Our Vision of Europe

Initial insights and follow-up questions

8 October 2021

Introduction

On 1 September 2021, the Dutch government launched Visions of Europe (*Kijk op Europa*), a citizen dialogue that allows the people of the Netherlands to share their ideas about the future of Europe. In this report we offer a number of initial insights and follow-up questions relating to the dialogue. We also describe what Visions of Europe will involve going forward, and what will be done with the final results.

About Visions of Europe

The European Union wants to know what its citizens think about the future of Europe. For that reason it is organising a Conference on the Future of Europe. The ideas of people from across the EU will eventually be translated into future plans for Europe. As part of the Conference the Netherlands has arranged the national citizen dialogue Visions of Europe. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has commissioned an external organisation to manage this process.

Visions of Europe went live on 1 September, collecting people's ideas and opinions online. This was done through a representative panel survey of more than 4,000 Dutch people over the age of 18. We then made the same questionnaire available to everyone in the Netherlands. What's more, people can also take part by using 'Swipe to the Future', an online survey tool featuring 20 statements. Both the questionnaire and the swipe tool will remain open until 14 November 2021.

The insights gained from the panel survey in September will provide input for various theme-based dialogues in the future. This will enable us to dig deeper into subjects that many people find important. These theme-based dialogues will take place both online and in person. We will engage with young people in various locations and organise meetings in local community centres.

The opportunities to take part in these surveys and dialogues are as follows:

Gathering ideas online 1 September - 14 November	**Input for**	**Theme-based dialogues** 12 October - 28 November
Research using a representative panel		Online group conversations Anyone can register
Open online research	Everyone can take part	Groups conversations on site (e.g. at community centres)
'Swipe to the future', with 20 statements		Meetings with young people (e.g. at schools)
↓		
The government will share the results at the Conference on the Future of Europe.		

About this interim report

This report describes a number of initial insights gained from the panel survey, which give an impression of the Netherlands' perspective: its 'vision of Europe'. We show, for example, what issues Dutch people

think are important and what role they feel the EU should play in regard to those issues, as well as areas in which they feel Europe should have *no* role. We also offer an impression of the responses to various questions and dilemmas, organised by theme.

We are publishing this interim report because we believe it is important to be transparent about our approach and the findings to date. The initial results are important, moreover, because they will determine the next steps in the Visions of Europe process. The final results of the citizen dialogue will be incorporated into reports that will serve as input for the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Next steps

The ideas and opinions of people across the EU will be brought together at the Conference on the Future of Europe. This will be done during various meetings focusing on specific themes. The participants will discuss not only the outcomes of the national citizen dialogues, but also the results of other Conference initiatives. For example, there will also be European Citizen Panels, and all EU citizens (and thus Dutch nationals too) will be able to access an EU digital platform.

The Conference will end in the spring of 2022, at which time the Netherlands will submit its final report. At the closing session, recommendations will be presented to the Conference Co-Chairs: the presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. They have promised to act on the recommendations, and the Conference outcome will provide valuable input for the Dutch government's EU policy.

Structure of this report
Nine themes have been selected for the Conference on the Future of Europe. These themes are also the central focus of the Netherlands' Visions of Europe dialogue and this report.

The report opens with a general section examining the importance of the various themes and the role of the European Union. We will then briefly consider each theme, sharing the responses to the survey questions, explaining certain results and posing several possible follow-up questions for the more in-depth theme-based dialogues. We will not present any conclusions at this time. Those will follow after the completion of the dialogue process, in the reports that will be submitted to the Conference in December 2021 and January 2022. The report closes with a section on the methodology used.

Timeline

Vision of Europe

1 Sept	Early Oct	22-23 Oct	14 Nov	17-18 Dec	21-22 Jan	Spring 2022		
Gathering ideas online								
		Theme-based dialogues						
		Initial insights and		Interim report on the economy	Interim report on climate	Final report 'Our Vision of Europe'		

		follow-up questions		and democracy	change and the EU in the world			
		↓		↓	↓	↓		
		Meeting at the conference		Meeting at the conference	Meeting at the conference	Conclusion of the conference	→	Recommendations for the chairs • European Parliament • European Commission • Council of the EU
				↑	↑	↑		

Other ways of gathering opinions and ideas about Europe:
Citizen dialogues in other EU countries
European citizen panels
European digital platform (for anyone living in the EU)

The themes at a glance

From tackling major societal problems to creating opportunities for people to work, travel and live healthy lives, the EU has an impact on issues that the public feels are important. The EU's role (or potential role) will differ for each theme, as will the success of each individual approach. What is the perspective of Dutch people in this regard?

We asked how important the themes listed below are in people's daily lives. We also asked whether people feel the EU should tackle these issues in the years ahead.

How important are these themes and should the EU deal with them?

