

RENEWED SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR EUROPE

Roadmap to 2030

FRIENDS OF EUROPE AND THE RENEWED SOCIAL CONTRACT

Friends of Europe's work on the Renewed Social Contract is part of our long-term journey to revitalise the European Project.

It is based on our belief that a Renewed Social Contract based on peace, prosperity, inclusion and sustainability is a necessity for policymaking and thinking and will be the only way to succeed in the transitions ahead.

Our journey to renew Europe's social contract is dynamic and multifaceted. We continuously crowdsource ideas from our far-reaching community, relying on their collective intelligence and expertise to identify options for getting Europe through the challenges it faces today – and those that will only become more important to overcome in future.

In typical Friends of Europe style, we do not stop at experts, policymakers, thinkers and doers. We go a step further, looking to citizens to share their hopes, fears and ideas for the future of Europe and working to ensure that those ideas find their ways into policymakers' hands.

The objective of our work is as much about shifting mindsets and behaviours towards addressing social problems as it is about offering ideas. Identity politics, vulnerability and insecurity – together with a very changed world order to that of the last century – will shift and shape our shared future. Policymakers should be reminded to take these issues seriously and to act on them with a prevention mindset. Leaders must choose to think differently, to innovate and to move beyond the status quo, as the models and institutions drafted post-WWII will simply not see us through the years and transitions ahead. Rising to future challenges will require a move from 1950s to 2050s thinking.

Our work is, therefore, an earnest appeal to policymakers at all levels to stand-up and have a more honest reflection about the challenges ahead of us. The ideas generated, which will guide our work through 2030, are open to criticism, debate, intellectual challenge and improvement. Our aim in this exercise is to generate the space to ask difficult questions and dare to craft bold answers.

WHY IT'S TIME TO RENEW EUROPE'S SOCIAL CONTRACT

Europe's 20th-century social contract was forged in an era of post-war European integration. Although it introduced ground-breaking concepts – such as welfarism, the social protection net, a new multilateral order to uphold and maintain peace, free flows of trade and global finance – times have changed, and mounting challenges and crises have brought societal concerns, confusion and frustrations to a breaking point. There is a deepening sense of disenfranchisement and cynicism as people and communities increasingly feel overlooked in the policies, politicians and politics of now.

Created in very different times, post-war institutions, regulations and laws are no longer able to keep pace with the societies they are meant to serve. Macro trends – namely the digital, green and demographic transitions– will define our times and demand new approaches to rise to the challenges of the age.

This decade, Europeans will have two opportunities to head to the polls for European parliamentary elections, with new European Commission mandates taking over soon thereafter. In this critical time of transition, the moment is ripe to radically rethink the ways in which citizens, the private sector, civil society and public institutions interact.

OBJECTIVES

Friends of Europe believes that a Renewed Social Contract offers a path towards the inclusive and fair transitions that are needed for Europe to play its part in the world and care for its citizens in the 21st century. Through our work we aim to:

- Embed the **Renewed Social Contract** into the work of the European institutions across key policy areas over the course of the new mandates through 2030
- **Engage citizens**, providing them the opportunity to have their voices heard by policymakers across Europe and present policymakers with the opportunity to respond to citizen views and concerns
- **Develop and socialise a database of citizen** experiences to provide policymakers and practitioners with a robust evidence base for decision making
- **Activate a multistakeholder network** to support the concept of a Renewed Social Contract and to take action across different levels and regions

METHODOLOGY

Our work on the Renewed Social Contract represents the fil rouge of our work through 2030, with policy choices elaborated through an iterative consultative process aimed at refining the ideas and recommendations offered to policymakers.

The primary methodology of the initiative is to create and drive a constant feedback loop of dialogue between those who make policy and those who are affected by it, so that final outcomes are reflective of a more participatory, cooperative process.

Following a first year of stakeholder consultations to arrive at an initial set of policy choices, the efforts are underpinned primarily by:

- **Focus Groups:** facilitated sessions conducted in national languages aimed at garnering citizen sentiments on themes related to the Renewed Social Contract and generating qualitative data to underpin the development of ideas and decision making. Focus Group outcomes feed into Working Groups to provide them with an evidence-base for discussion.
- **Surveys and polls:** launched online and disseminated to a pan-European database of citizens and civil society actors, offering an opportunity to road test the ideas generated by senior stakeholders through Working Groups.
- **Working Groups:** expert Working Groups serve as an ongoing source of expertise to provide ongoing input and support to Friends of Europe in the development of policy choices.
- **Outward-facing activities and publications:** through Friends of Europe's tried and tested formats, progress on the development of final policy choices can be shared with our network for further input or socialised with policymakers through concerted advocacy campaigns.

KEY OUTCOMES AND MILESTONES

2022

In 2022, the Renewed Social Contract became the *fil rouge* of Friends of Europe's work through 2030, with every activity in one way, shape or form connected to the ambition of designing a Renewed Social Contract for Europe.

