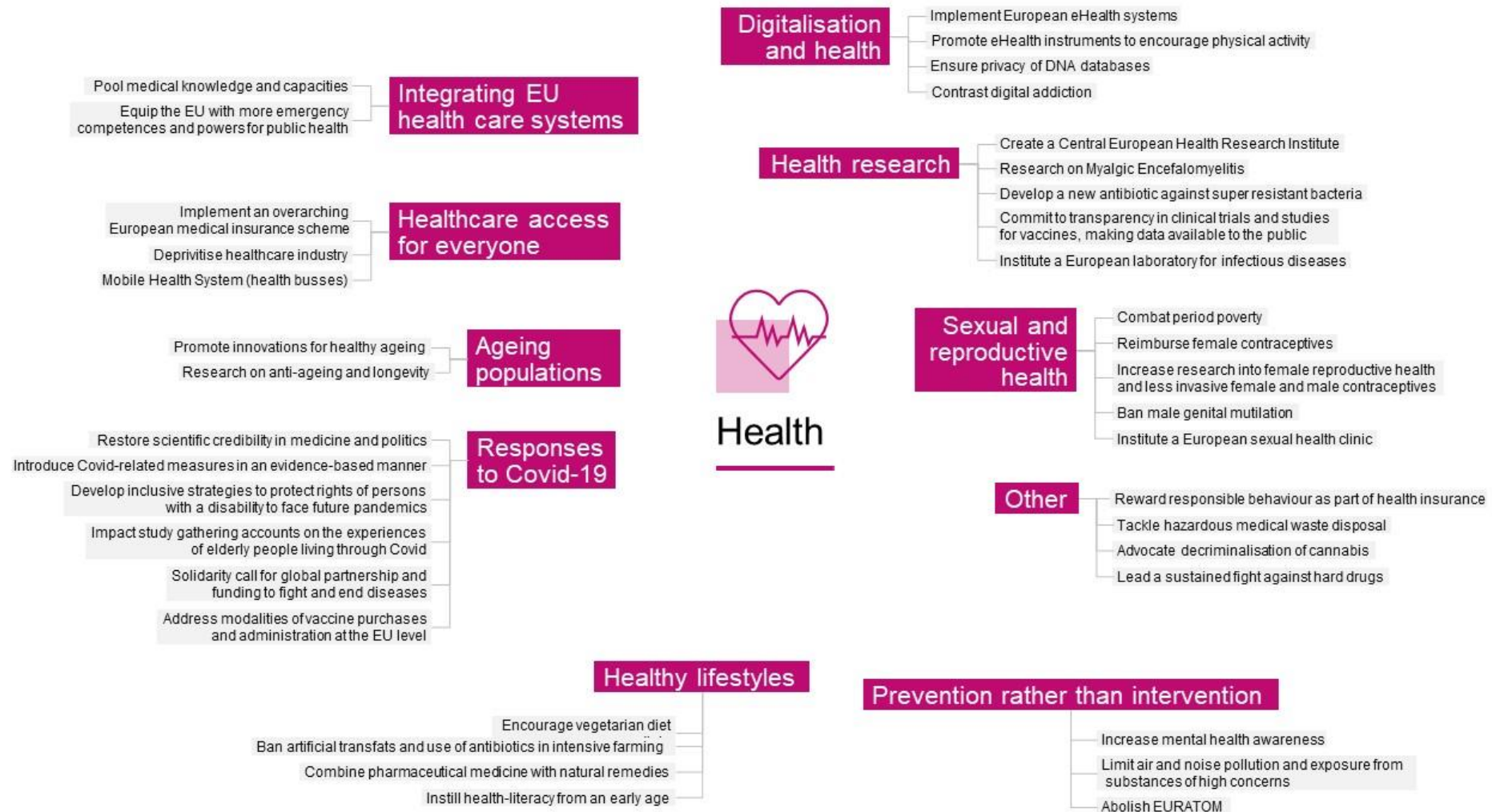


Other ideas

Other ideas relate to rewarding responsible behaviour as part of health insurance, for example in the form of cashback in case services are not used in a given year, (see [idea](#)). One idea highlights the need to find a solution for disposing of hazardous medical waste (such as needles from diabetes insulin kits) (see [idea](#)). Several citizens also call for cannabis to be decriminalised for public health reasons (see [idea](#) and [idea](#)), while others advocate a more sustained fight against drugs at EU level (see [idea](#)). Lastly, a largely discussed idea suggests following the astronomical time zone instead of changing to winter and summer times (see [idea](#)).



Figure 7 – Mind map ‘Health’ topic



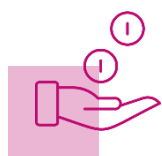


6. A stronger economy, social justice and jobs

The topic of 'A stronger economy, social justice and jobs' has received a total of 708 ideas, 1,172 comments and 159 events up to 2 August 2021. Contributors stress the importance of Europe becoming more inclusive and socially fair, especially in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and point to several perceived challenges related to that, such as lack of support to young Europeans and lack of collaboration among the Member States. The most often suggested mechanism to make Europe more inclusive and socially fair is the Unconditional Basic Income throughout the EU. Additionally, the contributors believe that the well-being of various

groups of people, especially, the most disadvantaged ones, is pivotal to EU's successful functioning and further growth. The various ideas can be grouped according to the following themes:

- **Taxation for an inclusive and fair economy**
- **Social protection and social security**
- **Economic recovery**
- **Challenging the current economic model**
- **More inclusive, socially just Europe**
- **Boost jobs**
- **Innovation – boosting growth**



Taxation for an inclusive and fair economy

A group of contributors make suggestions for addressing social, economic and environmental problems through fiscal rules.

A large pool of ideas under this theme advocates greater tax justice, fair taxation and combatting tax fraud. Suggestions include taking measures against tax avoidance, introducing a financial transaction tax (see [idea](#)), as well as avoiding 'social dumping' by harmonising fiscal rules and minimum wages across the member states (see example of [idea](#)). One of the most commented and endorsed ideas concerns the introduction of a global or EU minimum tax to address tax havens (see [idea](#)).

Furthermore, a variety of possible taxation measures for an inclusive and fair economy are highlighted on the digital platform. The taxation subjects are currently the following. First, tax measures to promote fair competition between companies, such as either a common Value Added Tax (VAT) system for e-commerce or requiring companies to only pay VAT in their home countries (see [idea](#)) and a VAT related to the source of goods to promote local consumption and thus support the local economy (see example of [idea](#)). Secondly, taxation related to the environment and climate change, with amongst others calls for an EU carbon or a sustainability tax (see example of [idea](#)). The last group of taxation measures falls under miscellaneous, including taxation to promote gender equality, with a call to allow the application of the zero or reduced VAT rate for female sanitary products (see [idea](#)).

In line with cross-cutting calls for federalisation under other topics, a substantial strand of ideas within the topic of 'A stronger economy, social justice and jobs' revolves around a Fiscal Union. Some contributors express the opinion that more EU own resources or a budget independent from the Member States is the way forward for a more united European future (see example of [idea](#)).



Social protection and social security

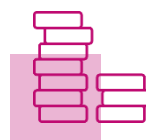
Ideas under this theme generally promote a unified EU approach to social security, or, in other words, minimum European standards ranging from parenting and the family to the right to accessible housing and pension policies.

The most recurring sub-theme, with several ideas being highly endorsed and commented on, concerns the unconditional basic Income to ensure the ability of each person to participate in society (see example of [idea](#)). Similarly, related to this sub-theme is the group of ideas discussing income gaps in the EU, suggesting a limited salary difference within the same company (see example of [idea](#)), or monitoring the income of politicians (see example of [idea](#)), and a general call for more measures to create a more humane Europe (see example of [idea](#)).

Next to an unconditional basic income, there is a recurring call for measures to address (youth) unemployment (see example of [event](#)). For the ageing population, contributors discuss the need for coordinated retirement policies and pensions across EU Member States is tackled (see example of [idea](#)). The specific situation of mobile Europeans is also raised with a suggestion for a voluntary European Public Pension Fund for people having lived in multiple Member States (see [idea](#)).

The right for accessible, affordable housing is another sub-theme related to social security discussed by contributors (see example of [idea](#)).

Lastly, there is a group of more administrative ideas, for instance, the introduction of a digitised (common EU) social security card and transferable social rights for mobile Europeans (see example of [idea](#)).



Economic recovery

A pool of comments and ideas on the platform expresses concern about rising public debt in the EU: discussing the role of the European Central Bank (ECB), calling for a review of the Stability and Growth Pact rules (see [idea](#)), legislation on current account imbalances amongst others (see example of [idea](#)).

Ideas revolving around the promotion of local consumption and production, with SMEs as the growth engine, are seen as pivotal to the EU's economic



recovery. In addition, taxation is also proposed as a tool to promote economic recovery by way of tax breaks for strategic industries or as an incentive to promote local consumption or buying European, by labelling and taxing the distance consumer goods have travelled (see example of [idea](#)).

In the same vein, with regard to the COVID-19, contributors discuss the need for financing future possible pandemic preparedness measures (see example of [idea](#)). Additionally, contributors stress the importance of working together globally on economic recovery (see example of [event](#)). There are calls for increased solidarity among Member States with, for example, an expansion of the Recovery Fund (see [idea](#)).



Challenging the current economic model

Within this theme, the current European economic system is discussed from a more ideological perspective. Participants highlight the perceived shortcomings of the current economic model. More specifically, one camp of contributors proposes an building on capitalism and the free market, with more internal competition, reduced regulatory burden, or even a Business Management approach (see example of [idea](#)). Another camp promotes a more social or human centred market economy (see example of [idea](#)).

Moreover, the second most endorsed idea under this topic since the launch of the platform proposes an updated model that would reform the EU economic governance, the European Semester, the mandate of the ECB, EU own-resources and strengthen the Economic and Monetary Union (see [idea](#)). This particular idea resonates with other calls on the platform that call for reform of the EU economic model to achieve an inclusive and equitable European welfare.



More inclusive, socially just Europe

With ideas concerning LGBTI rights and representation (see [idea](#)), the gender pay gap, and gender quota, several contributors on the platform call for a more inclusive, socially just Europe that could be

achieved by, for example, developing a social equality measurement index (see example of [idea](#)). Related ideas concern measures against sexual assault and domestic violence, with calls in particular for initiatives to support victims (see [idea](#)).