	Theme is important; EU should deal with it	Theme is important but EU doesn't need to deal with it	Theme is not (or not very) important
Climate change and the environment	71%	3%	26%
Security and the rule of law	68%	16%	16%
Migration and refugees	65%	5%	30%
Healthcare	64%	28%	8%
Economy and jobs	61%	21%	19%
European democracy	60%	5%	35%
Role of the EU in the world	56%	3%	41%
The online world	45%	15%	41%
Education	45%	37%	17%
Young people	39%	26%	35%
Culture	23%	27%	50%
Sport	19%	29%	52%

Spotlighted
- There were three themes that 65% or more of Dutch people not only felt were important but also believed that the EU should deal with:
  – Climate change and the environment
  – Security and the rule of law
  – Migration and refugees
- Compared with other age groups, significantly more young people feel that the EU should deal with:
  – Healthcare
  – Education

– Climate change and the environment
- Compared with other age groups, significantly more people aged 55 and over feel that the EU should deal with:
    – Role of the EU in the world
    – European democracy
    – Young people

Other themes

Besides the themes listed, respondents could also suggest themes of their own that they consider important. The top-3 most commonly named additional themes (grouped by category) were:
- Health (78 times)
- Housing (61 times)
- Religion/belief (55 times)

What is the EU dealing with effectively?
Top-3 most common responses:
- Climate change and the environment (22%)
- Healthcare (17%)
- Role of the EU in the world (13%)

What could the EU deal with more effectively?
Top-3 most common responses:
- Climate change and the environment (33%)
- Healthcare (18%)
- Migration and refugees (15%)

Spotlighted
- On the list of themes the EU is dealing with effectively, young people put 'Climate change and the environment' in second, rather than first, place. Compared with other age groups, young people more often put 'Climate change and the environment' at the top of the list of the themes the EU could be dealing with more effectively.
- Dutch people under the age of 55 put 'Economy and jobs' in their top-3 themes the EU is dealing with effectively. 'Role of the EU in the world' does not feature in their top 3.
- Compared with other age groups, over-55s more often put 'Role of the EU in the world' in their top-3 themes the EU is dealing with effectively.

Possible follow-up questions
- What do young people believe needs to be improved in the EU's approach to climate change? What specific ideas do they have for improving it?
- Why is it that many Dutch people feel that the EU's approach to healthcare is good, while many others feel that its approach could be improved? And to what degree do efforts to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic play a role in this assessment?
- Why is it that many Dutch people believe education is an important theme, while almost half of respondents feel that it is not a theme that needs to be dealt with by the EU?

Themes

- Climate change and the environment
- Security and the rule of law
- Migration and refugees
- Healthcare
- Economy and jobs
- European democracy
- Role of the EU in the world
- The online world
- Education, culture, young people and sport

Climate change and the environment

Climate change and environmental damage are urgent problems for the whole world. To deal with these problems, the EU has drawn up a European Green Deal. It believes Europe should play a leading role in tackling climate change, to turn problems into opportunities. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

The European Union should take the lead in the fight against climate change.					
Agree			**Disagree**		**Neutral**
68%			18%		14%
Do you also think that rules in Europe should be stricter than in the rest of the world?			Even if it means Europe falls behind on sustainable technology?		–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**
45%	40%	15%	45%	39%	16%

Note: The last column "Neutral / –" spans the sub-rows.

Statement 2

The different countries of the European Union should decide for themselves how they protect the environment.					
Agree			**Disagree**		**Neutral**
35%			54%		11%
Even if it means other countries in Europe do little or nothing to protect the environment?			Even if the Netherlands is less able to decide things for itself?		–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**
63%	27%	10%	32%	58%	10%

Statement 3

The bigger the population of an EU country, the more CO_2 it should be allowed to release. Countries with a higher population should therefore be able to release more CO_2.		
Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
36%	45%	19%

Even if dirty industries leave the Netherlands, which might mean fewer jobs?			Even if it means countries with large populations do not meet their climate targets?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
62%	27%	12%	45%	39%	16%	–

Statement 4

Richer EU countries should spend more to stop climate change than poorer EU countries.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
50%			35%			15%
So do you accept stricter rules for richer countries?			Even if it means that poorer countries fall behind in the fight against climate change?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
75%	16%	8%	55%	32%	13%	–

In-depth question

Which of the EU's plans to deal with climate change are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Sustainable industry	62%
Clean energy	55%
Farm to fork	48%
Biodiversity	29%
Building and rebuilding	26%
Sustainable travel	26%
EU should not spend money on any of these plans	7%
Background on plans: • Sustainable industry: finding ways of reducing pollution from factories, and exploring how European industries can learn lessons from those who have already started this process. • Clean energy: using less energy and switching to sustainable sources in our daily lives.	

- Farm to fork: healthy, affordable and more sustainable food for everyone.
- Biodiversity: helping protect plant and animal species to combat climate change and keep the natural balance.
- Building and rebuilding: building homes and roads in a way that does not have a negative effect on climate.
- Sustainable travel: reducing travel and increasing sustainable transport.

Spotlighted

- 68% of Dutch people think that the EU should be a leader in the fight against climate change. However, 40% of these people think this should not mean that Europe has stricter rules than the rest of the world.
- 54% of Dutch people do not agree that countries should decide for themselves how they protect the environment. Of them, 58% do not think it is a problem if a European approach means the Netherlands is less able to take its own decisions.
- Sustainable industry (62%) and clean energy (55%) are most often chosen by Dutch people as good plans for tackling climate change.

Possible follow-up questions

- What ideas do the Dutch have for making the EU a leader in the fight against climate change? And why should this leading role not mean Europe has stricter rules than other countries?
- Why do most Dutch people think that protecting the environment is a job for Europe? And how do they think Europe should do this?
- Why do many Dutch people think that more sustainable industry and energy are the most important aspects of Europe's fight against climate change? How quick do they think this process should be?

