1. The Commission underlines that the random selection of European Citizens’ Panels’ participants has been based on the five criteria set out in the Joint Declaration of 10 March 2021, signed by the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission: citizens’ geographic origin, gender, age, socioeconomic background and/or level of education. The combination of these five criteria was chosen to assure a reasonable level of diversity within a panel size of 200 people. Political opinion, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity have explicitly not been considered. No self-selection bias occurs as the samples were randomly selected simultaneously along the five criteria.

2. Through the Conference on the Future of Europe a new space has been created for debate with citizens to address Europe’s challenges and priorities. By drawing on citizens’ views, the Conference aimed to complement the EU’s representative system and enrich the democratic processes. In its purpose, it cannot lead to any democratic deficit. National referenda fall under the exclusive competence of the Member States.

3. The European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission have jointly committed to listen to Europeans and to follow up on the proposals made by the Conference, within their own sphere of competence. According to the Rules of Procedure of the Conference, consensus on the proposals was found at least between the four institutional components of the Conference, which included representatives of all National Parliaments. Against this background the Conference’s ultimate purpose is to reinforce the representative democracy of the European Union.