

REIMAGINE EUROPA

Building solutions together



«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. By aiming to develop and promote a shared and accepted vision of Europe that pragmatically answers to its citizens' fears and concerns, we want to rebuild the citizens' trust in the European project.

Evidence-informed: we imagine the future by placing trusted 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 that need to be put in place.

Inclusive: 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, cooperate and trust our 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.

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 gross 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 were 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, the pandemic and the outbreak of the Ukrainian conflict, 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 digital 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.

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 that citizens can rally behind, Europe is in real danger. A new vision of *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

Re-Imagine Europa aims to de-polarise issues of strategic importance to Europe and build inclusive and constructive visions for the future. 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**

For each of our three strategic areas, we build task forces by engaging experts from academia, think tanks, industry, NGOs, CSOs, and other stakeholders, to respond to key issues and develop inclusive, innovative and pragmatic solutions.

There are four active **Task Forces**:

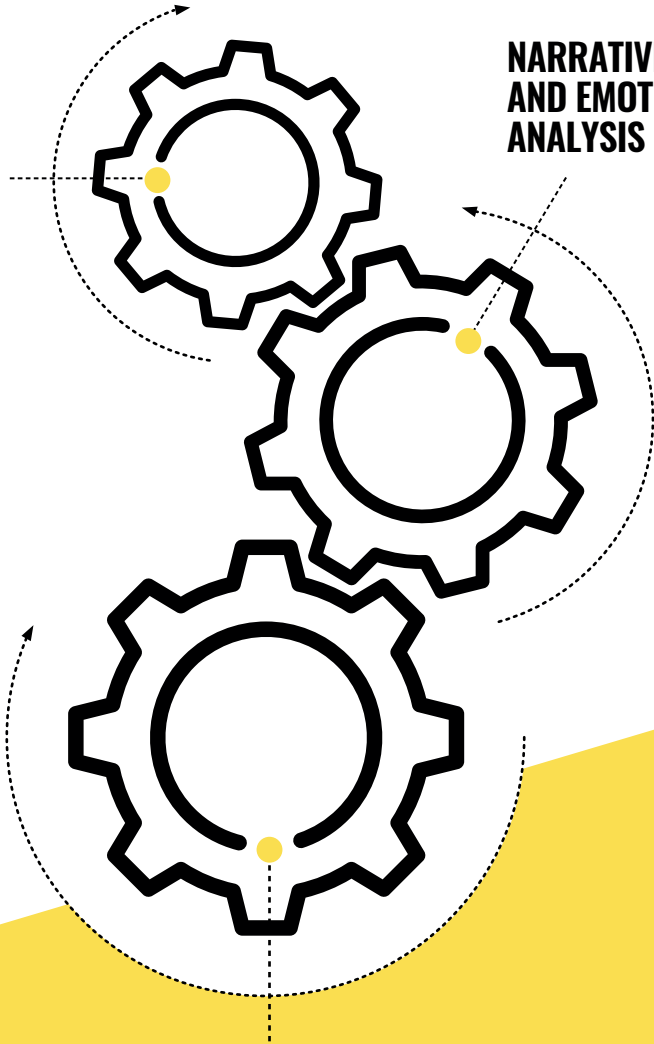
- **Future4Citizens** (RE-IMAGINE EUROPA)
- **Democracy in a Digital Society** (RE-IMAGINE DEMOCRACY)
- **An Ideal Fiscal System for the 21st Century** (RE-IMAGINE ECONOMY)
- **Sustainable Food Systems and Innovation** (RE-IMAGINE PLANET)

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 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. 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.

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. Shared stories foster shared identity and guide collective action. Similar stories can be woven together to form a broad narrative that usually represents an ongoing process. **Narratives are forms that our minds and cultures use to organise reality.**

Narratives are convenient as they render a complex issue more accessible. They do this by combining certain facts in a process known as ‘framing’, using structures familiar to us like purpose and intent. What is more, they contain implicit arguments that appeal to important human values as a motivation for action (or inaction) on a given issue.

The role of narratives in shaping people’s minds has become an important area of research and debate, especially 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.

Understanding narratives is thus the key to understand ourselves and others and to build shared solutions to our problems.

