

Report on the Youth Policy Dialogue with Maria Luís Albuquerque, European Commissioner for Financial Services and the Savings and Investments Union

The future of finance

Date: 4 March 2025

Location: European Commission, Brussels

Introduction

Maria Luís Albuquerque, Commissioner for Financial Services and the Savings and Investments Union, hosted a conversation on the future of finance with a group of 15 young Europeans on 4 March 2025. The exchange took place at the Commission headquarters in Brussels, providing a platform for the young participants to voice their ideas and concerns. It also gave Commissioner Albuquerque the opportunity to discuss the proposals and ideas presented by the participants in an immediate and face-to-face environment.

The topic of the dialogue, the future of finance, was selected to capture young participants' points of view on the changes they would like to see in financial services to better meet the needs of their generation. The event covered the three topical blocks of (1) saving, investing and financial literacy, (2) digital finance and innovation, and (3) sustainable finance.

The participants, who came from across the EU, were the winners of a video competition in which entrants had submitted 1-minute videos of themselves describing their vision for the future of finance in the EU. The final selection was gender balanced, geographically balanced and included individuals with varying levels of expertise in finance, ranging from professionals in the field to those with limited prior experience.

Summary of the online preparatory meeting

In the week prior to the event, participants took part in a 60-minute preparatory call with the event organisers and moderator. During the virtual meeting, they received information on the planned structure and topics of the event. They were also briefed on the logistics for the day.

Summary of the dialogue and topics of discussion

The dialogue lasted for two hours and was moderated by Aidas Palubinskas, Press and Media Officer at DG FISMA. Commissioner Albuquerque opened the discussion by welcoming the participants and emphasising the importance of listening to the younger generation to effectively address the challenges facing Europe today.

The first block of the discussion focused on saving, investing, and financial literacy. Participants highlighted the need to bring more Europeans, particularly young ones, into capital markets. Several proposed the creation of simple, digitally available EU-wide investment products to make capital markets more

accessible and suggested to improve the Pan-European Personal Pension Product (PEPP). Many of the participants highlighted the importance of enhancing financial literacy from an early age. One participant proposed leveraging digital tools such as gamification or collaboration with financial influencers to address this, while another suggested launching an EU initiative to equip teachers with better resources for financial education in schools.

In the second block on digital finance and innovation, participants emphasised that digital technologies in financial services should primarily serve the interests of users. For example, one participant suggested the creation of an EU-wide aggregator of finance applications, allowing users to view all accounts and providers in one place. Another proposed fostering the use of asset tokenisation to make financial products more accessible to retail consumers.

The final block of the discussion focused on sustainable finance. Participants called upon the Commissioner to remain ambitious in channelling funds into the green transition. One participant called for a clear and well-defined categorisation of green financial products, aligned with the EU Taxonomy, to enhance transparency and prevent greenwashing. Addressing social considerations, another participant proposed designing sustainable finance policies that direct funds toward tackling youth employment.

Following the dialogue, the participants had lunch at the canteen of the Commission headquarters. In the afternoon, they met with young staff members of DG FISMA for an informal exchange on the topics covered during the dialogue. After that, they visited the European Parliament and, to conclude the day, gathered with the event moderator for a round of feedback.

Follow-up debate on the Citizens' Engagement Platform

Idea 1

Create a simple and digital pan-European savings products

Several participants expressed a need to increase the participation of Europeans, in particular young ones, in capital markets. To achieve this, they proposed the creation of a pan-European savings product, which would make investing in EU capital markets simpler and more accessible.

Idea 2

Use digital tools and influencers to boost financial literacy

Body: Several participants noted a lack of financial education in European, including for the young generations. In order to teach young people financial literacy skills more effectively, one participant proposed to use digital technologies such as gamification and collaborations with financial influencers.

Idea 3

Create an EU-wide finance app aggregator

Participants noted that many young people today use a large number of finance apps, which all cover different services. To streamline this and offer a better service to users, one participant suggested to create an EU-wide finance app aggregator, allowing users to see all accounts in one place and make transfers with other people, including a budgeting function and information on investing.

Follow-up Activities

In her closing remarks, Commissioner Albuquerque thanked the participants for sharing their perspectives, concerns and expectations. She concluded by emphasising her commitment to take the input into account, affirming that her team would start reviewing the suggestions more closely to assess how they could be integrated into ongoing and future initiatives.

Moreover, DG FISMA has been sharing a summary of the participants' ideas both internally and externally.

Annex

Photos from the event: <https://audiovisual.ec.europa.eu/en/reportage/P-065720>

Video from the event: <https://audiovisual.ec.europa.eu/en/video/I-268087>