

REIMAGINE  
EUROPA  
**RIE**  
          





«Today, we live in a fragile and fragmented Europe. During the course of our careers, we have had the chance to become very familiar with the US, and then China, becoming the Superpowers of today, and of tomorrow. We are aware of the overriding obligation on Europe to further integrate to find a balance with these two giants once again.

We are now in a new phase of European integration – one belonging to a new generation – more active, more inventive and more united – who are entering public life.

An open environment must be created, peaceful and free, where you can explore opportunities and plan your life, against the backdrop of one of the most fascinating and diverse civilizations that humanity has ever created.

This project belongs to you. For it to be successful, you must cast aside negative ideas – political bias, personal ego and the fear of change to name but a few – and, relying on the foundations of our history, believe in the sincere hope of building one of the great civilizations of the 21st century.

We ask that you succeed.»

**VALÉRY GISCARD D'ESTAING & HELMUT SCHMIDT**



# ABOUT US

Re-Imagine Europa (RIE) is a nonpartisan think-tank, founded by President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing as the first "incubator" for new political ideas, in honour of the friendship and partnership with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and their efforts to define a future that goes beyond personal, national or partisan interests.

By aiming to develop and promote a shared vision for Europe that pragmatically responds to fears and hopes of today, we aim to give the project of 'Europa' back to its citizens and work together with multiple stakeholders, such as civil society organisations, national governments, as well as the European Institutions, to create an understanding for the need of a stronger Europe adapted to the 21st century.

RIE acts as a convener, catalyst and communicator:

**CONVENER:** we closely work with members and partners, leading institutions and experts from various backgrounds, to deliver world-class interdisciplinary and intersectoral research, and facilitate dialogue and engagement with national and international political processes. Our strategy relies on collective intelligence: bringing together stakeholders from different organisations ensures that proposals reflect the best ideas and research from across sectors, disciplines, and countries;

**CATALYST:** we focus on a few key issues of strategic importance to Europe – as identified by RIE Advisory Board – to promote new thinking and significant action. Our aim is to think systemically and long-term about these issues, to enable new thinking and innovative solutions;

**COMMUNICATOR:** a key pillar of Re-Imagine Europa's work is engaging with stakeholders using imagery and stories to posit old problems in a new light. We recognise the need for inclusive and expansive communication strategies more adapted to modern times and aim to remove barriers and promote broader participation in building shared visions.□

RIE is a Brussels-based International Non-Profit Organisation (Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif) supported by leading foundations, including La Caixa Foundation, Fondazione Cariplo, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and working on publicly funded international projects.



# OUR PRINCIPLES

**Citizen-centred:** we promote and protect the values of European citizens

**Evidence-informed:** we imagine the future by placing scientific evidence and high-quality information at the heart of policy making

**Long-term perspective:** we envision a long-term path for Europe looking at concrete measures and structures

**Inclusiveness:** we believe in the strength of collective intelligence and the need to listen to all the relevant opinions and points of view

**Collaborative approach:** we collaborate and trust partners encouraging productive and pragmatic working relationships

**Interdisciplinary approach:** we ensure that different perspectives and views are taken into account at the beginning of any process

**Trust:** we rebuild trust and join forces to overcome challenges of today for positive shared pathways of tomorrow

# HOW WE WORK STARTING POINT

“As Europeans we are at a turning point- we must re-seize the pragmatism that was so central to the founding spirit of the Union or be swept away by the tide of history. From individuals to nations to the European institutions, we must work together to tackle our joint challenges.”

**VALÉRY GISCARD D'ESTAING**

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the European Union, as dreamed by the visionary politicians and technocrats who dared to engage in one of the most remarkable political experiments in history, could be considered a success. It had become the largest economy in the world, with around a quarter of global domestic product (GDP), the largest consumer market, the largest repository of non-military science and technology knowledge on the planet, and a decisive share of global finance. Prosperity in terms of income, assets and social benefits was the highest on the planet. Democracy and human rights were rooted in the daily practice of European societies, and the institutions of co-governance, however bureaucratic, kept functioning.

However, in the aftermath of the global financial crisis 2008-2012, the humanitarian crisis of 2014-16, and the current global pandemic, the outlook of the European dream is being challenged. The paradox of our time is that as economic and social challenges have increased the awareness that the structural problems of Europe need to be addressed through stronger cooperation, we are seeing an upsurge of nationalistic parties and rhetoric gaining traction across the continent that demand weaker cooperation.