Security and the rule of law

The EU monitors the rule of law in all EU countries, and tries to reduce inequality in the EU. It also tries to protect all Europeans from terrorism and crime, so it introduces rules and measures, and EU countries work closely together. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

It is important that the European Union protects the rule of law and the basic freedoms and rights of all people in all countries of the European Union.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
78%			7%			15%
So do you think that countries that do not want to obey these rules and laws should leave the European Union?			Even if it means some countries do not obey the rules and laws?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
80%	9%	11%	44%	40%	16%	–

Statement 2

It is good that the European Union makes manufacturers in all countries put the same information on food, cosmetics and other packaging.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
82%			5%			13%
Even if it means that the Dutch government has less control in this matter?			Even if it means that some people in the European Union get better information than others?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
76%	15%	10%	47%	37%	17%	–

Statement 3

The European Union should keep growing, new countries should join.		
Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
25%	44%	31%
Even if it means decisions could be taken by majority? (Meaning that not all EU countries would have to agree for a decision to be taken.)	Even if it means countries on the outer border of the European Union are less protected from the influence of other big global powers (like Russia and China)?	–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
71%	15%	14%	58%	24%	18%	–

Statement 4

Security services in EU countries should share all their information with each other.		
Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
68%	12%	20%
Even if it means we give sensitive information to other EU countries?	Even if it means we do not receive important information from other EU countries?	–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
70%	16%	14%	54%	34%	12%	–

In-depth question

Which of the EU's plans to better protect the rights of residents and reduce inequality are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Preventing terrorism	61%
Tackling racism	46%
Cooperation	40%
Children's rights	39%

LGBTI equality	27%
Gender equality	22%
Consumers	20%
EU should not spend money on any of these plans	5%

Background on plans:
- Preventing terrorism: stopping terrorist attacks and radicalisation (people accepting extreme views).
- Tackling racism: tougher action and punishments for racism and spreading hate.
- Cooperation: more cooperation between the police and criminal justice services in the different EU countries.
- Children's rights: more protection of the rights of children.
- LGBTI equality: fighting to achieve equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people.
- Gender equality: ending inequality between men and women.
- Consumers: more protection of your rights when you buy expensive goods.

Spotlighted
- 78% of Dutch people think it is important for the EU to protect the rule of law. 80% of those people think that countries that do not stick to the agreed rules should leave the EU.
- 44% of Dutch people do not think that the EU should let more members join.
- 68% of Dutch people think that the security services in EU countries should share all their information with each other.
- Preventing terrorism is mentioned most often – by 61% of people – as a good plan for European cooperation on security and the rule of law.

Possible follow-up questions
- What do the Dutch think about the fact that the EU cannot force EU countries to leave the EU? And if they think it should be able to, under what conditions should this be possible?
- What do the Dutch think about the possibility that other big powers will influence countries on the EU's outer border? And what should the EU do about this?
- What conditions do the Dutch think should apply for the security services to work together more? And what do they think about the idea of a single common European security service?

Migration and refugees

The borders between EU countries are open, so the countries in the EU work together to control its external borders and stop migrant smuggling. There is also discussion of the fair sharing of refugees among EU countries. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

The outer borders of Europe should be better protected.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
70%			9%			21%
Even if it means more refugees are sent back to unsafe countries?			Even if it means more economic refugees come to Europe?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
72%	17%	11%	53%	36%	11%	–

Statement 2

A European immigration service should be set up to distribute refugees fairly between EU countries.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
69%			15%			17%
Even if the Netherlands has to let more refugees in?			Even if things then continue the way they are now?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
61%	31%	8%	45%	35%	19%	–

Statement 3

The European Union should give more help to unsafe regions to prevent refugees from having to leave there.		
Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
67%	12%	20%
Even if the EU needs extra money for this?	Even if it means more refugees come to Europe?	–

Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	–
84%	11%	5%	32%	60%	8%	–

In-depth question

Which of the EU's plans on refugees and immigrants are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Returning asylum seekers who are not allowed to stay quickly and successfully	61%
Better border controls and measures to stop people-smuggling	60%
Good arrangements with countries neighbouring the EU on refugees and migrants staying there	45%
More help for conflict regions to help prevent refugees from having to leave	38%
Better integration for immigrants	31%
EU should not spend money on any of these plans	7%

Spotlighted
- 70% of Dutch people think that the EU's outer borders should be better protected. And 72% of these people still think this is a good idea if it means more refugees are sent back to unsafe countries.
- 69% of Dutch people think there should be a European immigration service to distribute refugees fairly between EU countries.
- 67% of Dutch people think that the EU should provide more help in unsafe regions to prevent refugees from having to leave there. Of those people, 84% still think this is a good idea even if it costs the EU more money.

Possible follow-up questions
- What responsibility does the EU have for people from outside Europe, in Dutch people's opinion?
- What do the Dutch regard as a fair distribution of refugees across Europe? What should a common immigration service be like? And how much control should the Netherlands still have?
- What conditions do Dutch people think should apply to the EU providing help to unsafe regions (to prevent refugees from leaving)? Is it all right if this help comes at the cost of other EU investments? If so, which investments?