Suggestions also include further implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights in order to establish the social dimension of Europe, facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities, people living below the poverty threshold and similar (see example of [idea](#) and [event](#)).



Boost jobs

First of all, contributors emphasise the need to simplify tax and labour policies in the EU in order to avoid fiscal and social dumping (see example of [idea](#)).

Secondly, there is a call to foster better working conditions across the continent, for instance, by introducing a shorter working week (see example of [idea](#)). Other ideas under this theme include facilitating telework or work across EU borders (see example of [idea](#)), banning unpaid internships, mandatory overtime and precarious working contracts (see example of [idea](#)), or investing in childcare infrastructures to reconcile private and professional life.

Thirdly, there is an emphasis on the development of careers, with calls for programmes and measures to facilitate access to the EU job market, with internships across Member States and an online job-platform (see example of [idea](#)).

Contributors highlight the importance of supporting young people, in particular, when it comes to access to the job market (see example of [event](#)).



Innovation – boosting growth

Contributors suggest boosting growth via investments in high-tech research, skills, knowledge and expertise (artificial intelligence, blockchain, nanotechnology, energy storage, lab-grown meat, etc.). Additionally, several ideas identify the need for technological



independence, for example, by advancing in EU's hardware manufacturing capacity.

Investments in research and education are seen as of utmost importance, with support for knowledge sharing via an open network of laboratories or a European Infrastructure Agency (see [idea](#)). Another suggestion discusses a kind of Spotify for science, an accessible knowledge bank containing 3D printing models (see [idea](#)). In connection with research, one of the suggestions is to facilitate patents via a patent fund (see [idea](#)).

Secondly, the digital economy is seen as a prerequisite to innovation and growth, with discussions on cryptocurrency and local digital currencies that would be parallel to the Euro (see example of [idea](#)). When it comes to cryptocurrency,

contributors feel that regulation is needed to protect citizens (see example of [idea](#)).

Environment and climate change are also discussed in relation to innovation, with ideas around climate neutrality goals and the leading role that the EU could play in establishing and investing in a (global) Green Economy (see example of [idea](#)). Several ideas discuss a practical implementation of the Green Economy with, for example, investing in organic farming and farm-to-fork initiatives (see [idea](#)).

Lastly, the funding of start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is generally perceived as an innovation driver (see example of [idea](#)). Contributors propose to support SMEs via, for example, an EU fund providing starter capital for SMEs (see [idea](#)), or an online commerce platform dedicated to European SMEs (see [idea](#)).



Figure 8 – Mind map ‘A stronger economy, social justice and jobs’ topic

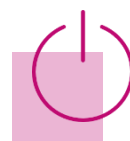




7. EU in the world

Ideas posted under the topic of 'EU in the world' cover a variety of themes related to foreign policy, ranging from trade, to the use of soft power and defence. Overall, contributors call for a stronger presence of the EU in the global political arena: in its neighbourhood policy as well as in relations with, for instance, African and Latin American countries. Contributors to the platform feel that the EU should be bolder in its exercise of both soft and hard power. Since the inception of the platform, this topic has gathered an overall number of 1,756 contributions, i.e. 541 ideas, 1,083 comments and 119 events. The various ideas can be grouped according to the following themes:

- **Overall objectives of EU foreign policy**
- **Trade Policies**
- **Defence**
- **Decision making**
- **Enlargement**
- **Neighbourhood policy and relations with others**



Overall objectives of EU foreign policy

Contributors express the opinion that the EU's role is changing amidst rising concerns over the climate emergency, a shifting economic and geopolitical power balance, major challenges to multilateralism and the global battle against COVID-19 (see example of [event](#), see example of [idea](#)). Hence several contributors express the opinion that the EU should be bolder in its exercise of both soft and hard power (see example of [idea](#) and [idea](#)).

When it comes to EU foreign policy, many ideas refer to the role the EU should play concerning human rights and democratic values worldwide. They call for a

tougher stance towards and a call for action against those countries that repeatedly violate international human rights conventions and/or treaties (see example of [idea](#)). For instance, the EU is encouraged to play a leading role in the peace-building process between Israel and Palestine (see example of [idea](#)). Related is a call for a common European arms export system with strict rules to ensure that weapons “made in EU” are not fueling conflicts around the world and leading to violations of human rights (see [idea](#)).



Trade policies

A group of contributions within the topic EU in the world call to enhance trade policies and reform trade agreements in line with EU values, be it respecting human rights or environmental standards (see example of [idea](#)). A widely endorsed idea calls for a reform of EU trade and investment policy and a relaunch of global multilateralism, with at its core the creation of decent jobs and the protection of fundamental and human rights, including workers and trade union rights (see example of [idea](#)).



Defence

When it comes to strengthening the EU's hard power - also seen as being of the utmost importance (see example of [event](#)) - contributors advocate the creation of a common European army (see example of [idea](#)). Contributors also suggest the creation of more specialized forces or institutions at EU level, such as for example a European Military Academy (see example of an [idea](#)).



Decision making

Contributors consider that it is pivotal for the EU to act as one solid and united entity in the international political arena, in order to maintain and further strengthen its role. Several contributions discuss the need for a common foreign policy. One of the most endorsed ideas within this topic proposes the need for a common foreign and security policy to ensure the safety of Europeans while promoting democracy, human rights, the rule of law and environmental protection in its neighbourhood and globally (see [idea](#)).

A second subtheme concerns a call for greater cooperation between Member States. Contributors highlight, to maintain credibility, the need to cease competition between the Member States at international level. Therefore, they suggest that the embassies of the EU Member States should be replaced by a single EU embassy that would represent and unite all EU Member States. This could also mean a single EU membership for any international institution such as the NATO (see example of [idea](#)). Additionally, another idea is the creation of a common EU passport for all European citizens (see example of [idea](#)).

Within the theme of decision making, contributions call for the rethinking of the unanimity rule. A strand of ideas expresses the view that the current situation based on unanimity rule allows single Member States to block common foreign policy (see example of [idea](#) and [event](#)). This is considered problematic as it prevents the EU from having a credible, stable and strong voice in the world, as already highlighted under the previous theme. Therefore, according to the idea expressed, the EU should move towards a system of an “absolute” majority voting. One of the most endorsed ideas under this theme gives a detailed description of an absolute majority voting system for Member States, supported by a simple majority of Members of the European Parliament, for the EU to be able to take executive action and generate real, credible foreign policy (see [idea](#)). Similar to the discussions within the topic of European Democracy, the alternative of a qualified majority is also presented

as an alternative for the current unanimity rule (see example of [idea](#)).

A last sub-theme, discusses the competences of the European Parliament. Contributors feel that, although the European Parliament has supported the concept of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) from its inception and has sought to extend its scope, the European Parliament still only has a peripheral role in EU foreign policy making. Therefore, it is deemed crucial by contributors to allocate more foreign policy competences to the European Parliament (see example of [idea](#)).



Enlargement

A group of contributions discuss the need for enlargement and integration of Eastern neighbouring countries as way of protecting democracy in these countries (see example of [idea](#)), but also in order for economic stability within the EU (see example of [idea](#)). These ideas are equally expressed in one of the most endorsed ideas within this topic, which calls for a continued enlargement of the EU with the integration of the Western Balkan countries to ensure peace and stability in the region (see [idea](#)). Related, there is a call to fully recognise Kosovo (see example of [idea](#)).



Neighbourhood policy and relations with others

A subtheme of ideas concern diplomatic representation of the EU with, in broad terms, contributors calling for the EU institutions to represent and defend their interests in the world more visibly (see example of [idea](#)).

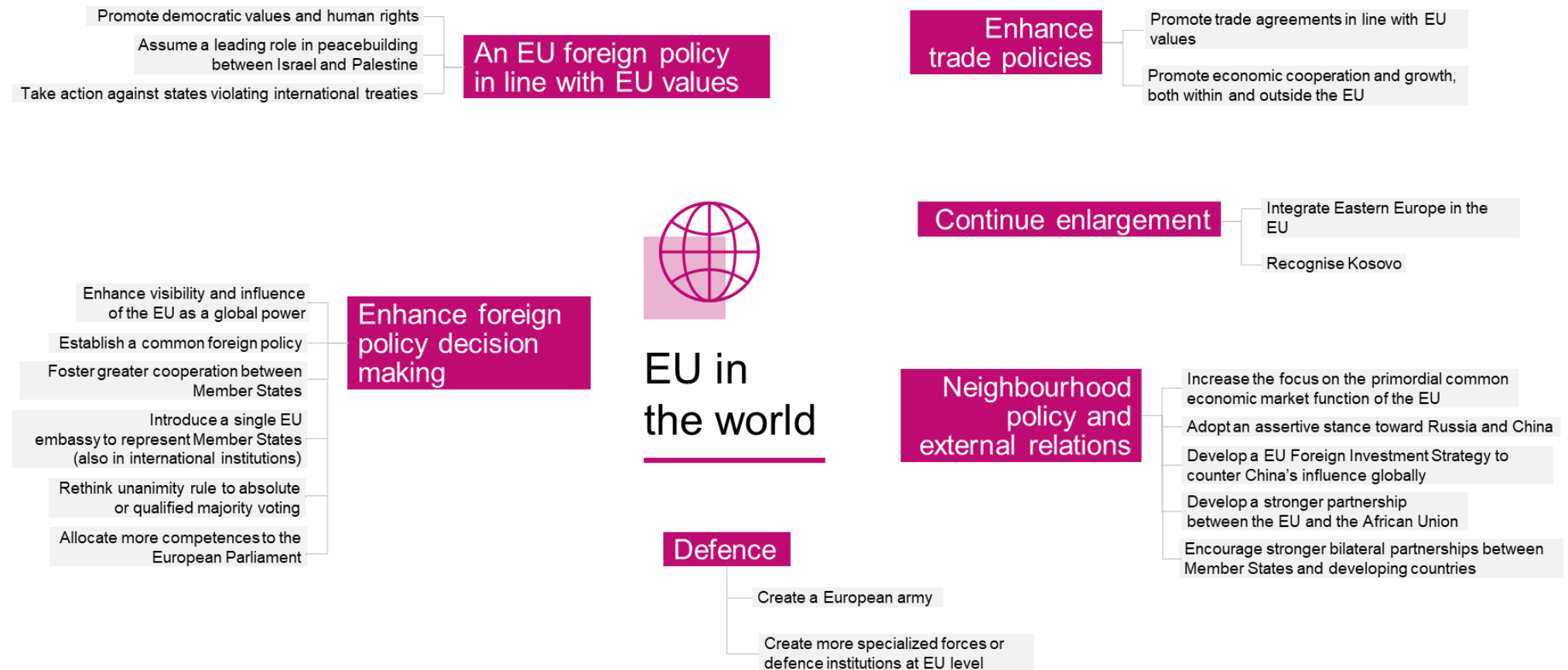
While most ideas call for a more united and integrated EU, thereby reinforcing the EU's role as a global power of law and justice being open to interaction with various multilateral institutions, both at a global and regional level (see example of [idea](#) and [idea](#)), others want the EU to focus on its role as an economic actor, as initially envisaged. In this regard, they consider that the EU should not assume the role of a geopolitical actor, but rather maintain its primordial function of a common economic market. Participants consider that since the EU is not a sovereign state it cannot exercise a political role as a global actor (see example of [idea](#)).

