



Results

EU FUTURE TALKS SALZBURG RESULTS

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the accession of the so-called “new” EU Member states in 2024, EUROPE DIRECT Land Salzburg initiated the third EU Future Talks at the Chiemseehof in Salzburg with more than 70 young participants from 15 different EU member states and EU candidate countries. The conference, which was organised in cooperation with the Salzburg Youth Advisory Council and akzente Salzburg, aimed to formulate young people’s demands for the future of Europe. The final discussion with Members of the European Parliament on 15 November 2024 is available on a livestream: Salzburg Live VOD and www.salzburg.gv.at/europedirect. The proposals of the young people aged 18-25 years - listed below - resulted in the attached paper and were developed over the preceding days in four parallel workshops, namely **“Economic growth & climate protection: conflicting interests?”**, **“Freedom, security & solidarity: together as EU fundamental rights”**, **“Geopolitical challenges: the role of Europe”** and **“Digital transformation & AI: changing times in Europe”**. It is in their interest and a top priority that their proposals are considered and integrated into the ongoing discussions.

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DEMANDS AND RESULTS FROM THE “DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND AI: CHANGING TIMES IN EUROPE” GROUP

EDUCATING ABOUT AI AS A TOOL, NOT A THREAT

We propose that general artificial intelligence should be introduced at an early age in schools, through technology-related subjects, to teach students how to use AI responsibly. To achieve this, teachers need to be trained first, with support from experts. This aligns with the wider need to upskill private and public sector workers to use AI effectively to streamline their work.

Public awareness campaigns can further inform citizens about the benefits, risks and limitations of AI, promoting informed understanding. In addition, we want to involve older generations through intergenerational learning about the basics of AI to help bridge the technological knowledge gap in society.

PROPER USE OF AI

With AI becoming increasingly widespread, learning how to wield this new technology properly is essential.

We are therefore proposing funding for schools so that every young person knows how to use it. In addition, people who are no longer in school should be reached with (online) tutorials, workshops and disclaimers that should be mandatory on every AI service's website.

To ensure the safe use of AI, we need to think more critically about it and be aware of its biases, errors and ability to generate misinformation. Another major concern with AI is its impact on the environment, particularly in terms of its huge energy consumption and the tougher green energy targets. If private companies train their models on copyrighted material, they should pay royalties to the artists as they benefit directly from their work. Inappropriate content and deepfakes must also be more strictly regulated, as they are dangerous tools of misinformation that are sadly still widely available today. Regulations, taxes, fines, restrictions and bans can be used to achieve these goals. In order for the rules of proper use to be followed, they need to be rigorously enforced, unlike the current AI law.

USAGE OF OUR PRIVATE DATA BY PRIVATE COMPANIES

Through the use of ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, companies have a very large amount of private information.

Everyone should have the same level of privacy online, but some companies obscure your rights by hiding the confirmation of the rights we share with them, for example by not showing the appropriate check boxes. We should have transparent information about what they do with our data and where it is stored. That is why companies should have restrictions on how they collect and use this private information. Companies are using our data to make better AI tools, but we should have the right to informed consent about the use of our private data in this process.



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There should be restrictions on how long the data is stored and processed, if it is really necessary to store it. By enforcing appropriate laws and regulations, we could create an environment where AI is not a threat but can be a great tool for European Institutions.

LABELING AI GENERATED CONTENT MORE CLEARLY

This proposal aims to raise awareness of unlabelled AI content. The rapid development of AI has enabled the creation of vast amounts of content across multiple platforms, from news articles and product descriptions to creative arts and social media posts.

Currently, many people do not understand the differences between AI-generated and human-generated creative content. To address this, it may be possible to add signatures or watermarks to generated content to make it clearer to people that it is AI-generated. Disclaimers can also be added to the captions of videos and posts, but the problem remains that people may not bother to read them.

The use of AI-generated content in the media, such as news and current events broadcasts on TV or in social media posts is often used to degrade or embarrass certain celebrities, politicians or groups of people. The problem with this is that the actions depicted in the AI-generated content are not real and are being used as a weapon.

DEMANDS AND RESULTS FROM THE “FREEDOM; SECURITY & SOLIDARITY: TOGETHER AS EU FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS” GROUP

STRENGTHENING EUROPEAN FEDERALISATION

The speakers, as European citizens, call for an acceleration of the process of European federalisation by pushing for the adoption of treaty reform by the European Council.

ESTABLISHING JOINT EUROPEAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Despite the rise of anti-immigration narratives in the European Union, which hinder efforts to address the common migration crisis, many regions within the EU face labour shortages, particularly in certain sectors. Additionally, the EU's pension system is under significant pressure as life expectancy increases and fertility rates decline.

Creating a common European migration infrastructure, especially in frontline states, could lead to more efficient immigration management. This would not only improve integration processes and enhance security but also help address labour shortages. By relieving pressure on the European workforce, such a system could reduce the need for controversial measures like extending the working age or cutting parental leave, which have been suggested as solutions to the labour crisis.



