

## CALL FOR EVIDENCE FOR AN INITIATIVE (without an impact assessment)

This document aims to inform the public and stakeholders about the Commission's work, so they can provide feedback and participate effectively in consultation activities.

We ask these groups to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions, and to give us any relevant information they may have.

<b>TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE</b>	2026 Strategic Foresight Report
<b>LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT</b>	Secretariat-General of the European Commission – Work Programme and Foresight
<b>LIKELY TYPE OF INITIATIVE</b>	Commission Communication
<b>INDICATIVE TIMING</b>	Q3-2026
<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>	<a href="https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategic-foresight_en">https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategic-foresight_en</a>

*This document is for information purposes only. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by this document, including its timing, are subject to change.*

### A. Political context, problem definition and subsidiarity check

#### Political context

Strategic foresight is a systematic and collaborative way of analysing a variety of possible futures and using these insights to inform policy decisions. It aims to help EU policymakers, businesses and societies create pathways towards preferable long-term futures by proposing actionable policy recommendations.

Strategic foresight is instrumental for strengthening the Commission's culture of evidence-informed anticipatory policymaking, as well as supporting the delivery of the Commission's strategic priorities and ensuring they are consistent with one another.

Building on the approach established under the 2019-2024 European Commission mandate, the annual strategic foresight reports under the 2024-2029 mandate continue to make use of foresight analysis to highlight strategic implications for EU policymaking. The 2026 Strategic Foresight Report will focus on the future of the EU in a changing world.

#### Problem the initiative aims to tackle

The EU is navigating a world which is rapidly breaking away from the contested multilateral rules-based order that developed post-WWII, and in which a return to the previous status quo is unlikely. It is marked by multiple uncertainties that have now come sharply into focus, quickly shifting power and alliances, weaponisation of dependencies and increasingly challenged EU norms and values – all against the background of other systemic challenges, from the triple planetary crisis (of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution) to EU-internal challenges.

This context creates the opportunity and the necessity for the EU to be much more strategic in shaping its global position in a changing world.

Against this background, the report will address the following guiding question: **How can the EU shape its long-term role in a rapidly changing and uncertain world?**

The Commission seeks evidence-informed input, particularly on the guiding question above as well on the following more specific questions:

**1) Which areas of leverage (especially those that are new or so far unexploited) could help the EU shape its long-term role in the world?**

'Leverage areas' are domains where the EU can translate its underlying sources of power and capacities into concrete influence on the global stage. They may concern a range of geopolitical dimensions (or a combination of them), such as: geography and the environment, military capabilities, the economy, technology, science and innovation, culture and identity, governance and politics, statecraft and diplomacy. While traditional leverage (for example, the economic power of the Single Market) remains essential, the ambition is to find novel approaches to exert influence and expand Europe's strategic room for manoeuvre.

**2) Which narratives about the European Union can help the EU shape its long-term global role?**

We know that narratives that have shaped global perceptions about the EU in recent decades, such as the EU as the standard-setting economic superpower, creating the 'Brussels effect', or the EU as a peace project, are now increasingly contested. As the global context evolves, both existing or emerging narratives will influence how the EU is seen and how it can frame its long-term role in the world.

**Basis for EU action (legal basis and subsidiarity check)**

In his mission letter, Commissioner Micallef was tasked by President von der Leyen to 'take forward the work on strategic foresight to identify trends and research and technology developments that will shape our economies and societies and have an impact on future generations', and to 'further strengthen the culture of anticipation and evidence-informed policymaking and ensure our work is future-oriented'.

The strategic foresight process will be participatory and cross-sectoral, involving policy experts from relevant Commission departments, Member States (notably through the EU-wide Foresight Network), the interinstitutional foresight network (the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System), and a range of stakeholders and civil society.

**Legal basis**

As a Commission Communication, the initiative will be non-legislative.

**Practical need for EU action**

Strategic foresight reports provide essential input for EU policies, as they highlight how short- and mid-term policy decisions could affect a variety of long-term future scenarios in the EU.

As the ability to respond to global challenges depends largely on policies developed at the EU level, there is clear added value in developing such a report at EU level.

**B. What does the initiative aim to achieve and how**

The 2026 Strategic Foresight Report aims to identify fresh, forward-looking areas of action to inform strategic thinking and present-day decision-making, and in this way help the EU shape its long-term role in a rapidly changing and uncertain world. To that end, the report will draw on the established foresight methods, the best available evidence and collective intelligence. It will be underpinned by a dedicated science-for-policy report developed by the Joint Research Centre.

**Likely impacts**

The report will inform future Commission work programmes and multiannual programming, as well as specific Commission initiatives under preparation.

It will also provide policy and decision-makers at various levels with foresight analysis and input on strategic decisions that need to be made to ensure that the EU remains resilient in all crucial areas in the decades to come.

<b>Future monitoring</b>
Future monitoring will involve keeping track of initiatives that have been informed by the report.
<b>C. Better regulation</b>
<b>Impact assessment</b>
The initiative is an annual report in the form of a communication. The report aims to inform EU policymaking but does not directly implement EU policies or lead to policy decisions by the Commission. It will therefore not have any direct economic, social or environmental impact. Given the nature and content of the report, an impact assessment is not necessary.
<b>Consultation strategy</b>
<p>In line with the Commission's inclusive foresight process, this call for evidence aims to collect insights from a broad range of analysts and stakeholders.</p> <p>Given the Commission's commitment to developing policies that are informed by the best available knowledge, this call for evidence targets the following in particular: national and regional policymakers, businesses, industrial actors, science-for-policy advisory bodies, think tanks, learned societies and scientific associations, academic organisations and researchers.</p> <p>These groups are invited to submit relevant published (and pre-published) scientific research, analyses and data, especially documents that synthesise the current state of knowledge in the relevant fields, including available foresight studies.</p>