Contributions under this theme refer particularly to the EU's political relations with Russia and China (see example of [event](#)). Contributors advance the need to fundamentally rethink and reconsider and move further in reforming the EU's foreign policy approach with the implementation of a bolder approach in line with what was discussed in earlier themes. Contributors on the platform discuss the opinion that, when it comes to China, the EU should not only develop a more unified and tougher stance in its diplomatic relations given the highly divergent systems of values, but should also develop a European Union's Foreign Investment Strategy to counter China's influence globally and in particular in developing countries (see [idea](#)).

When it comes to the EU's relations with African and Latin American countries, contributors express the opinion that there should be an enhanced partnership and reworked trade relations (see example of [event](#)). Most contributors call for a stronger partnership between the EU and the African Union to strengthen regional multilateralism (see example of [idea](#)). Other citizens call for stronger bilateral partnerships between individual Member States and African countries bilaterally, in order to address migration and other security threats to the European Union. However, this can only work if relations move away from maintaining the economic and political heritage of former colonial systems (see [idea](#)). The same applies to relations with Latin America (see example of [idea](#)).



Figure 9 – Mind map ‘EU in the world’ topic





8. Values and rights, rule of law, security

The topic 'Values and rights, rule of law, security' has generated a total of 1,635 contributions (547 ideas, 949 comments and 139 events) since the launch of the digital platform. A substantial proportion of interactions under this topic discuss what is described as the "dangers of the rise of illiberal democracies" within the EU, which do not respect EU values and tend towards autocratic regimes. These are seen as a threat. Contributors call for action to ensure respect for the rule of law. The contributions can be grouped into the following themes dealing with:

- **Values**
- **Rights and freedoms**
- **Protecting the rule of law and human rights**
- **Security**
- **Lobbying and corruption**



Values

A group of ideas on the platform discuss what it means to be European and the values that the EU should embody and promote (for example, see [idea](#)). In particular, several citizens mention the principles of human dignity, freedom, equality, democracy, rule of law, human rights, pluralism, justice, solidarity and gender parity, to mention a few, as constituting the European Union value system, and believe that these should guide its policies.

One main strand calls for greater gender equality (see example of an [idea](#)). There are suggestions of increasing the number of women among political and economic decision-makers (see example of an [idea](#)), as well as proposals for encouraging good practices. Some of the specific suggestions include a call to end gender discrimination in freedom of movement within the EU, with reference to Mount Athos peninsula, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Greece where entrance to women is forbidden, following Orthodox Christian norms (see [idea](#)).

Another strand of discussions focuses on the role of Christian values and the need to protect them (see [idea](#)). In line with this, one idea calls for the EU to take a firm stand against the genocide of Armenians and of other Christian minorities (see [idea](#)).

Some contributors also discuss the need for a European Constitution to clearly define a set of fundamental European values that need to be respected in the EU (see example of an [idea](#)).

recognised as a democratic right (see example of an [idea](#)). The need for better legislation and tools to address privacy concerns related to the internet and social media, as well as all new technology, has also been raised (see [idea](#)).

Another group of contributions underline the need to lift Covid-19 measures once the effects of the pandemic allow in order to ensure a return to normality and restore citizens' freedoms. This includes a call to prevent discrimination against citizens who have chosen not to be vaccinated or undergo regular tests to gain access to basic facilities (see example of an [idea](#)). Issues related to vaccination are addressed in more detail under the Health topic.

A further discussion relates to the fundamental importance of human rights and freedoms within the Western value system. Along these lines, numerous participants call for LGBTI people to be protected and same-sex marriages to be recognised across the EU Member States (see example of an [idea](#)).

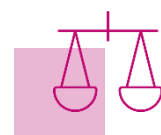
Some participants call for the right to self-medicate with cannabis (see example of an [idea](#)) and discuss the decriminalisation and legalisation of drugs more broadly (see example of an [idea](#)). This issue is also addressed under the Health topic as well.

A much discussed and endorsed idea is a call for the EU to take the lead in protecting animal rights (see [idea](#)). Contributors consider that although the EU treaties recognise animals as sentient beings, abusive and cruel treatments still exist in the farming and meat industry (see example of an [idea](#)).



Rights and freedoms

On rights and freedoms, a number of contributions focus on issues related to the protection of privacy. One highly endorsed idea calls for the prohibition of social credit systems based on facial recognition (see [idea](#)). There are also other calls for limitations on the use of biometric data for surveillance (see [idea](#)) and on the collection and sharing of personal data more generally (see example of an [idea](#)). Various citizens suggest that cash payment options should be



Protecting the rule of law and human rights

A large group of participants express concerns about democracy and the rule of law in the world and in particular in parts of the EU. Citizens who contribute on this theme call for a tougher stance to defend the EU's values vis-a-vis countries such as Russia and



China, but also towards a growing number of illiberal democracies in the EU, referring mostly but not only to Hungary and Poland (see example of an [idea](#)). Participants are also worried that women, LGBTI minorities and human rights are under attack, especially in light of the recent developments in Poland and Hungary (see example of an [idea](#)). Several contributors are critical of the Hungarian government and call for more action from the Commission in this regard (see [idea](#)).

In order to ensure that the rule of law is upheld, some participants suggest reducing grants to the countries that breach it, taking away their voting rights in the Council or even ending their EU membership (see example of such an [idea](#)). There are calls for using the budgetary protection mechanism in the new long-term EU budget (see [idea](#)), as well as suggestions that the Article 7 procedure under the treaties should be reviewed to make it easier to sanction governments that breach EU values (see [idea](#)). One participant has suggested that the European Court of Justice should become the watchdog to protect democracy and the rule of law in the EU (see an example of the [idea](#)). A number of contributors have endorsed a proposal to introduce a Review Mechanism on Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights in the EU (see [idea](#)).

There is also a call on the platform to eliminate the unanimity rule to ensure that Member States that do not respect the rule of law cannot block decision-making in the EU (see [idea](#)).

As regards the protection of human rights in general, one broadly endorsed idea suggests to strengthen the enforceability of various human rights instruments in the EU legal order (see [idea](#)).

commenting mostly on the political implications and the relationship between EU defence and national defence. This idea is also discussed under the topic 'EU in the world'.

Given the freedom of movement within the EU, some citizens endorse the establishment of a European agency to strengthen collaboration across Member States in the fight against terrorism and organised crime (see [idea](#)).



Lobbying and corruption

As in the case of the topic 'European Democracy', some contributors focus on issues related to lobbying and corruption. There are calls for the EU to act against tax avoidance and corruption in Member States (see example of an [idea](#)), as well as suggestions to enhance regulation and transparency of lobbying by private interests and limit its influence on EU policy (see [idea](#)). Other participants discuss how to tackle corruption related to the EU and the use of EU funds and the protection of whistle-blowers (see example of an [idea](#)).

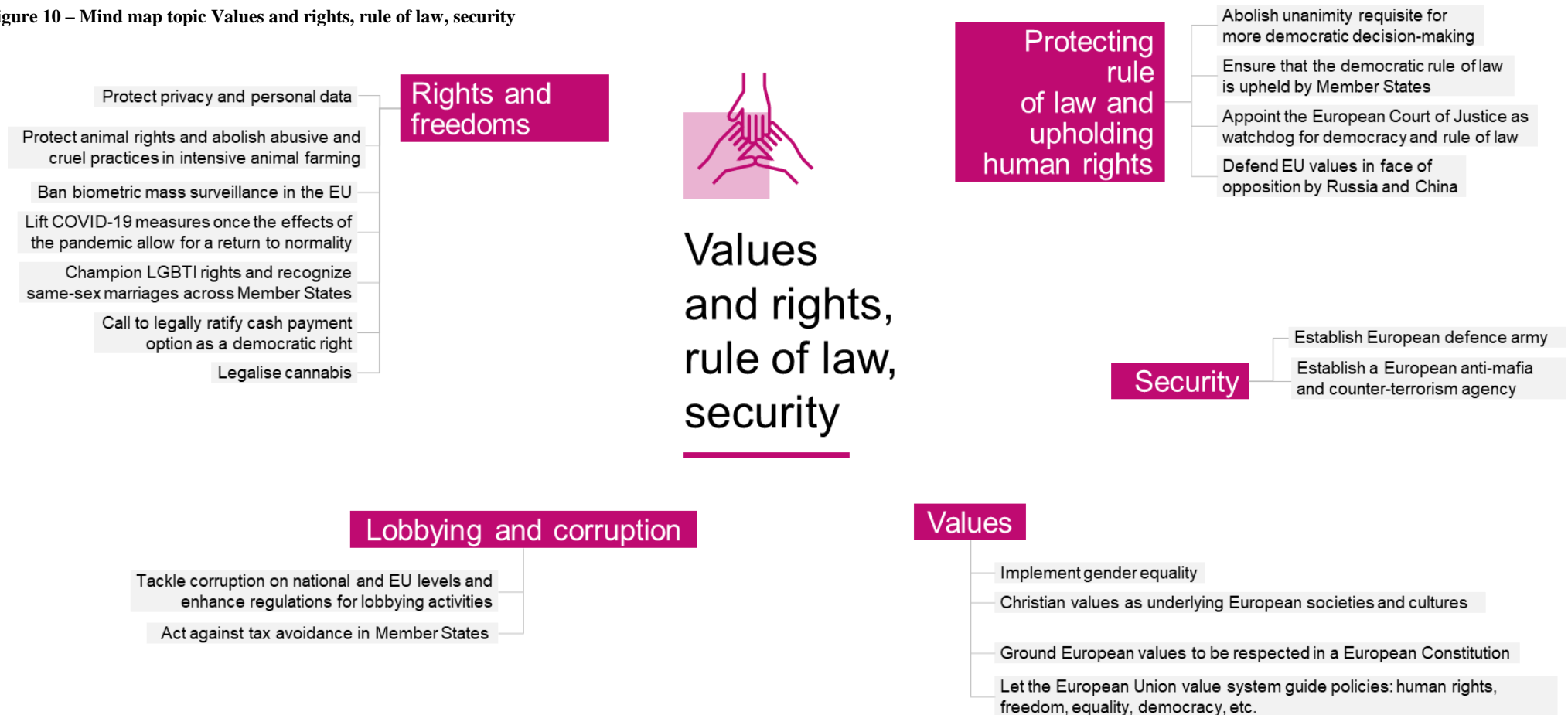


Security

One of the most widely endorsed and commented ideas currently on the platform is a proposal to create an EU army, to better protect member states against hostile foreign actors in the context of uncertainties regarding the US position (see [idea](#)). However, several participants have questioned this proposal,