The biggest challenges facing our societies in this modern, digital, global and highly-mobile world need European - if not global - approaches. Something that can be seen when looking at the current debates around climate change or increasing inequality in a highly competitive, global and digital world.

Re-Imagine Europa strongly believes that Europe could - and should - have a leading global role in the 21st century. Yet, unless we manage to rebuild a new vision for Europe, a new dream of Europe that citizen can rally behind, Europe is in real danger. A new vision for Europe, Europa, must be developed rooted in the pragmatism of the founding fathers, but projected towards the future and finding innovative and contemporary solutions to the challenges we face.

# METHODOLOGY

As an incubator of new political ideas that aims to foster creative thinking, **our methodology is inclusive, goal-oriented and future-looking.**

We work together with our partners and key thinkers on topics of strategic importance to Europe, as defined by the Advisory Board. For each issue we address, the aim is to foster new thinking and innovative ideas.

Our work is organised into **three strategic areas**, as well as the overarching work on the future of Europe:

- **RIE DEMOCRACY – Democracy in a Digital Society**
- **RIE ECONOMY – A Fairer and More Competitive Economic System**
- **RIE PLANET – Narrative, Climate and the Future**

Under each strategic area, we launch and facilitate **Task Forces**, to respond to key issues and develop inclusive, innovative and pragmatic solutions.

There are four active **Task Forces**:

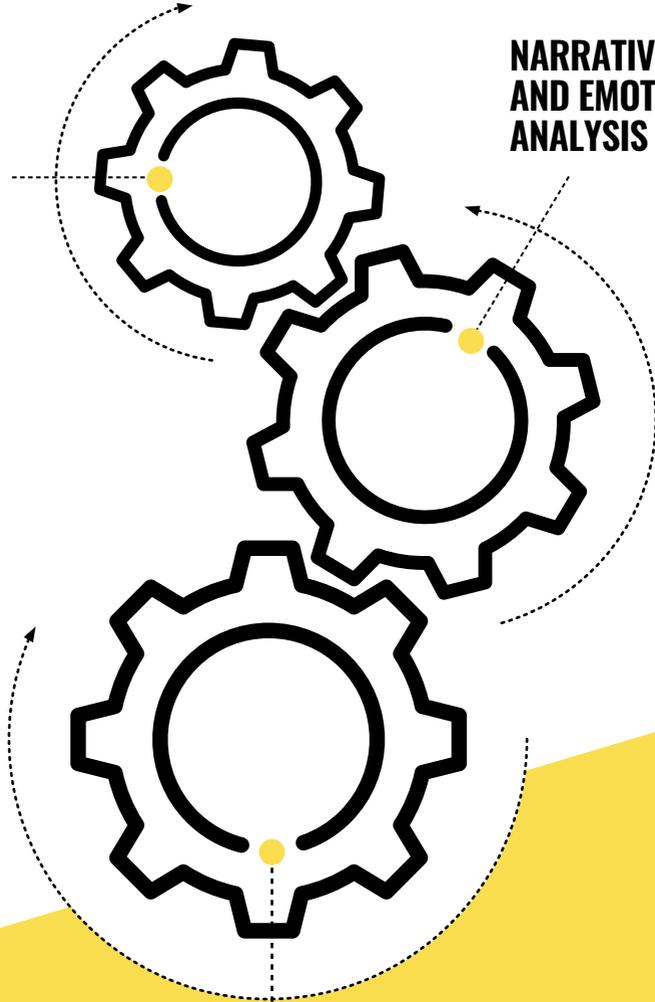
- **Future of Europe** (RE-IMAGINE EUROPA)
- **Democracy in a Digital Society** (RE-IMAGINE DEMOCRACY)
- **An Ideal Fiscal System for the 21st Century** (RE-IMAGINE ECONOMY)
- **Sustainable Agriculture and Innovation** (RE-IMAGINE PLANET)

Each Task Force brings together leading thinkers and stakeholders in an **Expert Committee** to ensure that the work is inclusive, reflects the most interesting and relevant thinking on the topic and is rooted in robust evidence.

We couple the work of the Expert Committee with a cutting edge narrative methodology to analyse and better understand the existing framing of a topic, the values that are connected to it as well as the hidden cognitive patterns that define different societal positions. This methodology helps us to posit the questions in a different light and better design the discussions as well as the engagement activities.