RIE’s Narrative Methodology generally involves:

- **Mapping** the various ways in which **contentious issues** are framed
- **Identifying common features** (structures, symbols, iconography, community) used to build broader narratives
- Deconstructing narratives along the axes of identity and structural frame to **determine the values** to which they appeal
- Determining **underlying concerns** shared across narratives
- **Reformulating issues** along more inclusive and evidence-informed lines

REIMAGINE
EUROPA
RIE



TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

The past decades have been marked by multiple crises that have significantly eroded the trust between citizens and institutions in Europe and beyond, giving rise to a *cycle of distrust*. This has led to increased polarisation and social fragmentation, exacerbated by the dynamics of today's media ecosystem, making it harder for constructive and inclusive debates.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing war on Europe's borders have further increased the stressors on society with increasing energy prices, inflation, and job insecurity; all issues that risk further fragmenting society ahead of the European elections in 2024.

It is time to recognise that the structures and systems we have in place since the 20th century need to be revamped to fit the challenges of today.

We must remember, however, 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 do we 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, former Spanish University Minister, Manuel Castells, former President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pötering, 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



FUTURE4CITIZENS

Listening to citizens is the starting point in the development of new ideas for the 21st century. We need to start a different and innovative reflection on how to support the development of a more sustainable and resilient society.

Future4Citizens (F4C) has been conceived as a European project which will harness Re-Imagine Europa's methodology to engage local communities in open debates about their future and how Europe can support that, reaching beyond Brussels and capital cities.

RIE Chief Narrative Scientist, Prof. Andrzej Nowak, and his team will analyse millions of media posts across the continent – both traditional media articles as well as social media posts – to map what Europeans are saying and feeling (narrative methodology). This will allow us to get a glimpse into what is really of concern to the public as well as the differences in priorities and focus on different parts of Europe.

The narrative analysis will be at the basis of the national *Citizen Dialogues*, a series of local events that RIE will organise across Europe, with the support of national strategic partners as well as media partners. Physical events will be also enhanced by digital “civic media” solutions to increase the reach and accessibility of the activities. Engaging people in meaningful and open conversations about their future is key to re-establish trust in our society.

The ultimate goal of the project is to depolarise the public discourse around the future of Europe, shifting it from a binary ‘yes/no’ debate into more solution-oriented conversations and shared new ideas ahead of the 2024 European elections.

This project will build and contribute to the ambitious European Commission funded project **ORBIS - Augmenting participation, co-creation, trust and transparency in Deliberative Democracy at all scales**. This initiative aims to ‘respond to the lack of dialogue between citizenship and policy making institutions by providing a theoretically sound and highly pragmatic socio-technical solution to enable the transition to a more inclusive, transparent and trustful Deliberative Democracy in Europe’.

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 the big digital corporations grapple with tough questions about data privacy and security practices, the citizens' 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 intrusive and overwhelming 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 direct its focus at the communication and participation processes in a digital world fuelled by big data and AI, by addressing challenges around issues of trust, truth and the changing media environment. Mass online disinformation campaigns and profound changes in the way citizens access and engage with news are damaging our democratic institutions. RIE will reinforce its work on this field with the launch of the first **Narratives Observatory to combat Disinformation in Europe Systemically (NODES)**, working together with key partners from across Europe.

CHAIR

Professor Manuel Castells, Sociologist and former Minister of University of the Spanish Government

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, former President of Spinelli Group and 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, Presenter at Newstalk. Presenter at Newsroom, BBC World Service

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

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 built 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 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

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)

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-Cert PÖTTERING, former Chairman of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Former President of the European Parliament

Maria João RODRIGUES, Chair of RIE's Advisory Board, President of FEPS, former Member of the European Parliament and Vice-President of S&D Group (2014-19)

**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 FOOD SYSTEMS AND INNOVATION

The relationship between food security and socio-political stability has been well documented and has become painstakingly clear since the beginning of 2022, representing one of the most important challenges of our time. The current polarization of the debate on food systems prevents the creation of effective solutions to the intricate issues we are currently dealing with.

