

## **Long-term vision, short-term goals: the Council of State unveils the results of the Geneva 2050 consultation**

From the start of its term of office in 2018, the Council of State decided to take an innovative approach, looking to the future at long-term timescales in order to better understand them, given how challenging it can be to control these factors with the changes in our society. This decision was shared in its speech at Saint-Pierre Cathedral, and was included in the Council of State Programme (<https://www.ge.ch/document/programme-legislature-2018-2023-du-conseil-etat>).

Unprecedented in terms of its time span and interdisciplinary nature, and still in its infancy in Switzerland, this forward-looking approach raises hopes for a number of major changes. By partnering with and consulting both the population and the region's established partners, the Council of State wished to bring an innovative, interdisciplinary vision to support the region's development.

Urban development planning for the canton of Geneva is mainly carried out through the canton's general development plan, which currently extends to 2030. Considerations around the development of transport infrastructures (which are set by the Confederation) go well beyond 2040, however. This is why the Council of State wished to re-examine planning methods, in order to include the needs of the Canton in future sector-specific federal plans and therefore have the means necessary to respond to challenges arising from the growth of Geneva between now and 2050. This is what the Confederation expects for each canton, with the hope of making long-term projections.

### **A collective vision for the Geneva of tomorrow**

Today, the Council of State presents the results of the forward-looking Geneva 2050 consultation. Of approximately 5,000 people who took part in the Geneva 2050 online consultation, the majority (85%) are satisfied with life in Geneva. Four points were identified for improvement in terms of quality of life: air and water quality (69% and 57% respectively), green spaces (61%), architecture and town planning (58%), and stress and noise levels (55% and 57%). In addition, the many additional comments highlight residents' concerns and expectations regarding the Canton's development.

In spring 2019, more than 700 people and 70 experts debated the challenges related to the Canton's development through 15 workshops. In the summer of the same year, nearly 5,000 Genevans expressed their opinions in an online survey. In October 2019, more than 1,000 students aged 10 to 18 years old also took part in this consultation as part of the "One Month, One Right" programme.

Rich in terms of its content and the proposals made, the consultation revealed some striking figures: 75% of respondents are willing to do more to fight climate change; 87% would cycle more if secure facilities were available; 75% think their work will evolve with digital technology; 95% think that everyone should receive training throughout their lives; and nearly 85% think that Geneva should adapt to remain at the forefront of technological developments.

Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic struck our country and shook up our society. In these circumstances, the themes of the Geneva 2050 consultation have become even more relevant and urgent. In the online survey, participants frequently referred to major changes in behaviour that will need to be adopted: schooling, working remotely, reduced travel, etc.

Like the rest of the world, our canton is being confronted by major challenges, which require precise and, above all, immediate answers. Whether the issue is global warming, transport, housing or even social and regional equality, a collective response is needed.

### **Striking up a dialogue and finding innovative solutions**

The State feels encouraged to shape the public policies of tomorrow by better involving the main stakeholders and beneficiaries. The results of the consultation are also a useful foundation for sector-specific planning in the canton to meet the expectations of the Confederation in terms of urban planning and transport. The Council of State wishes to continue strategic monitoring for all public policies, develop partnerships with similar initiatives particularly at the Swiss and cross-border level, and engage in a dialogue on the Canton's forward-looking approach with stakeholders in the region and in international Geneva.

In the short term, the results of Geneva 2050 will support the Canton in its response to the Confederation's expectations in terms of the 2050 sector plan consultation on "transport and the region". This determines the long-term development of the overall transport system in Switzerland, coordinating it with regional urban planning and environmental protection plans.

Led by the Council of State, this process is steered by State Councillors Antonio Hodgers, head of the department for the region, and Serge Dal Busco, head of the department for infrastructure.

Find the full version at [GE2050.CH](http://GE2050.CH).

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