Figure 10 – Mind map topic Values and rights, rule of law, security

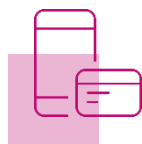




9. Digital transformation

The topic of 'Digital transformation' has generated 346 ideas, 815 comments and 97 events, making a total of 1,258 contributions. Ideas range from more abstract suggestions on themes such as sustainability and durability to more specific suggestions concerning digital education and digital health and digital voting. The contributors on this topic stress the need for digital transformation with regard to the future economy, collaboration, health and other areas of life. However, they also highlight several challenges related to digital transformation, such as ethical considerations, GDPR shortcomings, and cyber threats. The various ideas can be grouped according to the following themes:

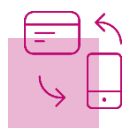
- **Digital economy**
- **Digital innovation**
- **Digital sovereignty and ethics**
- **Cyber threats**
- **Digital voting**
- **Digital data**
- **Pollution, sustainability and durability**
- **Technology for people**
- **Digital health**
- **Education and training**



Digital economy

A theme also under the topic Stronger economy, social justice and jobs, a large number of ideas under this topic call for the digital economy to be embraced. One idea, for example, discusses the implementation of an EU block chain platform (see [idea](#)). Other contributors also discuss cryptocurrencies with requests for governments to adopt cryptocurrencies to benefit and develop a digital and economically active society (see example of [idea](#)), or rather discuss the need for cryptocurrencies to be regulated or banned (see example of [idea](#)).

In addition, several ideas advocate the introduction of a digital euro as a secure and convenient payment method (see example of [idea](#)).



Digital innovation

The ideas submitted on the platform concerning digital growth advocate first and foremost increasing the EU's role in further developing artificial intelligence (AI) tools (see [event](#)). One of the ideas calls for increased planning and regulation with regard to current AI possibilities in order to make them safer and more accessible (see example of [idea](#)). Nonetheless, the use and development of AI are the subject of discussion among contributors, some highlighting the future risk of creating AI more capable than the human brain (see example of [idea](#)).

Related, there are several challenges identified with an increased digital society according to contributors. This [event](#), for example, discussed the increased digitalisation of our society and inequality among population groups (termed digitalisation losers). The other disadvantages of increased digitalisation discussed included dehumanisation, robotisation, and increased monitoring and surveillance of individuals (see [idea](#)).

On a more basic level, contributors call for accessible and affordable digital services and appliances (see example of [idea](#)).



Digital sovereignty and ethics

The ideas submitted on the platform to boost digital sovereignty focus on Europe's strategic independence in terms of hardware, software and social media platforms, as well as on advancing EU's digital development and production, especially in relation to other actors such as the US or China (see example of [idea](#)). For instance, one of the ideas suggests to develop and promote Europe's own chip production (see [idea](#)).

A similar strand of ideas puts a strong emphasis on the ethical aspect. Specifically, contributors want to boost EU's digital sovereignty via European social media platforms that would be fully in line with European values, standards, transparency and ethics (see example of [idea](#)). Additionally, an idea calls for a fair digitalisation based on human rights, including labour and trade union rights, improved working conditions, and collective bargaining (see [idea](#)).



Cyber threats

As regards the cyber threats theme, the ideas revolve around Internet safety and security (see example of [event](#)). For instance, participants stress that the EU should be able to defend itself in case of online threats and digital warfare; some go even further by suggesting the creation of a European cyber army, which could also provide support for digitalisation in the EU countries that are lagging behind (see example of [idea](#)).



Digital voting

Within the digital voting theme, a number of contributors on the platform point out the advantages of electronic voting, in particular in the context of the pandemic (see example of [idea](#)). This theme, which

has received a significant number of comments under the topic of 'Digital transformation' since the launch of the Conference, has been explored from the point of efficiency, safety and innovation, not from the perspective of enhancing democracy. There are however some opposing views in the comments which point out a number of disadvantages of electronic voting. Contributors suggest applying blockchain technology or setting up Europe's own highly encrypted mailing system, as possible means of ensuring the security of digital voting in the EU.



Digital data

When it comes to the digital data theme, contributors emphasise the progress made so far, mentioning that the EU is a leader in protecting individuals in the digital world. Nevertheless, there is a call for further improvement in this area (see example of [event](#)). For example, suggestions focus on modifying GDPR laws to make it easier to refuse the online collection of personal data, as well as on improving data security not only across the EU but also in the candidate countries (see [idea](#)).

Simultaneously, there is a call for a more comprehensible legislation without burdening users with constant requests for consent (see example of [idea](#)).



Pollution, sustainability and durability

In several cases, contributors link digitalisation to climate change, stressing, for example, that increased digitalisation efforts would help reduce pollution. For instance, there is a call to introduce a digital product passport accessible via QR codes providing information on product origin, composition,

environmental impact, recycling and final handling (see [idea](#)).

Another strand of ideas revolves around digital waste, calling, for instance, for new products to be produced with recycled electronic waste (see [idea](#)).

Additionally, there is an emphasis on durable, repairable and fairly and ethically produced digital equipment, which could be promoted, for instance, with lower taxes. (see [idea](#)).

Lastly, some contributors point out that satellite deployment contributes to space pollution and call for tackling this issue (see example of [idea](#)).



Technology for people

Suggestions contain a range of specific ideas proposing technological and digital tools for European citizens.

A large pool of ideas discusses creating digital citizenship and the digital unification of the EU (see [idea](#)), for example, by creating a framework which helps all EU countries to work together on IT projects. This idea is developed further with several suggestions for all encompassing digital portals for citizen participation, daily life identification needs (see [idea](#)), a European Social Network dedicated to the expression of public opinion (see [idea](#)), and Europe-wide identification via a digital ID (see [idea](#)).

Additionally, there is a call for stronger consumer protection in an online environment (see example of [idea](#)), for instance, by making it easier in the future for consumers to change their mind with regard to purchases.

Another idea discusses the need to ensure that major crowdfunding platforms can be accessed from all Member States (see [idea](#)).



Digital health

Within the theme of digital health, a number of ideas on the platform propose concrete measures to improve the health of citizens in the digital world, such as employee rights to disconnect from work (see [idea](#)), introducing a social media day off (see [idea](#)), or fostering youth digital training to promote healthy and conscious use of technology.

Simultaneously, there is a call for digital health integration within the EU (see example of [idea](#)), for instance, by creating a single platform for electronic health management – which would be particularly interesting for the many Europeans using cross-border mobility possibilities – and by introducing a (European) digital health ID-card (see example of [idea](#)) that contains information on vaccinations and health insurance. However, there are privacy and data protection concerns. These themes are equally addressed under the Health topic.