Healthcare

Although healthcare is the responsibility of individual countries, European policy can support and strengthen healthcare, as it has in the case of COVID or other health emergencies, either now or in the future. Or through joint research into serious diseases. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

The countries of the European Union should work together more to prevent infectious diseases from spreading all round world.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
83%			8%			9%
Even if it means that the Netherlands can no longer make its own rules?			Even if it makes it more difficult to travel around Europe?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
66%	22%	12%	43%	43%	14%	–

Statement 2

We should make sure we depend less on countries outside the European Union for the development, production and supply of medicines.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
71%			12%			17%
Even if it means we have to wait longer for medicines?			Even if it makes medicines more expensive?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
50%	38%	12%	34%	52%	14%	–

In-depth question

Which of the EU's plans for a healthier future for all Europeans are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Medicines	57%
More oversight	47%
Action against cancer	46%
Tackling COVID	46%
Food	37%
Sport	16%
Alcohol and tobacco	16%
EU should not spend money on any of these plans	4%

Background on plans:
- Medicines: making sure more medicines are available.
- More oversight: better cooperation between countries to deal with disease; more sharing of knowledge and experience.
- Action against cancer: spending more money on research into preventing, curing and treating cancer.
- Tackling COVID: more and faster vaccinations; persuading more people to get vaccinated.
- Food: encouraging production and consumption of healthy food.
- Sport: encouraging physical fitness and exercise.
- Alcohol and tobacco: encouraging people to drink less alcohol and stop smoking.

Spotlighted
- 83% of Dutch people think that countries in the EU should work together more to prevent infectious diseases from spreading around the world.
- 71% of Dutch people think we should make sure we depend less on countries outside the EU for the development, production and supply of medicines. But if this means waiting longer for medicines, not everyone agrees this is a good idea: 50% do, but 38% do not.
- Dutch people mention encouraging sport and exercise (16%) and reducing use of alcohol and tobacco (16%) least often as areas for EU countries to work together on.

Possible follow-up questions
- How do Dutch people think EU countries should work together more to prevent pandemics? And should the EU work more with countries outside the EU too?
- What should the Netherlands do itself to develop, produce and supply medicines? And what can best be done at European level?
- Why do most Dutch people think preventive measures (like encouraging more exercise and reducing use of less alcohol and tobacco) are less important as part of a European approach to healthcare?

Economy and jobs

Small and medium-sized companies are the backbone of the European economy, so the EU would like EU countries to work together on recovery plans to make Europe stronger after the pandemic. In the long term EU wants to make the European economy healthier, greener and more digital. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

The European Union should make sure that companies work together more to make the European economy stronger.				
Agree		**Disagree**		**Neutral**
71%		10%		19%
How should companies work together?		Do you think it is alright that the rules for companies are different in each country?		–
		Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	–
The rules for companies should be the same in all countries of the European Union.	51%	58%	31%	11%	–
The European Union should do more to encourage companies to share knowledge and ideas.	41%				
More European Union money should go to companies.	7%				
Other (please describe):	0%				

Statement 2

The European Union should help create more jobs.					
Agree			**Disagree**		**Neutral**
71%			11%		18%
Do you think it is right for Dutch tax money to be spent on jobs in other European Union countries?			Do you think it is a problem if some countries do little or nothing to create jobs?		–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
21%	65%	14%	45%	43%	13%	–

Statement 3

The countries in the European Union should work together to make sure that all companies in the European Union pay their fair share of taxes.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
82%			6%			12%
Even if it means higher taxes for companies in the Netherlands?			Even if it means companies leave the Netherlands because they can pay less tax in another country?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
65%	24%	11%	45%	45%	10%	–

Statement 4

The European Union should spend more money to create a sustainable economy.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
62%			15%			23%
Even if it means higher taxes on dirty fuels, such as natural gas and petrol?			Even if it means that not all countries in the European Union achieve the climate goals?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
65%	27%	7%	66%	26%	8%	–

In-depth question

Which of the EU's plans for a stronger and fairer European economy are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Fair taxation	55%
Climate	43%
Post-pandemic recovery	35%
Competition	30%

Worker protection	33%
Opportunities for young people	33%
Knowledge	29%
EU should not spend money on any of these plans	5%

Background on plans:
- Fair taxation: stopping fraud and tax evasion.
- Climate: spending money on a climate-friendly economic recovery after the pandemic.
- Post-pandemic recovery: more European money for the regions and sectors that have suffered most because of COVID.
- Competition: making sure the European Union is able to make products better and/or more cheaply than other countries.
- Worker protection: ensuring that workers' rights are protected to the same extent
- in all countries.
- Opportunities for young people: helping young people find work.
- Knowledge: ensuring people and companies learn more.

Spotlighted
- 71% of Dutch people think that the EU should ensure that companies work together more to make the European economy stronger. But of them, only 7% think that more EU money should go to companies.
- 82% of Dutch people think that EU countries should work together to ensure that all companies in the EU pay their fair share of taxes.
- All the plans to make the European economy stronger and fairer appear in the top three of at least 25% of Dutch people.

Possible follow-up questions
- Why do so many Dutch people think the EU should help to make the European economy stronger, but only a small percentage of them believe that more EU money should be spent on companies?
- What are the Dutch worried about when it comes to fair taxation? What do they think is fair taxation? And how should the EU help make sure taxes are fairer?
- How should the EU decide how to make the European economy stronger and fairer? If its budget is limited, what should the money be spent on?

