

## Mission project: European citizens' panels

### What is the problem?

The processes of EU legislation are too complicated for most citizens to understand. Too many citizens feel out of touch and disempowered, and this may turn into distrust and resentment towards the EU. European democracies need to address this problem and grow stronger from it.

### What is the solution?

#### Citizens' panels

Citizens' panels should be organised and given binding power. Regularly hosting citizens events, councils and conferences that have some degree of legal weight empowers participants as active members of the EU and revitalises the democratic process. Citizens cannot be turned against the EU and its institutions when they feel themselves to be a fixed part of its inner workings.

The EU Commission should organise test rounds for citizens' panels and review the process with participants and civil society organisations. This process should result in a draft bill that institutionalises citizens' panels. MEPs should put pressure on the Commission to make good on Ursula von der Leyen's promise of more citizens' forums.

### How does it affect Europeans?

The increased isolation of EU lawmaking from the general public has provided 'anti-elite' parties with an opportunity. They claim to be able to empower those they deem to be 'native citizens'. These parties exacerbate the erosion of democracy, leaving all of us vulnerable to the will of autocrats.

### What does it cost?

Depending on the size and frequency of the panels, promotion, the selection process, travel and accommodation costs, each panel may cost up to 100,000 euros a year. This would be worthwhile investment for European democracy.

**Would you like more detailed information about this policy?**

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