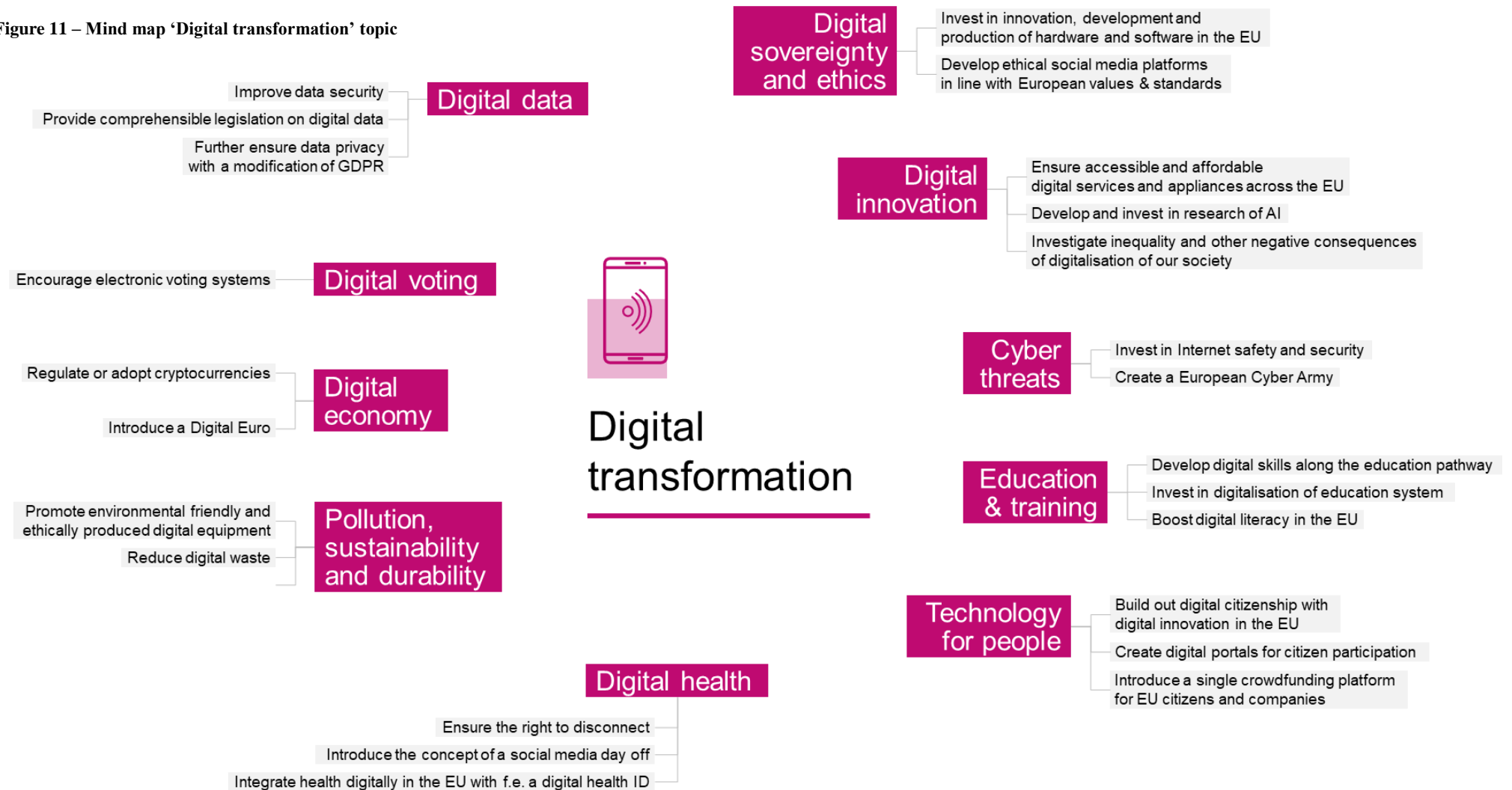
Education and training

Within the theme of education and training, a number of ideas on the platform advocate comprehensive EU-wide awareness-raising efforts at all levels, starting at primary school level and continuing along the education pathway (see example of [idea](#) and [event](#)), stressing that the development and promotion of digital skills is a top priority for the economy (see example of [idea](#)).

One sub-theme calls for investments and efforts to boost the digitalisation of education (see example of [idea](#)). In this connection, contributors discuss the need to boost digital literacy in all EU countries, for instance, by launching an advertising campaign in the media to give more visibility to digital transformation (see [idea](#)).



Figure 11 – Mind map ‘Digital transformation’ topic





10. European democracy

By 2 August 2021, the topic of 'European Democracy' had a total of 1,016 ideas, 2,296 comments and 329 events submitted on the digital platform. Contributors call for a restructuring of European institutions or even a federalisation of the European Union. Various suggestions also call for increased citizen participation and engagement. Overall interactions under this topic are constructive and forward-looking, even if some interactions express a fear of the EU being at risk of implosion due to tensions, populism, and nationalism. The contributions cover a large variety of themes:

- **Federalisation of the European Union**
- **Institutional reforms**
- **European Parliament elections**
- **Citizen representation**
- **Citizen participation and consultations**
- **Media**
- **Languages and fostering the European spirit**
- **Protecting and strengthening democracy**



Federalisation of the European Union

A large number of contributors under the topic of European Democracy call for a federalisation of the European Union. This is also a recurring subject of events linked to this topic (see example of [event](#)).

Contributors see federalisation as the best way forward for the EU to reach its full potential (see example of [idea](#)), but also as a means of giving the EU more credibility and influence in the global political arena and the power to deal with the transnational problems we are facing today, such as climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic (see [idea](#)). In addition, it would overcome Euroscepticism and nationalist sentiments according to the participants who support the idea.

As an example, a highly endorsed and debated idea advocates a constituent Assembly to develop a European Constitution defining the key elements and principles of a democratic European Federation (see [idea](#)). The discussion also includes more specific calls for a common fiscal and economic policy, one European army and the federalisation of foreign policy, alongside a redesign of the EU institutions along federalist principles.

Nevertheless, some contributors are sceptical with the federalisation of the EU and promote decentralisation with greater power for Member States instead of federalisation (see example an [idea](#)), with more freedom and respect for the identity of Member States and free cooperation in areas where it is useful (see example of an [idea](#)).



Institutional reforms

A substantial volume of ideas also discuss reforms of European Institutions more specifically, with the aim of making them more efficient and transparent, and bringing them closer to the citizens. This includes proposals for a bigger overhaul of the institutional set-up (see example of an [idea](#)).

Regarding the European Parliament, contributors most often call for it to be granted real power of legislative initiative (see example of [idea](#)). There are also calls for it to be granted fiscal power (see [idea](#)). The seat of the European Parliament is discussed as well, with contributors calling for a choice between Strasbourg and Brussels (see example of an [idea](#)).

Discussing the European Council and the Council of the European Union, a recurring idea on the platform and within the topic of European Democracy is to move to a qualified majority voting to end the national veto power (see example of an [idea](#)).

There are also discussions about the role of the Council in the EU institutional set-up (see example of [idea](#)) and suggestions to deepen the bicameral legislature in the EU (see example of an [idea](#)).

When it comes to the European Commission, a group of contributions discusses the election of the Commission President and appointment of commissioners, including the Spitzenkandidaten system (see example of an [idea](#)), and direct election of the Commission President by citizens (see example of an [idea](#)). Participants also raise the issue of the number of commissioners (see example of an [idea](#)).

Additionally, reforms of the Committee of Regions and the Economic and Social Committee are mentioned, for example to make them function more efficiently. This includes suggestions to reform the Committee of Regions to encompass adequate channels of dialogue for regions as well as cities and municipalities (see [idea](#)) or to give it a stronger role (see [idea](#)).

One much discussed idea is to have a directly elected EU President, for instance by merging the roles of the President of the European Commission and the European Council (see example of an [idea](#)). There are also calls to have a single contact point for the EU to speak with one voice in external relations (see example of an [idea](#)).



European Parliament elections

A group of ideas related to institutional reforms calls for changes to the way European Parliament elections are held as means of creating more citizenship engagement in the EU democratic processes. One of the more discussed proposals concerns the creation of EU-wide transnational electoral lists to encourage candidates to focus on European, rather than domestic issues (see [idea](#)). Other ideas for promoting pan-European debate, as well as bringing European Parliament members closer to the citizens, are also debated (see example of an [idea](#)).

Some of the proposals more specifically address ways to increase voter turnout at the European elections. There are calls for the introduction of mandatory voting

(see [idea](#)), as well as suggestions to facilitate participation, for instance by allowing postal ballots and same-day voter registration, or making the voting day a public holiday (see [idea](#)). Some contributors also discuss digital voting, including an idea to create a pool of pan-European digital voters (see [idea](#)). The issue of digital voting is also covered under the topic 'Digital transformation'.

There are also proposals to unify the minimum age to be eligible to vote at European Parliament elections (see example of an [idea](#)) and to preferably set it at 16 years old (see [idea](#)).



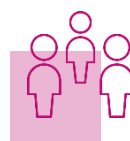
Citizen participation and consultations

Contributions to the platform include a number of suggestions to strengthen citizen engagement and a sense of ownership as regards EU decision-making.

A group of ideas and events discuss developing more permanent mechanisms based on participatory democracy and interaction among citizens to strengthen and complement representative democracy, including by building on the experience of the Conference on the Future of Europe. Participants have proposed, for instance, a more systematic use of citizens' assemblies and panels to prepare the most important and difficult political decisions in the EU (see example of an [idea](#)). Other contributors propose an online digital forum where EU citizens could discuss EU legislation, using a social media-derived system of upvotes and commentaries (see [idea](#)). A related idea involves a citizen lobbying platform as an alternative way for ordinary EU citizens and smaller companies to channel their expertise and views on legislation in the EU decision-making process (see [idea](#)).

The contributions also include a 'proposal to devise one an online one-stop-shop platform centralising all public input, be they European Citizens' Initiatives, complaints or petitions, into the EU institutional participatory architecture (see [idea](#)).

Some contributors have proposed a 'Citizen Parliament', an 'Assembly dedicated to civil society organisations' (see [idea](#)) or a 'Constituent Assembly' (see [idea](#)) to advise the European Parliament. Participants also discuss the idea of EU wide referenda as an alternative to national referenda on EU institutional and policy topics (see example of [idea](#)).



Citizen representation

When it comes to the theme of citizen representation, there are several calls on the platform to have a particular generational focus. This includes suggestions to have a European commissioner dedicated to the elderly (see [idea](#)) and giving young people opportunities to regularly present their views in the European Parliament (see [idea](#)). A related contribution suggests establishing a quota for Members of the European Parliament who are under 35 years old (see [idea](#)).

There is also an idea suggesting a gender parity list at the European Parliament elections (see [idea](#)).

One more widely supported and discussed idea suggests to have a European citizenship which is not linked to citizenship of an EU member state (see [idea](#)). Contributors also raise the question of allowing non-EU citizens living long-term in a Member State to vote in their country of residence for EU elections (see [idea](#)).

Another idea calls for the EU to push for the establishment of a UN Parliament to allow citizens to express their will directly, independent of their respective national governments, in decisions on a global level (see [idea](#)).



Media

A number of contributions under the topic of European Democracy focus on the media. This theme of ideas is also discussed by contributors under the topic of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

One recurring suggestion is to have pan-European media outlets or networks (see example of [idea](#)) or creating a single public EU broadcaster (see example of [idea](#)). This is mainly proposed to increase knowledge on EU issues among citizens, with for example live streaming of discussions and events, but also to foster a common EU spirit celebrating the European values and European cultures, with documentaries on EU countries. Some contributors also call for an EU TV and radio channel to project its values beyond its borders (see example of [idea](#)).

Other participants suggest training journalists on EU reporting or imposing an obligation for public broadcasters to dedicate a percentage of broadcasting time to EU matters.



Languages and fostering a European spirit

Another group of ideas on the platform concern issues related to languages and a common European spirit and identity. This is also a recurring theme under the topic of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

A large number of participants discuss the idea to choose a common language for better communication and understanding among citizens across the EU (see example of [idea](#)), including the proposal to have Esperanto as a unifying language (see example of [idea](#)). Both suggestions give rise to strong opinions for and against in the comment sections. Some participants also call for the principle of multilingualism to be better respected (see example of an [idea](#)).

Additionally there are ideas for establishing an EU sports team (see example of [idea](#)), having 9 May as a public holiday in all Member States (see [idea](#)), or creating an EU Passport (see [idea](#)) to foster European spirit.