European democracy

The EU encourages Europeans to vote, and also likes to get people involved in European decision-making and policy at other times. The EU does all kinds of things to strengthen democracy, such as its plan of action for free and fair elections and a free press. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

The European Union properly explains the decisions it takes.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
15%			51%			35%
Do you find it easy to find out all the latest information?			Do you think that people living in the EU should be given more information?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
69%	25%	6%	92%	5%	3%	–

Statement 2

I want more direct influence over the decisions of the European Union.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
47%			19%			34%
Even if it means the European Union takes decisions more slowly?			Even if it means the Dutch government has less influence in Europe?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
78%	15%	7%	35%	47%	19%	–

Statement 3

The European Union is aware enough of what is happening in society.		
Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
21%	51%	28%
Would you like to be given more information about the plans and decisions of the European Union?	Should more time and money be spent improving contact between the	–

			European Union and the people who live there?			
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
66%	22%	12%	74%	15%	11%	–

Statement 4

People should be able to vote for candidates from other EU countries in European Parliament elections.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
38%			30%			32%
Even if it means fewer Dutch members are elected to the European Parliament?			Even if they agree more with the views of candidates from other EU countries?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
71%	22%	7%	52%	33%	15%	–

In-depth question

Which plans to improve relations between people and politicians in the European Union are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Provide more, and clearer information on the EU.	62%
Stop fake news.	54%
Do more to protect press freedom in all countries of the EU .	45%
Make it a rule that politicians in the EU talk with people in Europe once a month .	34%
Hold European elections more often.	13%
EU should not spend money on any of these plans.	12%

Spotlighted
- 51% of Dutch people think that the EU does not give enough explanation for its decisions. Of those people, 92% think that the public should be given more information.

- 51% of Dutch people think that the EU does not know what is going on in society.
- The Dutch are divided in their opinion of whether people should be able to vote for foreign candidates in European Parliament elections. 38% think they should. 30% think they should not.
- Stopping fake news (54%) and doing more to protect press freedom (45%) are often mentioned as good ways for a Europe to protect democracy.

Possible follow-up questions

- What information about the EU and EU decisions would the Dutch like to have? And how would they like it to be provided?
- How can the EU find out more about what is happening in society? Would Dutch people like to play an active role in this and, if so, how?
- Why would Dutch people like to vote for foreign candidates, or why would they not? And how should the European Parliament be structured?

Role of the EU in the world

The world is facing some major challenges. The EU is convinced that global cooperation is necessary to deal with issues like climate change and pandemics. It wants its views to be heard in the world, alongside those of the United States, China and other countries. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

The Netherlands should leave the European Union.				
Agree		**Disagree**		**Neutral**
21%		57%		22%
Why do you think we should leave the European Union?		**Why do you think we should stay?**		–
It would save a lot of money that we now pay to the European Union.	35%	Because the Netherlands is too small to negotiate agreements with other countries.	34%	
We would be able to set more rules for ourselves.	18%	It would be bad for our economy.	31%	
We could decide who we wish to work with.	13%	Because we can only deal with the climate problem together in Europe.	22%	
Fewer immigrants would come to the Netherlands.	11%	Because we make agreements on the quality of products for the whole of Europe.	5%	
The public would have more influence.	8%	We will no longer be able to travel freely.	5%	
We could get the guilder back.	8%	Other (please describe):	4%	
We would not have to follow so many rules in climate agreements.	4%			
Other (please describe):	3%			

Statement 2

The European Union should form a stronger bloc against other big powers like the United States, Russia and China.				
Agree		**Disagree**		**Neutral**
66%		12%		22%
Why?		**Why?**		–
To better protect the European economy from unfair trade	45%	Because we should first solve the problems in the Netherlands	37%	
To be able to do more to stop human rights abuses	20%	Because it could lead to disagreement and wars between countries	31%	
To be able to better deal with the climate problem	18%	Because the Netherlands can deal with other countries itself	27%	
To have more control over the quality of products from outside the European Union	14%	Other (please describe):	5%	
Other (please describe):	3%			

In-depth question

Which plans to strengthen the European Union's role in the world are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Security and defence	50%
Trade policy	46%
Good neighbours	39%
Foreign policy	36%
Development cooperation	34%
Humanitarian aid	24%
EU should not spend money on any of these plans	10%
Background on plans: • Security and defence: preventing wars and stopping them from escalating.	

- Trade policy: promoting free and fair trade with clear rules.
- Good neighbours: helping to protect peace, security and stability in the countries bordering the European Union.
- Foreign policy: making sure there is economic and political stability all over the world.
- Development cooperation: making the economy stronger and ending poverty and hunger.
- Humanitarian aid: providing support for the people in the world who need it most, after natural disasters and wars, for example.

Spotlighted

- 21% of Dutch people think that the Netherlands should leave the EU. The reason most often given for this is that much less money would then have to be paid to the EU.
- 66% of Dutch people think that the EU should form a stronger bloc against other powerful countries, such as the US, Russia and China. The reason they most often give for this is that it would better protect the European economy from unfair trade.
- 50% of Dutch people think that helping to end conflicts in the world is one of the things that the EU should do in the world.

Possible follow-up questions

- What do Dutch people think the EU spends too much money on, and why?
- What do Dutch people think is unfair trade, and why are they worried about it? How should the EU protect itself against unfair trade?
- Why do half of Dutch people think that security and defence are important for making the EU's role in the world stronger? What form should this role take? What do they think are the advantages and disadvantages of a common European security service and defence?