Friends of Europe establishes its internal thinking on the Renewed Social Contract and ensures that it becomes the overarching narrative of the organisation's work through 2030.

State of Europe 2022 is the starting point for the definition of '10 policy choices for a Renewed Social Contract for Europe.'

To facilitate a new way of working, Friends of Europe develops its first formal monitoring & evaluation system, designed to bring the whole team onboard with a new way of working.

Friends of Europe releases [Activity Report 2022: Friends of Europe and the Renewed Social Contract.](#)

2023

In a year dedicated to drafting an initial set of 10 policy choices to guide a new cohort of European decisionmakers, Friends of Europe engaged in a multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary approach to harvest and crowdsource ideas and thoughts on the key challenges facing Europe in the decades to come.

Friends of Europe engages in multistakeholder consultations with experts and professionals from 30+ countries in Europe and beyond over the course of the year and releases a working paper highlighting an initial set of policy choices for European leaders.

Friends of Europe partners with the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU for State of Europe, on the occasion of which the working paper is discussed and debated.

A coalition of likeminded local, national and European players is developed through the consultative process, establishing a bedrock of like-minded partners to work together on the initiative's further development.

Launch of Friends of Europe's **DRIVE Impact Initiative**, aiming to expand and deepen the global and European conversation on sustainable and inclusive development by reimagining investment, funding, collaboration and impact evaluation.

Debating Europe, Friends of Europe's citizen engagement platform, conducts a series of focus groups and surveys across 7 countries to gather qualitative data from 2,000+ citizens on themes key to Europe's future. The project is titled **2024 Voices – Citizens Speak Up!**

2024

With an initial set of policy choices in place and a database of citizen sentiments at the ready, Friends of Europe launches two flagship publications which are disseminated to policymakers before and after the year's European elections. To support the further elaboration and development of those ideas, Working Groups are established and hold their first meetings.

Launch of Friends of Europe's **Ukraine Initiative**, aimed at countering the 'fatigue narrative' and rallying support for Ukraine through a sustained campaign of multi-level engagement.

Friends of Europe's monitoring & evaluation system is adapted to ensure progress towards and impact of its policy choices.

Launch of **10 policy choices for a Renewed Social Contract for Europe** and **2024 voices: citizens speak up!** in Strasbourg with cross-party support.

A series of hybrid high-level debates during the electoral campaign brings together European citizens with political party and private sector representatives to discuss the policy choices and citizen sentiments drawn out of the *2024 voices* report.

European parliamentary elections.

Following the European parliamentary elections in May 2024, Friends of Europe disseminates its flagship publications among the new European Parliament and Commission.

An initial 3 Working Groups, composed of experts and senior stakeholders, are established on taxation, carbon reduction, and strengthening European defence and resilience.

State of Europe is an occasion to reflect on the impact of the European elections on its policy choices, taking into account the priorities of the new EU Commission mandate.

20-year anniversary of the accession of 10 new member states to the European Union.

Adoption of the EU strategic agenda 2024-2029.

Member states update their national energy and climate plans.

US presidential elections and re-election of Donald Trump as next US President.

The European Parliament approves the "Von der Leyen II" Commission. The College of Commissioners takes office on 1 December 2024.

2025-2027

New Working Groups and Focus Groups are initiated on a yearly basis, tied to the policy choices published in 2024 and key political milestones, while existing Working Groups continue to be consulted on an ad hoc basis. State of Europe serves as an annual evaluation moment to assess state of play and road test ideas with a high-level audience.

75th anniversary of the UN (2025)

Final year in which global emissions can peak if the 1.5 °C warming target is to remain a scientific possibility (2025)

COP30 In Belém, Brazil - 10 years after the Paris Agreement (2025)

Halfway point to achieving the EU's Digital Compass targets (2025)

Application of the Regulation on Health Technology Assessment (HTA) (2025)

Implementation of the European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP) (2025-2027)

Evaluation year for WHO global targets for noncommunicable diseases (2025)

Evaluation year for EU Beating Cancer Plan (2025)

4th International Conference on Financing for Development (2025)

Application of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) in definitive regime (2026)

30th anniversary of the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) (2027)

Application of the AI Act (2026)

End of the Global Gateway timeframe (2027)

Application of the Cyber Resilience Act (2027)

End of the EU Multilateral Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027

2028

A final set of policy choices is defined and elaborated on the basis of the previous years' consultations and launched on the occasion of the State of Europe high-level roundtable.

Start of a new EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

2029

In a year of European parliamentary elections, Friends of Europe will undertake a targeted campaign to socialise the final set of policy choices among the new European Parliament and European Commission

80th anniversary of NATO

European parliamentary elections and start of a new European Commission mandate

2030

As Friends of Europe continues to socialise its policy choices and advocate for their uptake, it will assess progress towards achieving its objectives through an evaluation exercise aimed at understanding how and where the Renewed Social Contract has gained momentum and what impact it has had.

End of the EU's Digital Decade

Target year for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals

EU commitment to reduce emissions by 55%

COP35 - 15 years after the Paris Agreement