**CONTENT,  
EVIDENCE  
AND POLICY**

**NARRATIVES  
AND EMOTIONAL  
ANALYSIS**



**CHANGE  
AND RESULTS**

# WHY NARRATIVES?

“We are not thinking machines that feel;  
rather, we are feeling machines that think”

**ANTONIO DAMASIO, NEUROSCIENTIST**

Humans are social creatures. Our ability to work together underpins the stunning successes to date in fields both technical and creative. Shared stories foster shared identity and guide collective action. The multiplicative effect of working towards a shared goal is all the more impressive when driven by shared belief, rather than formal coordination.

Although the human brain is the most exquisitely powerful computational tool known, it necessarily requires simplifying structures to process the deluge of information it receives. **Narratives are forms that our minds and cultures use to organise reality.**

One of the most important findings of modern psychology is that **the process of understanding is inherently constructive in nature.** In fact, social reality is constructed in interactions between individuals and is co-created by people in groups, in conversation.

In a world increasingly dominated by technological sophistication, there has been a tendency to underestimate the role played by narratives in guiding individual and collective behaviour.

The role of narratives in shaping people's minds has become an important area of research and debate, in particular in recent years when entire societies have made choices that seem “rationally” counterintuitive. It is through narratives, shared interpretations of the world, that people unite. Yet, narratives also have the power to divide and polarize.

An increasingly influential stream of research demonstrates, in fact, **the integration of cognition and emotion in political decision-making.** Political cognition is emotionally shaped. In a globalised world, any desire for meaningful change on topics of increasingly universal concern will require a fine understanding of all the narratives at play should we wish to disrupt the present trend towards increasing polarisation.

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# TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

The Conference on the Future of Europe provides a unique opportunity for citizens across the continent to contribute to shaping the future. With the current global pandemic being the latest in a series of economic, social and political crises that have marred the Europe in the past fifteen years, it is time to accept that the structures and systems we have in place since the 20th century need to be revamped to fit the challenges of today.

As always with big ambitious projects, the risk is that this exercise becomes overly bureaucratic and fails to engage the public imagination. The set-up has already been criticised for being too institutional and not giving enough time or scope for citizen engagement.

At the same time, we have never been more in need of bold new ideas. The post-COVID-19 world that we glimpse in the future feels daunting and full of challenges. Yet, the NextGenerationEU recovery plan is promising to use this difficult time to rebuild the continent and get us ready for the 21st century.

We must remember that the European Union is itself the most ambitious and courageous political project in history. Dreamt up by visionary thinkers after the catastrophe of two world wars, the so-called “founding fathers” dared to imagine the impossible: a continent in peace! Today we are facing a similar challenge and will need equally bold ideas; what dreams dare we dream? What do we want for our future? If we dream together it might just become reality.

Already in April 2020, President Giscard d’Estaing, wrote an open letter “For the Europe of Tomorrow” together with leading representatives from the world of politics, academia and civil society from the Board of Re-Imagine Europa, calling upon European leaders to show courage and ambition amid the current crisis. Signatories to the letter include former Prime Minister of Italy Enrico Letta, Spanish government minister Manuel Castells, former President of the European Parliament Hans-Gert Pöttering and President of the European Foundation of Progressive Studies, Professor Maria João Rodrigues.

“

A dream you dream  
alone is only a dream.  
A dream you dream  
together is reality

**JOHN LENNON**



# RE-IMAGINE EUROPA CONTRIBUTION: AN IDEA FACTORY

This is the real opportunity and challenge of the Conference on the Future of Europe and Re-Imagine Europa wants to contribute to this effort by developing a programme encompassing the best of what we have to offer.

Working with the Members of our Advisory Board, our strategic partners, and our knowledge partners, we are developing bold new ideas that respond to the concerns of citizens. Listening to citizens is the starting point in the development of these ideas.

In order to do this, our Chief Narrative Scientist and his team are currently analysing millions of media posts across the continent – both traditional media as well as public social media articles – to map what Europeans are saying and feeling (narrative strategy). This will allow us to glimpse into what is really of concern to the public as well as the differences in priorities and focus in different parts of Europe.

The proposals developed will be presented on the **2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2022** - on the anniversary of the birthday of President Giscard d'Estaing – and serve as a starting point for further debate with citizens across Europe.