The online world

The online world is making internet connections, security and privacy more and more important. The EU feels it has a responsibility for these things, and wants to make sure that no one is left behind in the digital society. It is also investing in digital solutions to problems in society. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

The European Union should make sure that everyone in Europe has fast, stable internet access.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
61%			17%			22%
Should the Netherlands also help pay for good internet access in other countries?			Even if it means more difficulties and delays for Dutch companies doing business in other EU countries?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
36%	53%	11%	53%	32%	15%	–

Statement 2

The European Union should make sure that buying things online is safe in all countries of the European Union.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
75%			8%			17%
Even if it means more rules for online shopping and payments?			Even if it means online shopping and payments are more risky?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
85%	9%	7%	49%	37%	14%	–

Statement 3

Protection of privacy should be organised by the European Union.		
Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
60%	18%	22%

Even if it means more work for companies to protect your privacy?			Even if people's privacy is better protected in one country than another?			–
Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	–
92%	4%	4%	61%	27%	13%	–

In-depth question

Which plans to protect people and companies doing business online in the European Union are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Safe internet	70%
Stopping bad influences	47%
Better privacy	42%
Good internet access	41%
Sustainable digital society	14%
More openness	14%
Internet lessons	9%
Online economy	8%
EU should not spend money on any of these plans	7%

Background on plans:
- Safe internet: protecting people from online crime.
- Stopping bad influences: taking action to stop bad influences from outside the European Union (such as spying and fake news).
- Better privacy: more and better protection of personal data.
- Good internet: making good, fast and affordable internet access available for everyone.
- Sustainable digital society: making sure that more people use sustainable digital services.
- More openness: making government data more easily available to everyone.
- Internet lessons: teaching all Europeans to use the internet.
- Online economy: helping innovative, fast-growing companies.

Spotlighted
- 61% of Dutch people think that the EU should make sure that everyone in Europe has fast, stable internet access. But of those people, 53% think that the Netherlands should not have to help pay for good internet access in other countries.
- 75% of Dutch people think that the EU should make sure that buying goods online is safe in all EU countries.

- 60% of Dutch people think that protection of privacy is something that should be organised by the EU.
- Protection from online crime is most often mentioned (by 70% of people) as a good plan for Europe in the online world.

Possible follow-up questions
- Why do most Dutch people think it is important that all Europeans have good internet access? And why do so many think that European money should not be spent on this?
- Why do most Dutch people think that the EU should make sure that online shopping is safe in all EU countries? And what do they think is safe enough?
- What do the Dutch think is good about the European privacy laws we have now, and what do they think needs to be improved?

Education, culture, young people and sport

EU countries are responsible for education, culture, youth policy and sport. The EU can however give them support, by promoting high-quality education, multilingualism (speaking more than one language), protection of cultural heritage, and support for the culture and sport sectors. What do the Dutch think about this?

Statement 1

The European Union should make it easier to study in another country.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
57%			13%			29%
Do you also think that all teaching in higher education should be in English?			Even if that makes it more difficult for students to enjoy international opportunities?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
51%	38%	11%	70%	22%	8%	–

Statement 2

The European Union should do more to protect Europe's cultural heritage.						
Agree			**Disagree**			**Neutral**
58%			12%			30%
Even if the Netherlands has to pay more to protect cultural heritage in other countries?			Even if it means that cultural heritage is less well protected in other countries?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
51%	38%	11%	65%	26%	9%	–

Statement 3

The European Union should make sure children from poor backgrounds have more opportunities.		
Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
73%	9%	18%

Even if it means the European Union decides what the Netherlands should do to end poverty?			Even if some countries do too little for young people with few opportunities?			–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
70%	19%	10%	60%	27%	13%	–

Statement 4

The European Union must be tough on problems in sport, such as discrimination, vandalism, sexism and doping.		
Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
63%	15%	22%
Do you also think that the European Union should punish athletes, clubs and supporters more severely for these things?	So do you think that the countries in the EU are already doing enough to deal with these things themselves?	–
Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–

Yes	**No**	**Don't know**	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	–
85%	8%	7%	43%	37%	20%	–

In-depth question

Which EU plans to provide EU countries with better support for policy on education, culture, young people and sport are the best, in your opinion? Please choose no more than three.	
Qualifications should be equalised and accepted in all EU countries	44%
Improve cooperation between schools and universities in Europe	39%
Provide better access to childcare (for example make it more affordable)	35%
Provide more international internships	26%
Promote teaching in more than one language	25%
Encourage young people to do sports	19%

EU should not spend money on any of these plans	14%
More money for European culture (museums, theatre, film, etc.)	13%
Work together more on culture	13%

Spotlighted

- 57% of Dutch people think that the EU should make it easier to study in other countries. The Dutch do not agree on whether teaching in higher education should be in English. 51% believe it should, 38% do not.
- 58% of Dutch people think that the EU should do more to protect Europe's cultural heritage.
- 73% of Dutch people think that the EU should make sure that children from poor backgrounds have more opportunities.
- Few people mention sport for young people (19%) and European culture (13%) as good plans for the European Union.

Possible follow-up questions

- Why should (or shouldn't) English be used more for teaching in higher education? What do the Dutch think in general about what language is used and about multilingualism in Europe?
- What should the EU do to provide better protection for cultural heritage in Europe? What do the Dutch see as important European cultural heritage?
- Why do most Dutch people think the EU should do something for children from poor backgrounds? How should the EU offer them more opportunities?

Methodology

Below we provide a short description of the design and implementation of the panel survey that forms part of the citizen dialogue Visions of Europe.

The following elements will be discussed in turn:
- Goal and target population
- Field work
- Sampling and distribution
- Response
- Reliability and representativeness
- Other background characteristics
- Questionnaire
- Analysis methods
- Reporting

Goal and target population

Visions of Europe was launched on 1 September 2021 with an online questionnaire exploring how Dutch people feel about the future of Europe. The questionnaire was presented to a representative panel and made accessible to all Dutch people (including those living abroad). In addition the online tool 'Swipe to the future', which features 20 statements that people can give their views on, is also available to everyone. Both the questionnaire and swipe tool will remain open for responses until 14 November 2021. The results of the panel survey up to the end of September are described in this report, 'Initial Insights and Follow-up Questions'. The results of the panel survey will provide input for the various theme-based dialogues as the Visions of Europe citizen dialogue progresses. These will explore the issues in greater depth. The theme-based dialogues will take place both online and in a physical setting. For more information, please visit www.kijkopeuropa.nl.

