

**Question for written answer E-001180/2022
to the Council**

Rule 138

Jaak Madison (ID), **Gunnar Beck** (ID)

Subject: The Conference on the Future of Europe and democratic principles

The aim of the Conference on the Future of Europe is to identify the EU's future priorities by recruiting 'random' citizens and giving them the opportunity to influence decisions in different policy areas. However, similar projects involving citizens have been widely criticised for lacking democratic legitimacy and having questionable legal and practical value.

Although the conference is supposed to reinforce democracy, its structure and set-up seem to point to the contrary:

1. Given that the participants were allegedly selected at random, but only to be representative in terms of geographic origin, gender, age and socio-economic background, and not political affiliation, how can political pluralism and political representation be guaranteed, especially since this type of project is usually characterised by self-selection bias?
2. Is the Council aware of the democratic deficit of the conference (including the lack of participation by citizens on the multilingual digital platform) and would national referendums on key issues not provide a more legitimate indication of the democratic will of the people?
3. Does the Council believe that the right of citizens to elect representatives to act on their behalf is being undermined by the Conference on the Future of Europe?