To engage with the public at large, Re-Imagine Europa is developing a three-pronged strategy:

- Working together with **traditional media**;
- Developing a cutting-edge **social media campaign** aimed at sparking inclusive conversation;
- Hosting **Citizen Parliaments** across Europe organised together with our strategic partners in each country as well as our national media partner. Physical meetings will be enhanced by digital “civic media” solutions to increase the reach and accessibility of the activities.

The aim of our contribution to the conference is to shape the public discourse and move it away from a binary “yes/no” debate into an **idea factory** to bring about the future that we dream of.

REIMAGINE  
DEMOCRACY  
RIE

“Democracy lives  
in the minds of people”

MANUEL CASTELLS



# TASK FORCE ON DEMOCRACY IN A DIGITAL SOCIETY

The digital industry is riding an important—and turbulent—wave of change right now. As Facebook and others grapple with tough questions about data privacy and security practices, trust in social platforms appears to be plummeting. At the same time technological advances will continue to change the digital media environment and make it even more powerful than it is today. Whilst companies and analysts are scrambling to figure out how to make privacy rules clear, protect user data, and evolve the business models that made them successful in the first place there is a much deeper question about important ethical choices that will have to be made in the coming years.

This programme will look more at the communication and participation processes in a digital world fuelled by big data and AI. These will address challenges around issues of trust, truth and expertise; the changing media environment and how can we support a reliable and healthy digital space. Yet, mass online disinformation campaigns and profound changes in the way citizens access and engage with news is questioning the fundamental workings of our media environment.

## CHAIR

**Professor Manuel Castells**, Spanish Minister for Universities and Professor of Sociology

## STEERING COMMITTEE

**Magdalena ADAMOWICZ**, Member of the European Parliament

**Elisabeth ARDAILLON-POIRER**, Senior Policy Adviser of the European Political Strategy Centre of the European Commission

**Brando BENIFEI**, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of the European movement International

**Anthony GOOCH**, Director of Public Affairs & Communications at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

**Christophe LECLERCQ**, Founder of EURACTIV Media Network & Chairman of Fondation EURACTIV

**Joe LYNAM**, Disinformation Specialist at the EU Commission, former BBC Broadcaster

**Maria Grazia MATTEI**, Founder & President at MEET - Fondazione Cariplo

**Paula PETERS**, Vice President of Change.org

**Alain STROWEL**, Saint-Louis University (Brussels) and the UCLouvain (Belgium)

**Krzysztof SZUBERT**, Former Secretary of State / Deputy Minister of Digital Affairs, Poland. Visiting Fellow, University of Oxford, UK. Strategic Advisor of National Research Institute (NASK). Member of the Council of the National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR).

**REIMAGINE  
ECONOMY**  
**RIE**

“I will stand for tax fairness – whether for bricks-and-mortar or digital businesses.”

**URSULA VON DER LEYEN, PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**



# TASK FORCE ON AN IDEAL FISCAL SYSTEM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Proposals for different types of elements of an ideal fiscal system for the 21st century economy have flourished in recent years, both from academic and policy circles. It is clear that most of fiscal systems of European countries are not adapted to deal with the economic challenges of today as can be seen by the problems posed by the digital economy (GAFA and the European Digital Tax), fiscal fraud and tax evasion (Panama and Paradise Papers) and adapted to compete in a global economy (US threat of tariffs). In fact, our current systems were mostly build before the first World War when the economy looked very different.

This programme brings together the leading minds in Europe on this issue in order to develop a model for what an ideal fiscal structure might look like today, adapted to our current economy. Aware that most countries will need to reform their fiscal structures in order to deal with today's reality, RIE suggests in fact to use this opportunity to think creatively and innovatively on the issue and come-up with a solution that would be acceptable by most European countries.

## KEY ADVISORS

**Romina BOARINI**, Director of the OECD Centre on Well-being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunity (WISE)

**Maria ASSIMAKOPOULOU-SØRENSEN**, Senior Advisor on European economic policy, finance and taxation, Former Minister Counsellor at the Economic Department of the Greek Permanent Representation to the EU, Former Deputy

Member of the Boards of the EFSF and the ESM

**Elmar BROK**, President of the Union European Federalists, Former Member of the European Parliament

**Étienne DAVIGNON**, President of Friends of Europe and Former Vice-President of the European Commission

**José Luis ESCRIVÁ**, Minister of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration of Spain

**Caroline DE GRUYTER**, Journalist and Author

**Olivia GISCARD D'ESTAING**, Co-founder and Strategic Advisor of Re-Imagine Europe

**Roberto GUALTIERI**, Mayor of Rome, Former Minister of Economy and Finances of Italy and former Member of the European Parliament