The target population for the panel survey consists of all Dutch nationals aged 18 or over and registered (as of the time the field work began) as a Dutch resident in the municipal Personal Records Database. According to Statistics Netherlands (CBS), on 1 January 2021 this target group numbered 14,190,874 people. The 18-year-old age threshold matches the voting age in the Netherlands. This is the population identified for the panel survey.

Field work

To obtain a statistical picture of 'the Dutch', a survey was conducted of a nationwide panel of over 100,000 members (ISO-certified, Research Keurmerk group, Dutch Market Research Association). These members have all registered for the survey panel and regularly give their opinions on a range of topics. In addition to whatever personal motivation these people may have to offer their input, they are also paid for filling in the surveys. Various studies have shown that respondents who receive financial compensation for filling in surveys do not give significantly different answers from those who do not (source: 'Does use of survey incentives degrade data quality?' Cole, J.S.; Sarraf, S.A., Wang, X., 2015).

Field work started on 11 August 2021 and ended on 19 September 2021. A single data-collection method was used: internet research. The members of the survey panel each received an email containing a personalised link to the online questionnaire. After two weeks the panel participants received a reminder

email. Invitations to participate were sent in batches and in stratified form (with due regard to equal distribution among subpopulations) until the required number of respondents had been reached.

Sampling and distribution

The guiding principle for the study's design was that a minimum of 3,600 respondents would have to participate in order to achieve good statistical reliability. This number also enabled a good distribution across various background characteristics in the population. There is no one single type of Dutch person. For this reason the study ensured in advance that the sample was properly distributed across a number of characteristics. The Netherlands is a relatively small country, but regionally opinions may differ. A person's attitude regarding the importance attached to a theme may be determined (at least in part) by the area where they live. People who live in rural areas may feel differently about security to those who live in urban areas, for example. In addition, studies by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) have shown that highly educated people generally support the EU more than less educated people, and that young people are more often pro-EU than older people (source: '*Wat willen Nederlanders van de Europese Unie*?' (What do the Dutch want from the European Union?', summary available in English) Netherlands Institute for Social Research, The Hague, 2019).

To address this, we assigned quotas in advance across the following characteristics, to ensure a representative sample distribution: (1) region (using COROP[1] regions), (2) age and (3) level of education. In addition, the sample reflects the following background characteristics: sex, origin, primary day-to-day activity and political leanings.

The COROP regions were developed using the nodal principle (population centres which provide services or which serve a regional function) on the basis of commuter flows. Here and there the nodal principle has been abandoned in favour of provincial boundaries. After a redrawing of municipal boundaries crossed the COROP boundaries, these regions were adjusted (source: CBS). Within the COROP regions, we ensure a good distribution across the following age groups: 18-34; 35-54; 55-75 and over 75.

Finally, we also ensured a representative distribution across levels of education. The sample distribution of respondents is in line with the national distribution of highest level of education attained, which is as follows:

Highest level of education attained

Low: primary education, pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO), senior general secondary education (HAVO) or pre-university education (VWO) (years 1-3)), secondary vocational education (MBO) (year 1)	32.1%
Medium: senior general secondary education (HAVO) or pre-university education (VWO) (years 4-6), secondary vocational education (MBO) (years 2-4)	44.6%
High: Higher professional or university education	22.9%
Unknown	0.4%

---

[1] Translator's note: A COROP region is a division of the Netherlands used for statistical purposes. (COROP is a Dutch acronym for the committee that originally established these divisions.

Response

A total of 4,086 respondents participated in the panel survey, surpassing the goal of 3,600 fully completed questionnaires.

Response across COROP regions and age group	18-34	35-54	55-75	Over 75
North Drenthe	11	14	17	5
Southeast Drenthe	10	12	14	4
Southwest Drenthe	7	10	11	3
Flevoland	29	33	28	6
North Friesland	20	22	25	8
Southeast Friesland	12	13	14	3
Southwest Friesland	8	11	11	4
Achterhoek	22	27	34	11
Arnhem/Nijmegen	52	53	55	15
Veluwe	44	48	51	17
Southwest Gelderland	16	18	20	5
Greater Delfzijl	2	4	5	1
East Groningen	7	10	12	3
Rest of Groningen	36	26	28	8
Mid-Limburg	13	17	21	7
North Limburg	17	20	23	7
South Limburg	38	40	52	17
Mid-North Brabant	34	35	35	11
Northeast North Brabant	41	43	51	14
West North Brabant	40	47	49	15
Southeast North Brabant	55	56	58	18
Greater Haarlem	13	18	18	7
Greater Alkmaar	14	19	19	6
Greater Amsterdam	116	104	88	23
Het Gooi & Vechtstreek	13	21	19	7
IJmond	12	14	15	4

Response across COROP regions and age group	18-34	35-54	55-75	Over 75
North North Holland	22	27	30	9
Zaanstreek	11	13	12	3
North Overijssel	25	28	25	8
Twente	41	44	46	14
Southwest Overijssel	10	11	12	3
Utrecht	96	100	89	27
Rest of Zeeland	16	21	23	8
Zeelandic Flanders	6	8	9	3
Greater Leiden & Bollenstreek	30	31	31	10
The greater Hague area	63	70	57	18
Delft & Westland	19	15	15	4
Greater Rijnmond	103	107	99	31
East South Holland	22	24	25	8
Southeast South Holland	24	26	26	9

Response by level of education

Low	1382	34%
Medium	1747	43%
High	915	22%
Unknown	42	1%

Reliability and representativeness

A response level of 4,086 makes it possible to make observations about the population with 95% reliability and a 1.53% margin of error. The results' reliability level and margin of error depend on the size of the sample. The larger the sample, the more reliably/accurately the results can be generalised to the population as a whole.