ENHANCING INTEGRATION MEASURES

Despite the European Union's efforts, many migrants still face significant barriers to integration, including difficulties in accessing adequate housing, fair employment opportunities, and essential services like healthcare and insurance. The European Website on Integration reports that these challenges persist. While acknowledging the cultural diversity that migrants bring, we must also recognise the potential economic and social benefits of successful integration. However, the rise of far-right movements and instances of discrimination across Europe raises concerns about the effectiveness of current anti-racism measures.

In this context, the members of the group ask the European Parliament how it is working to balance effective integration measures with the protection of fundamental rights, especially the freedom of thought, conscience and religion as outlined in Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. What is Europe's current plan to promote intercultural dialogue while respecting diverse beliefs and backgrounds?

THE ROLE OF FRONTEX

The members of the group are interested in the general opinion of the MEPs on the role of FRONTEX, especially in the light of the latest European elections in which the positions of MEPs were rather divided. Should FRONTEX be financially strengthened or weakened?

DEMANDS AND RESULTS FROM THE “ECONOMIC GROWTH & CLIMATE CHANGE” GROUP

FAIR AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLIMATE LEGISLATION

EU member states are required to implement legislation, but they often face challenges due to their unique circumstances. For example, Estonia has struggled with fossil fuel legislation due to its heavy reliance on oil shale, which has led to higher energy costs.

To ensure fair and effective implementation, we call on the EU to take these national differences into account by conducting thorough impact assessments and recognising the specific challenges faced by each member state. This approach would make climate legislation more balanced and adaptable to the different realities across the EU27.

MAXIMISING RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES

Many EU member countries are currently falling short of the Fit for 55 plan's ambitious climate objectives. To reduce emissions effectively by 2030, it is imperative that renewable energy resources are maximised.



ESTABLISHING AN ORGANISATION TO IDENTIFY HIGH POTENTIAL REGIONS AND INITIATE PROJECTS

Not all EU countries have equal potential for the development of renewable energy sources such as solar, hydro and wind, so a collaborative EU-wide approach is needed. We propose the creation of an organisation dedicated to identifying regions with high potential for renewable energy projects and facilitating their development in a coordinated and collaborative way. For example, southern European countries have significant solar energy potential, while Nordic countries have abundant wind and hydro resources. This initiative would allow the EU to leverage the strengths of different regions and work together to achieve our common climate goals.

FOSTERING USE OF E-VEHICLES

The purchase and use of electric vehicles can modernise our economy, simplify our daily economic lives and, of course, reduce the burden on our climate. Investing in battery technology and its further development is just as crucial for consumers' future purchasing decisions of e-vehicles.

We therefore call for easy access for people to purchase electric vehicles and ask for your support.

DEMANDS AND RESULTS FROM THE “GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES - THE ROLE OF EUROPE” GROUP

The members of the group discussed intensively the important role the EU plays in both domestic and international politics and recognised that political decisions have a major impact on our future. EU policy is highly complex and as difficult as it was to limit ourselves, we agreed on the following. We, the young people, call on the members of the European Parliament and the other European institutions to listen to our demands, take action and make changes for a better future.

STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY STRATEGY OF THE EU ESPECIALLY CONCERNING THE WAR IN UKRAINE

The future we inherit will be shaped by the efforts that are made today.

That's why we are calling for the war in Ukraine to be recognised as a matter of fundamental importance for the EU. This conflict has profound implications for the whole continent and for the future of global stability. We want the EU to be united on this issue. We oppose a resolution on the aggressor's terms and strongly support the formulation of a strategic framework for a post-Putin landscape. As war is associated with fear of the unknown, we also want the EU to emphasise the importance of building a well-informed public and fostering a society that understands the realities of global security. This is an opportunity for EU society to strengthen solidarity across borders and counter misinformation.

We firmly believe that the decisions we take here will affect the very foundations of global politics and the principles we uphold.



STRATEGIC AUTONOMY AND DE-RISKING FROM THE US

With the future of the Western Alliance uncertain and the international landscape increasingly unstable, Europe is called upon to live up to its anthem and contribute to global stability. We call on the members of the European institutions to take measures to improve the exchange of information and to draw up common crisis response plans. We also call for treaty reforms to strengthen the mutual defence clause.

Finally, we would like to emphasise the importance of meeting the 2% target for defence spending by each member state. If we want the EU to act on a global scale, we must equip it with the appropriate strategic capabilities.

EU AS AN ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE

We see a problem in the European Union where small and medium-sized companies have difficulty expanding outside their national markets. The EU has immense potential as a global economic powerhouse, but to realise this we need to enable our small and medium-sized enterprises to expand beyond national borders. Too many businesses face barriers that restrict their growth to individual countries. We need harmonised, business-friendly legislation in all Member States - legislation that allows businesses to scale seamlessly across Europe. We ask you to promote business legislation that is compatible across member states. This will help European companies to grow and be seen as global players.