**Angel GURRIÁ**, Former Secretary-General of the Organisation of Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD)

**Alain LAMASSOURE**, Former Member of the European Parliament, Former Chairman of the EP Committee on Budgetary Control and of the EP Committee on Budgets

**Allan LARSSON**, Former Special Adviser to the President of the European Commission for the European Pillar of Social Rights

**Geoff MULGAN**, Professor Of Collective Intelligence, Public Policy and Social Innovation at University College London

**Georgi PIRINSKI**, Former Chairman of The National Assembly of Bulgaria, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Former Member of The European Parliament

**Hans-Gert PÖTTERING**, Former Chairman of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Former President of the European Parliament

**Maria João RODRIGUES**, President of FEPS, Former MEP and Former Vice-President of S&D Group

**Luca VISENTINI**, General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

**REIMAGINE  
PLANET**  
**RIE**

“We need to change the way we reflect on future proofing regulation so that our laws keep up with our labs.”

**CARLOS MOEDAS, FORMER EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER  
FOR RESEARCH, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION**



# TASK FORCE ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND INNOVATION

With the Green Deal at the centre of European policy priorities, significant focus has been placed on rethinking our food systems, bearing in mind the inextricable links between healthy people, a healthy society and a healthy planet.

Re-Imagine Europa decided to launch a Task Force on Sustainable Agriculture and Innovation to create a forum for real dialogue between different viewpoints on the topic. In particular, the aim is to better understand the emotions and values behind different perspectives and to see if, with ambitious climate goals as a clear priority, it is possible to find positive pathways forward to ensure that Europe can develop a robust and resilient food system that can become a global standard for sustainability while protecting biodiversity and reducing land-use.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

**Anne CAMBON-THOMSEN**, Emeritus Research Director in CNRS and Member of the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE)

**Maria da Graça CARVALHO**, Member of the European Parliament (EPP - ITRE), former Minister of Science, Innovation and Higher Education

**Paolo DE CASTRO**, Member of the European Parliament (S&D - AGRI), former Minister of Agriculture of Italy

**Garlich von ESSEN**, Secretary General of Euroseeds

**Dirk INZÉ**, Full Professor at Ghent University and Scientific Director of the VIB, Department of Plant Systems Biology, member of KVAB

**Peter KEARNS**, Former Principal Administrator at the OECD

**Urs NIGGLI**, President of agroecology.science - Institute of Sustainable Food and Farming Systems

**Pekka PESONEN**, Secretary General of Copa-Cogeca

**Pere PUIGDOMENECH**, ALLEA Board Member - Institute of Catalan Studies and Royal Academy of Sciences and Arts

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Professor of Neuroscience, Professor  
of Psychology, Professor of  
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**Professor Maria João Rodrigues**  
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of the European Parliament and  
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# BOARD



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National Secretary of the Italian Democratic Party, Founder of 'Scuola di Politiche' in Italy and former Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA) at Sciences Po in Paris – Italy



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President of All European Academies (ALLEA) – Switzerland



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**Mr Claus Haugaard Sorensen**  
Senior Advisor on Resilience, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, European Commission – Denmark



**Dr Daria Tataj**  
Innovation Expert, Founder & CEO of Tataj Innovation – Poland



**Mr Georgi Pirinski**  
Former Chairman of the National Assembly of Bulgaria, former Deputy Prime Minister and former Member of the European Parliament – Bulgaria



**Ms Monica Maggioni**  
Journalist and Former Chairman of RAI – Italy

# RIE'S COMMUNITY

Re-Imagine Europa actively works with key thinkers and institutions with diverse backgrounds and expertise, to encourage new thinking and collective intelligence.

**5 STRATEGIC PARTNERS**

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**20 KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS**

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**OVER 100 COLLABORATING ORGANISATIONS**

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We strongly believe in the work done by so many think tanks, universities, research institutions, civil society organizations, companies, journalists and citizens passionate about improving life in Europe.

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**LET'S JOIN FORCES AND  
HELP BUILD A STRONGER  
AND FAIRER EUROPE!**



# THANK YOU

RIE is profoundly grateful to its partners for their support and cooperation. Together we *reimagine Europa*.

## STRATEGIC PARTNERS



## KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS



**REIMAGINE**  
**EUROPA**  
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