Protecting and strengthening democracy

A number ideas under this theme relate to the protection of democracy in the EU, with calls for strong action against governments that violate democratic principles, with reference in particular to Hungary and Poland (see example of an [idea](#)). This issue is covered in more detail under the topic of 'Values and rights, rule of law, security'.

Contributors also acknowledge the danger disinformation and fake news can pose to democracies. There are calls for a strengthened approach to counter the spread of misleading information, including proposals to create a mobile

fact-checking app (see [idea](#)) or an independent EU Media Fact-Check Institute (see [idea](#)).

A number of ideas and comments discuss the need to regulate lobbying, with calls for a code of conduct for politicians or the establishment of an independent European body with the means to fight against corruption and undesired influence of the lobbies (see example of [idea](#)). In this regard there are also calls for general measures to be taken to fight corruption, for example in the granting of tenders at a local level.



Figure 12 – Mind map ‘European democracy’ topic



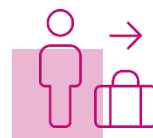


11. Migration

Since the launch of the platform, the migration topic has gathered a total of 1157 contributions, including 306 ideas, 827 comments and 24 events. The contributions under this topic reveal three general trends. On one hand, one group of interactions wants more action to control and reduce migration, while on the other hand, other contributions call for greater solidarity and better integration procedures. Taking an intermediate position, a group of participants would like to foster international mobility, but only between economically developed democracies. The following themes are analysed accordingly:

- **Unregulated non-EU migration as a threat**
- **Humanistic stance on migration**
- **Legal migration**
- **Addressing root causes of migration**
- **Border control**
- **Integration**

- **Facilitating and supporting the acquisition of the EU citizenship**



Unregulated non-EU migration as a threat

Commentators are outspoken in their ideas and contributions on the topic of migration. One theme observed is the feeling that migration from non-EU countries is a threat to EU civilization, identity, values and culture (see example of [idea](#)). Contributions express opinions and views that non-EU migration contributes to terrorism and the creation of ghettos and no-go zones in the EU (see [idea](#)). These contributors call for measures to restrict non-EU migration, a stricter repatriation policy, and strategies hindering

migrants' mobility, such as tougher border controls (see example of [idea](#)).



Humanistic stance on migration

Contributors with an opposing view call for solutions to counter illegal migration and an EU immigration policy, with easier and more accessible asylum procedures in countries of origin, legal and safe migratory routes and a crackdown on human trafficking in order to avoid the deaths of refugees on the EU's borders (see example of [idea](#)). Lastly, some contributors want a legal framework to halt the deportation of integrated persons and families to unsafe countries of origin (see [idea](#)).



Legal migration

Under the theme of legal migration, those advocating stricter migration policies call for a common EU policy of selective migration, with quotas, stricter selection and strict acceptance procedures (see example of [idea](#)). A European points-based immigration system is sometimes seen as necessary to regulate migration flows more efficiently (see [idea](#)).

Contributions that are more open to migration, similarly, call for a unified and more efficient approach, however more in line with human rights and (social) European values. For example, contributions specifically discuss a single and efficient EU asylum procedure (see [idea](#)), also pointing to the need to reform the Dublin Convention to prevent the unequal distribution of asylum seekers and migrants (see example of [idea](#)). An EU labour migration policy or EU recruitment strategies for students and qualified employees coming from third-world countries are also advocated by citizens. Related, one citizen highlights the need for increased competences on migration for the EU so that it can ensure management of migration in accordance with the principles and values of the Union (see [idea](#)).

A group of respondents advances the idea of fostering a selective type of immigration. This type of

participants usually sees migration in a positive light because of the economic advantages it creates. They propose targeting specific countries to attract their talents (see [idea](#)), or to easing the mobility criteria between economically advanced democracies, in the West and in Asia alike notably in the context of Free Trade Agreements (see [idea](#)).

Some contributions also reflect on issues of inequality affecting the existing asylum seeking process. For example, they highlight the fact that the share of male asylum seekers is significantly higher than that of female asylum seekers or families (see [idea](#)). Others report the difficulties faced by LGBTI asylum seekers, calling for greater protection and better translation support for this group (see [idea](#)).

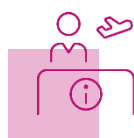


Addressing root causes of migration

Thinking about the Future of Europe, contributors highlight the need to address the root causes of migration to tackle the migration issues the EU is currently facing.

Suggestions in this regard range from establishing equal trade relations, investing in more development aid plans and academic training, and the professional development of people living in third-world countries (see [idea](#)).

A particular group of contributions takes the EU to task on the basis that it has played a part in regional destabilisation through, for example, European military involvement or by destabilising subsidised agricultural exports to developing countries (see [idea](#)).



Border control

The theme of border control again represents the two opposing stances on migration.

In general there is support for more organised and coordinated efforts when it comes to border control, with calls for more comprehensive border controls, including push-back authority (see example of [idea](#)), greater support for Frontex, with a better definition of its functions (see [idea](#)), and a legally binding approach to Search and Rescue (SAR) efforts in the Mediterranean (see [idea](#)).

Other contributions call for more solidarity and respect for human rights. The ideas discussed here are, for example, a centralised EU distribution system based on solidarity, funding to improve border reception infrastructures (housing and food) or a supranational agency managing European refugee camps, co-managed by different countries and funded by EU resources (see example of [idea](#)).



Integration

Another theme under the migration topic concerns ideas discussing integration with calls for a monitored follow-up pathway for migrants in order to ensure full integration in the EU Member State. One idea sees great potential in recognising and further activating migrants and members of receiving communities as changemakers (see [idea](#)). Education is felt to be key to integration, with language and European values playing a central role. In this connection, contributors feel that there is a need for sufficiently funded programmes to support the inclusion of school-age migrant children in the public education system (see [idea](#)).

Contributors express the opinion that a geographical distribution of migrants is key in order to achieve integration (see example of [idea](#)) and avoid the formation of ghettos (see [idea](#)). There are calls for information campaigns and programmes to sensitise EU citizens to counter racism in order to move towards a truly inclusive society. In connection with the opinions regarding racism and labour market exclusion, there are calls for equal and fair treatment of legally residing third-country nationals (see [idea](#)).



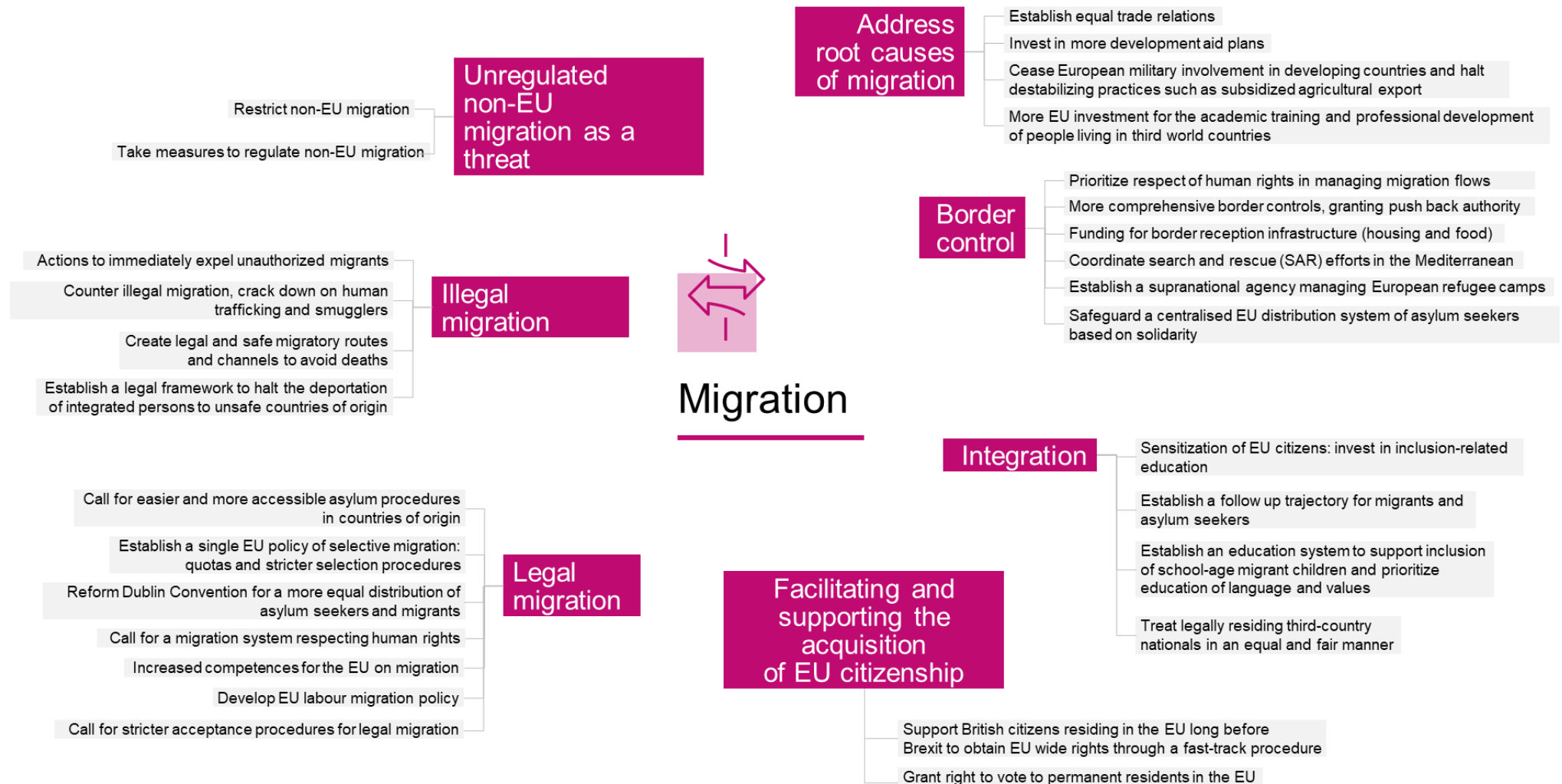
Facilitating and supporting the acquisition of the EU citizenship

Some participants lament the lack of rights of permanent residents in the EU. They observe that the Union does not grant the right to vote to its permanent residents who had been living in the EU for a long time, or other advantages which could make it more attractive for them to apply for EU citizenship (see [idea](#)).