Re-Imagine Europa decided to launch a Task Force on Sustainable Food Systems and Innovation to create a forum for real dialogue between different viewpoints on the topic. In particular, the aim is to develop a shared understanding of what is meant by sustainable food systems, including which values and goals should be prioritized; and to assess how innovations can support the transition to a European model for sustainable agriculture promoting social, environmental, and economic sustainability, going beyond the debate on NGTs (New Genomic Techniques).

STEERING COMMITTEE

Peter KEARNS, Director of RIE's Task Force on Sustainable Food Systems and Innovation; former Principal Administrator at the OECD

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

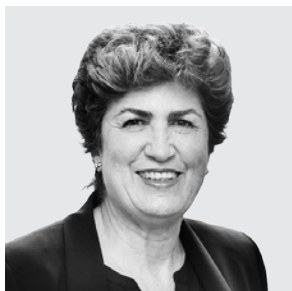
Urs NIGGLI, President of agroecology.science - Institute of Sustainable Food and Farming Systems

Pekka PESONEN, Secretary General of Copa-Cogeca

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

Nils TORVALDS, Member of the European Parliament (RENEW – ENVI)

ADVISORY



Professor Maria João Rodrigues, Chair of RIE's Advisory Board, President of FEPS, former Member of the European Parliament and Vice-President of S&D Group



Ms Magdalena Adamowicz, Member of the European Parliament



Mr Brando Benifei, Member of the European Parliament, former President of Spinelli Group and Vice President of the European Movement International



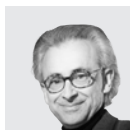
Dr Inge Brees, Director of Policy, Advocacy and External Affairs at The European Youth Forum



Mr Elmar Brok, former Member of the European Parliament and President of the European Federalists



Professor Manuel Castells, Sociologist and former Minister of University of the Spanish Government



Professor António Damásio, University Professor, David Dornsife Professor of Neuroscience, Professor of Psychology, Professor of Philosophy, and Director of the Brain and Creativity Institute at the University of Southern California.



Mr Étienne Davignon, President of Friends of Europe and former Vice-President of the European Commission



Professor Paolo De Castro, Member of the European Parliament, former Minister of Agriculture of Italy



Dr Isidro Fainé Casas, Chairman of Criteria Caixa



Ms Olivia Giscard d'Estaing, Re-Imagine Europa's Co-founder and Special Adviser



Ms Caroline de Gruyter, Journalist and Author



Mr Angel Gurría, former Secretary General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

BOARD



Mr Alain Lamassoure, former Member of the European Parliament



Mr Allan Larsson, former Special Advisor to the President of the European Commission for the European Pillar of Social Rights



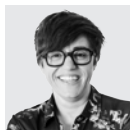
Mr Enrico Letta, former National Secretary of the Italian Democratic Party. Founder of 'Scuola di Politiche' in Italy and former Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs - Sciences Po



Professor Antonio Loprieno, President of All European Academies (ALLEA)



Ms Monica Maggioni, Journalist, Director of RAI's television newscast 'TGI' and former Chairman of RAI



Ms Irene Milleiro, Director of Ashoka Spain



Mr Carlos Moedas, Mayor of Lisbon, former European Commissioner Research, Science and Innovation



Dr Geoff Mulgan, Professor of Collective Intelligence, Public Policy and Social Innovation at University College London



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



Dr Hans-Gert Pöttering, former Chairman of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, former President of the European Parliament



Professor Dusan Sidjanski, Professor Emeritus - University of Geneva



Mr Claus Haugaard Sørensen, Senior Advisor on Resilience, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, European Commission



Dr Daria Tataj, Innovation Expert, Founder & CEO of Tataj Innovation



Mr Nils Torvalds, Member of the European Parliament and Vice-President of Renew Europe



Professor Boris Zala, Member of Slovak Parliament and former Member of the European Parliament

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

4 STRATEGIC PARTNERS

28 KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS

OVER 100 COLLABORATING ORGANISATIONS

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.

**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

Building solutions together

Rue du Congrès 1
1000 Brussels - Belgium

+32 (0)2 203 75 37

secretariat@re-imagine.eu

Numéro d'entreprise : 0680.783.711

Identification number in the EU
Transparency Register:
931656328552-33

MARCH 2023