The reliability level is defined as 1 (100%) minus the significance level. It is normal to assume a significance level of 5%, which means a reliability level of 95%. This in turn means that if the study were

to be repeated in the same manner and under the same conditions the results would give the same picture in 95% of cases.

The accuracy level (expressed as the margin of error) indicates the range of values within which the true value in the population lies. In other words, what is the greatest extent to which the results in the sample deviate from the results that would be obtained if the entire population were to complete the survey? A margin of error of 1.53% means that the actual value in the population may be up to 1.53% higher or lower than the value in the sample. In concrete terms, this means that if a survey result from the sample indicates that 50% of respondents find a given theme important, in reality the percentage may be up to 1.53% lower or 1.53% higher than 50% (i.e. between 48.47%h and 51.53%). A margin of error of up to 5% is common and generally accepted in (statistical) quantitative research.

Another important issue, in addition to reliability, is a sample's representativeness. Since the invitations to participate in the survey were sent in batches and stratified, the results are representative in relation to the characteristics 'COROP region' and 'age group per COROP region'. In regard to level of education, the response also corresponds to the national distribution in terms of the highest level of education attained.

Other background characteristics

The respondents to the panel survey were asked a number of extra background questions. These covered the respondents' sex, views on the EU, origin, primary day-to-day activity and which political party they would vote for if an election were to be held now.

49% of respondents were male, 50% were female and 1% preferred not to answer this question.

51% of respondents thought it was a good thing that the Netherlands is a member of the EU. 13% thought it was a bad thing, and 36% held a neutral view or did not have an opinion on the matter.

95% of respondents were born in the Netherlands. Both parents of 89% of respondents were born in the Netherlands. Both parents of 5% of respondents were born outside the Netherlands.

Current political preference of respondents

Party	%
People's Party for Democracy (VVD)	14%
Freedom Party (PVV)	13%
Socialist Party (SP)	8%
Democrats '66 (D66)	6%
Christian Democrat Alliance (CDA)	6%
Labour Party (PvdA)	6%

Animal Rights Party (PVD)	4%
Green Left Alliance (Groenlinks)	4%
Christian Union (CU)	3%
JA21	3%
Farmer Citizen Movement (BoerBurgerBeweging)	2%
Forum for Democracy (FVD)	2%
Calvinist Party (SGP)	2%
Volt	2%
DENK	1%
Haga Group	1%
BIJ1	1%
Den Haan Parliamentary Party	0%
Other	2%
Blank ballot	3%
Prefer not to say	13%
Would not vote	5%

What is your current primary day-to-day activity?

Activity	%
Pupil/student	6%
Part-time employee	16%
Full-time employee	31%
Business owner	3%
Homemaker	5%
Job seeker	2%
Volunteer	2%
Medically incapable of work	6%
Retired	27%

Other	1%
Prefer not to say	1%

Questionnaire

The questionnaire and this report were commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and drafted by an independent external organisation. The questionnaire has a modular structure and contains the following sections, which correspond to the themes identified for the Conference on the Future of Europe:

- Important themes and the role of Europe
- Climate change and the environment
- Healthcare
- Economy and jobs
- Role of the European Union in the world
- Security and the rule of law
- The online world
- European democracy
- Migration and refugees
- Education/culture/young people/sport

When developing the questionnaire close attention was paid to the quality, reliability and validity of the formulation of questions, statements and dilemmas. The aim was to ensure that the formulation was neutral and non-suggestive. In addition, the questions were reviewed in the context of language comprehensibility (B1 level).

The questionnaire was subjected to a qualitative assessment in a face-to-face setting, with test respondents who were part of the target group. The assessment looked at how the questions came across to different types of respondents. A formulation was adjusted if it turned out to be too complex.

Methods of analysis

This study used two methods of analysis:

Univariate analysis
In this method of analysis, descriptive statistics are used to describe variables in a study. The present study made use of frequencies and averages.

Bivariate analysis
'Bivariate analysis' means examining the relationship between two variables – in this case the relationship between the importance of the various themes and whether the EU should or should not deal with them, and the background characteristic of age. Researchers use significance assessment to determine whether different age groups attach different levels of importance to a theme, and whether opinions differ on whether the EU should deal with a given theme.

Reporting
This interim report contains visual representations of the results of all questions put to the survey panel respondents. This questionnaire was also made available to all Dutch people (including those resident

abroad). People can also take part by using 'Swipe to the Future', an online survey tool featuring 20 statements. Both the questionnaire and the swipe tool will remain open until 14 November 2021.

In the section 'The themes at a glance', results are divided up by age group, and statistically significant differences are described. Owing to rounding, the percentages in the diagrams do not always add up to exactly 100%.

For some questions the respondent has the opportunity to give an 'open' answer (as opposed to a pre-determined set of multiple-choice answers). These open answers were later categorised and incorporated into the report. The ideas that respondents shared in the open sections will be used as input for the various theme-based dialogues as the Visions of Europe citizen dialogue progresses further.