This issue is considered by some contributors to be particularly pressing when it comes to UK citizens who had been living in the EU before Brexit. One idea leading to controversial discussions puts forward is to introduce a fast-track procedure to get EU-wide rights for British citizens who had been living in the EU before Brexit (see [idea](#)).



Figure 13 – Mind map ‘Migration’ topic



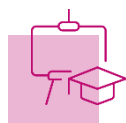


12. Education, Culture, Youth and Sport

Ideas posted under the topic of 'Education, Culture, Youth and Sport' cover a variety of themes, given its multi-thematic nature. As elsewhere on the platform, the call to foster an EU identity is a recurrent underlying sentiment for themes identified in this topic with interventions related to, amongst others; exchange, exposure, and mobility. This topic has generated an overall volume of 1,437 contributions, consisting of 484 ideas, 692 comments and 261 events. The various ideas can be grouped according

to the categories as presented on the multilingual digital platform:

- **Foster common EU identity**
- **Future-proof education**
- **Inter-EU mobility**
- **Youth unemployment**
- **European heritage**



Foster common EU identity

Several ideas relate to establishing more EU media portals (TV, radio and social media) to better engage European citizens when it comes to EU matters and issues, with the ultimate goal of strengthening European identity and core values (see example of [idea](#)). Favouring the circulation of European media productions, for example by establishing a common EU media market, is also advanced as idea by multiple participants (see example of [idea](#)). One idea is the creation of a specific EU media platform tailored for learning of languages. (see [idea](#)).

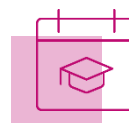
A sub-theme of ideas relate to education where contributors suggest the implementation of a mandatory course about the history and institutions of the EU in all European secondary schools as a tool for younger generations to build interest and a sense of ownership with regard to the EU, thereby enhancing the EU identity building process (see example of [idea](#)). Other ideas related to education to foster a common EU identity suggest various forms of exchange or twinning between schools in different Member States to foster friendship across Member State borders (see [idea](#)).

The establishment of a common European language is seen as something which could foster European integration according to many participants. (see example of [idea](#)). The discussion goes over the various advantages and disadvantages of such a common European language and the various possible languages, including Esperanto, Latin (see example of [idea](#)), or English (see example of [idea](#)).

The sub-theme of sport in relation to fostering a common EU identity discusses the organisation of more cross-country, inter-European sports events and the possibility of creating a European sports team which could compete in international events (see example of [idea](#)).

Another idea, which is also extensively mentioned in other priorities, advocates the establishment of a European public holiday on the 9th of May to foster European community building initiatives all across the continent (see example of [idea](#)).

Another area of focus is the 'DiscoverEU' initiative. Some participants proposed to extend the *DiscoverEU* initiative to every young European aged 18 years old (see example of [idea](#)).



Future-proof education

Many ideas express the need to rethink education in the current digitalised era, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic changed teaching practices in schools and universities. According to many contributors, rethinking education in the digital age is a prerequisite for Europe's future global competitiveness and modernisation (see example of [idea](#)). This call goes hand in hand with the need to promote ICT in schools and universities, also by subsidising schools to buy hardware (see example of [idea](#)).

The promotion of soft-skills, and specifically artistic activities, is often seen by respondents as another key step in developing EU students' critical thinking and reinforcing their global values, especially at a young age (see example of [idea](#)). The implementation of inclusive educational methods, and more in general the promotion of diversity in education, is considered an important objective for the future of education in the EU (see [idea](#)).

A sub-theme of ideas raises the need to reform educational practices to raise adults who are able to be active citizens of the EU. Next to exchanges and education on the EU, as discussed above, this sub-theme gathers ideas discussing the need to encourage active social participation of young students in schools (see [idea](#)) or instill cross-cultural skills with for example more foreign language learning practices (see [idea](#)).

A group of contributors raised the need to rethink the current educational system in order to prepare our youth for the future they will face. Contributors call for education on climate change (see example of [idea](#)) and mechanisms to improve the STEM skills of young people, e.g. via an EU wide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) basic skills programme (see [idea](#)). Additionally, as raised in the topic of digital transformation, contributors call for training of youth in digital well-being.

A strand of ideas also discusses the alignment of (vocational) education with the working world (see example of [idea](#)), and encouraging of entrepreneurial skills in education (see [idea](#)).



Inter-EU Mobility

Some participants propose to create an EU-led online portal for application to higher education courses in the EU. This portal could also allow prospective students to simultaneously apply to different programs within the European Union (see example of [idea](#)).

Another sub-theme raised by several contributors concerns the expansion of the Erasmus scholarships to include young people not in university, for instance by extending it to high school students, including those in vocational education. This would give the opportunity to live abroad, exchange good practices, learn new languages and cultures, and expand their skillsets in general to those who have not gone into higher education (see example of [idea](#)).

One of the most widely endorsed ideas within the theme of education concerns the ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Treaty in order to facilitate professional and academic mobility in Greece (see [idea](#)).



European heritage

Under this theme contributors call for protection and celebration of European culture and heritage, for example by way of introducing an EU culture commissioner (see [idea](#)) and in general invest more in the preservation of common EU cultural memory.

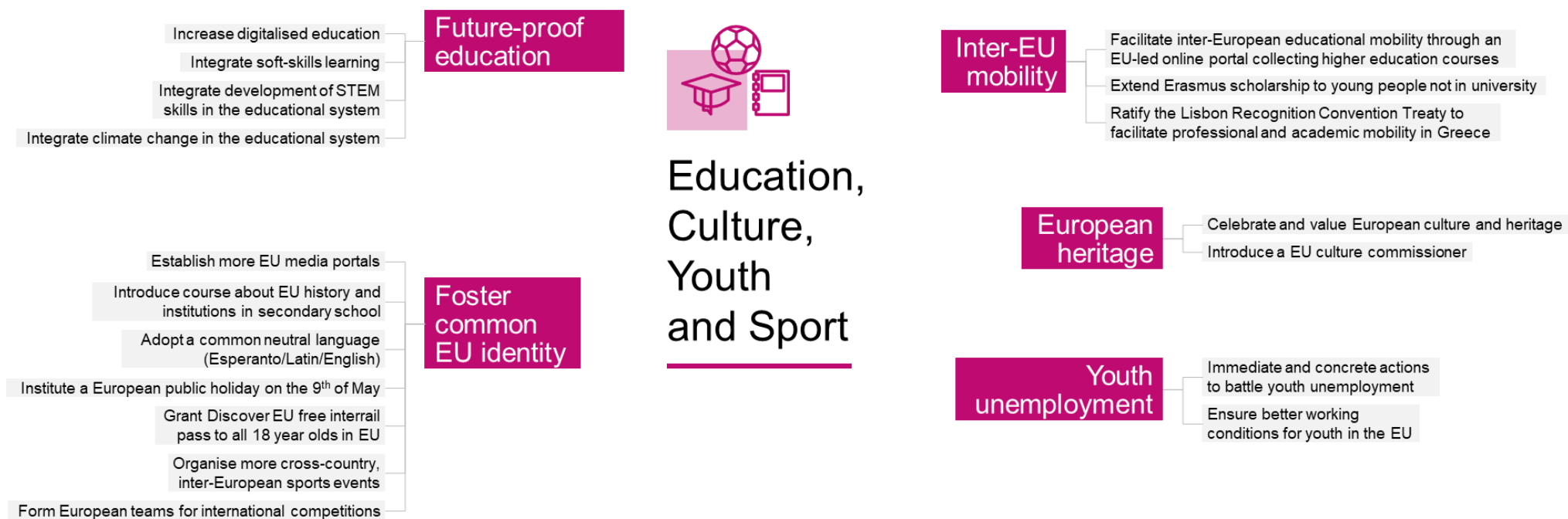


Youth unemployment

Another of the most endorsed ideas under this topic of education, culture, youth and sport concerns the growing “not in employment, education or training” (NEET) proportion of young people in Europe. In particular, participants highlight that NEETs are one of the most vulnerable groups in today’s European society and express strong concerns that NEETs will be the next victims of the COVID-19 economic fallout. For this reason, contributors feel that it is crucial for the EU to take immediate and concrete actions, not only to counter the NEETs’ phenomenon but also to assure better working conditions in youths-dominated sectors (see example of [idea](#)).



Figure 14 – Mind map ‘Education, culture, youth and sport’ topic





ANNEX I: List of currently most endorsed and commented ideas per topic



Most commented and endorsed ideas per topic

	Most endorsed	Most commented
Climate change and the environment	Idea: Just transition (see idea) Endorsements: 308 Comments: 10	Idea: Promotion of nuclear energy where renewable energy cannot be used (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 103 Comments: 134
	Idea: Stop all fossil fuel subsidies (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 189 Comments: 20	Idea: Improve protection of nature, environment, biodiversity and people when developing industrial wind power plants in Europe (see idea) Endorsements: 32 Comments: 69
	Idea: Euro Trainscanner (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 129 Comments: 34	Idea: Reduce Environment Pollution by Immigration Policy (see idea) Endorsements: 7 Comments: 64
	Idea: Make European railway network more accessible and advisable as a replacement for intra-EU connections (see idea) Endorsements: 116 Comments: 23	Idea: Encourage people into eating less meat (see idea) Endorsements: 40 Comments: 51
	Idea: Circular economy, change in consumption habits (see idea) Endorsements: 106 Comments: 12	Idea: Make nuclear power the focus of the green transformation (see idea) Endorsements: 22 Comments: 47

	Most endorsed	Most commented
Health	Idea: Science-intensive healthy longevity technologies: development and access (see idea) Endorsements: 414 Comments: 77	Idea: Stop daylight saving time change: Adopting astronomically correct time and optionally mandate moving opening hours to 1 hour earlier (see idea) Endorsements: 32 Comments: 126



	Idea: Equal access to affordable and high-quality public services, including health (see idea) Endorsements: 296 Comments: 9	Idea: Science-intensive healthy longevity technologies: development and access (see idea) Endorsements: 414 Comments: 77
	Idea: Research on Myalgic Encefalomyelitis (ME/CFS) (see idea) Endorsements: 215 Comments: 5	Idea: Focus on Anti-Aging and Longevity research (see idea) Endorsements: 137 Comments: 31
	Idea: Focus on Anti-Aging and Longevity research (see idea) Endorsements: 137 Comments: 31	Idea: Say NO to digital (green) vaccine passports, certificates and possible chip implants, as it would create two classes of citizens based on vaccination (see idea) Endorsements: 10 Comments: 25
	Idea: Treaty change to strengthen the EU's powers in health (see idea) Endorsements: 74 Comments: 5	Idea: Replacement of time changes with new time zones in Europe (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 14 Comments: 13

	Most endorsed	Most commented
Stronger economy, social justice and jobs	Idea: European Pillar of Social Rights for a social market economy (see idea) Endorsements: 313 Comments: 21	Idea: Unconditional Basic Income (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 70 Comments: 80
	Idea: New EU economic model and governance (see idea) Endorsements: 307 Comments: 20	Idea: Unconditional Basic Incomes (UBI) throughout the EU which ensure every person's material existence and opportunity to participate in society (see idea) Endorsements: 166 Comments: 58
	Idea: A renewed Social Contract for Europe for a fair recovery (see idea) Endorsements: 294 Comments: 20	Idea: Start fighting tax havens inside & outside the EU (see idea) Endorsements: 221 Comments: 49
	Idea: Start fighting tax havens inside & outside the EU (see idea) Endorsements: 221 Comments: 49	Idea: Proposal for English Towns in Europe (see idea) Endorsements: 2 Comments: 34



	Idea: Making the EU budget work for Europeans: a Fiscal Union (see idea) Endorsements: 198 Comments: 23	Idea: Increase the EU budget by including more direct contributions (see idea) Endorsements: 36 Comments: 33
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	Most endorsed	Most commented
EU in the world	Idea: The creation of the European Army (see idea) Endorsements: 395 Comments: 201	Idea: The creation of the European Army (see idea) Endorsements: 395 Comments: 201
	Idea: ETUC calls for a reform of EU trade and investment policy and relaunch of global multilateralism (see idea) Endorsements: 310 Comments: 8	Idea: Uniting Europe: Continue the EU enlargement (see idea) Endorsements: 158 Comments: 42
	Idea: Foreign Policy at EU level based on absolute majority, not unanimity (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 208 Comments: 39	Idea: Foreign Policy at EU level based on absolute majority, not unanimity (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 208 Comments: 39
	Idea: Acting as one: EU as a global actor (see idea) Endorsements: 197 Comments: 16	Idea: Integration of the Armed Forces of the Member States at European level (see idea) Endorsements: 14 Comments: 33
	Idea: Strategic Autonomy (see idea) Endorsements: 186 Comments: 27	Idea: Strategic Autonomy (see idea) Endorsements: 186 Comments: 27

	Most endorsed	Most commented
Values and rights, rule of law, security	Idea: Gender equality (see idea) Endorsements: 303 Comments: 11	Idea: Creation of a common European army (see idea) Endorsements: 53 Comments: 175
	Idea: Strengthen the enforceability of Human Rights Instruments (see idea) Endorsements: 296 Comments: 19	Idea: European military (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 4 Comments: 57
	Idea: The EU should enforce the obligation to respect the Rule of Law within its borders (see idea)	Idea: There's an 'East issue' (see idea) Endorsements: 19



	Endorsements: 179 Comments: 13	Comments: 22
	Idea: Protecting our fundamental values: Mechanism on Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights (see idea) Endorsements: 175 Comments: 13	Idea: Switch Off: EURATOM. Dissolution of the protection and funding agreement for the nuclear industry. For a real green deal and a fair energy transition (see idea) Endorsements: 30 Comments: 22
	Idea: The European Union should take the lead in abolishing the brutal animal industry and granting rights to animals (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 55 Comments: 20	Idea: The European Union should take the lead in abolishing the brutal animal industry and granting rights to animals (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 55 Comments: 20

	Most endorsed	Most commented
Digital transformation	Idea: Fair digitalisation (see idea) Endorsements: 329 Comments: 29	Idea: EU-CAP = European Citizens Awareness Platform (see idea) Endorsements: 0 Comments: 81
	Idea: Public support for open source software and hardware (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 131 Comments: 9	Idea: Ban cryptocurrencies (see idea) Endorsements: 12 Comments: 39
	Idea: European chip-making (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 101 Comments: 25	Idea: Universal income for open source maintainers (see idea) Endorsements: 47 Comments: 32
	Idea: Kickstarter should be equally accessible for all EU citizens (see idea) Endorsements: 95 Comments: 11	Idea: Fair digitalisation (see idea) Endorsements: 329 Comments: 29
	Idea: GDPR: Declining collection of personal data should be made at least as easy as accepting it (see idea) Endorsements: 84 Comments: 5	Idea: A global cooperation on AI (see idea) Endorsements: 21 Comments: 27



	Most endorsed	Most commented
European Democracy	Idea: Stronger together: A democratic European Federation (see idea) Endorsements: 472 Comments: 133	Idea: We need a common European language (see idea) Endorsements: 107 Comments: 167
	Idea: Truly European Elections: Transnational EU-wide electoral lists (see idea) Endorsements: 359 Comments: 86	Idea: Stronger together: A democratic European Federation (see idea) Endorsements: 472 Comments: 133
	Idea: Better decision-making for a fairer Europe (see idea) Endorsements: 318 Comments: 14	Idea: Directly elect the President of the European Union (see idea) Endorsements: 181 Comments: 93
	Idea: Social Progress Protocol (see idea) Endorsements: 317 Comments: 13	Idea: Truly European Elections: Transnational EU-wide electoral lists (see idea) Endorsements: 359 Comments: 86
	Idea: Economic democracy (see idea) Endorsements: 306 Comments: 25	Idea: European democracy begins with a common language: Esperanto (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 29 Comments: 75

	Most endorsed	Most commented
Migration	Idea: A common migration and asylum policy, based on respect for rights and equal treatment (see idea) Endorsements: 313 Comments: 15	Idea: No more immigration from non-european or non first word countries (see idea) Endorsements: 93 Comments: 104
	Idea: No more immigration from non-european or non first word countries (see idea) Endorsements: 93 Comments: 104	Idea: Removal of unauthorised asylum seekers/migrants (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 33 Comments: 69
	Idea: Migration and integration (see idea) Endorsements: 61 Comments: 55	Idea: Migration and integration (see idea) Endorsements: 61 Comments: 55



	Idea: Expulsion from the EU (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 57 Comments: 30	Idea: Give British people who are resident in an EU country EU-wide rights (see idea) Endorsements: 12 Comments: 35
	Idea: LYMEC's vision on political priorities - Asylum and Migration (see idea) Endorsements: 41 Comments: 1	Idea: Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt for the 21th century human experiment (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 2 Comments: 33

	Most endorsed	Most commented
Education, culture, youth and sport	Idea: Youth. EU cannot fund precarity (see idea) Endorsements: 310 Comments: 7	Idea: The EU needs improved language learning (see idea) Endorsements: 220 Comments: 59
	Idea: Lifelong learning and the right to training to become a reality for everyone in Europe (see idea) Endorsements: 307 Comments: 12	Idea: Language teaching in Europe (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 112 Comments: 43
	Idea: The EU needs improved language learning (see idea) Endorsements: 220 Comments: 59	Idea: Let's set up a European Public Broadcaster (see idea) Endorsements: 161 Comments: 33
	Idea: Let's set up a European Public Broadcaster (see idea) Endorsements: 161 Comments: 33	Idea: Promote Latin in European schools (see idea) Endorsements: 28 Comments: 25
	Idea: Language teaching in Europe (translated) (see idea) Endorsements: 112 Comments: 43	Idea: Esperanto — International auxiliary language (see idea) Endorsements: 56 Comments: 22



ANNEX II: Methodology

The metrics used for the analysis in this report come from a live platform where data is updated on an ongoing basis, even throughout the period of the research team's data analysis.

The main metrics used for the **quantitative analysis** are the following:

- Numeric data on ideas uploaded by contributors, be it as individuals or as representatives of an organisation. Numeric data consist of number of ideas – overall and within the various topics.
- Numeric data on endorsements: endorsements are similar to a 'like/up-vote' in social media. They help indicate participants' interest in and general favourability towards an idea, whilst not giving indications about any opposition to it. Therefore, the number of endorsements is not per se an indicator of overall support for the idea, but just one of the many aspects that is taken into consideration in the analysis of contributions on the platform. Numeric data consist of the number of endorsements – overall, within the various topics and linked to a particular idea (used also for the listing of ideas by the number of endorsements).
- Numeric data on comments by participants: the analysis also covers the amount of participants' comments on each other's ideas, as they indicate the level of active engagement on an idea. In terms of substance, comments can cover a range of feedback, from neutral to agreeing or strongly disagreeing. This is reflected in the qualitative



analysis (see below). Numeric data consist of the number of comments – overall, within the various topics and linked to a particular idea (used also for the listing of ideas by the number of comments).

- Numeric data on events: contributors can create events on the platform and upload event reports. Numeric data covers number of events – overall and within the various topics.
- Socio-demographic data (anonymised): Prior to engaging with the platform contributors are asked to provide information on their country of residence, educational background, age, gender and employment status. The data are processed anonymously. As this information is shared voluntarily (currently around 78% of participants provide it), there are limitations on the insight that can be provided into the profiles of participants. Respondents are particularly unlikely to provide information on their occupation, education and country of residence. For organisations, only the country of residence can be provided.

The main focus of the report is on the **qualitative analysis** on the basis of ideas and comments to deliver an overview of the content of the platform. Themes and in some cases sub-themes are identified within the pre-defined topics.

In practice, within each topic a manual textual analysis and clustering of all the proposed ideas has been performed by a research team, aided by a computer assisted clustering tool. Subsequently, the research team has read through the ideas and comments within the identified cluster to provide a summary of the common themes and possible sub-themes, also noting variations and potential points of disagreement in the comment sections.

The ultimate goal of this qualitative approach is not only to record the themes or ideas which attract the most attention on the platform, but **to also record the breadth and diversity of ideas falling within one topic**. In case several ideas submitted on the platform are in practice expressions of the same idea or sub-theme, qualitative indications to this are provided in the summary, by referring to a 'recurrent' or 'prominent' idea or sub-theme.

The summaries also include links to illustrative ideas, which describe a concrete proposal or provide a good summary of the general argument of the identified theme or sub-theme.

The breakdown of a topic into themes and sub-themes or ideas is visually represented in the relevant mind map.