



Informal video conference of development ministers 14 June 2021

The informal video conference of foreign ministers on development will be chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, **Josep Borrell**, starting at **9.00**. The European Commission will be represented by Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen.

Ministers will discuss **the EU cooperation with middle-income countries - *development in transition***, and will exchange views on the topic of **human development, including global health and vaccines**.

[Informal video conference of development ministers: meeting page](#)

[Video coverage of the event in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

[Press conferences and public events via video streaming](#)

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the Council press office.

Cooperation with middle income countries - Development in Transition

EU foreign ministers will have the opportunity to discuss new ways for the EU to engage and **further develop its relationship** with middle-income countries (MICs), **based on common interests** and on a Team Europe approach.

The **COVID-19** pandemic has exacerbated the socioeconomic challenges in many of these partner countries, stressing the need to prevent additional setbacks and **promote an inclusive and sustainable recovery**. Many of these countries are still struggling with poverty, high levels of inequality, macroeconomic instability, economic distress and public debt issues. Their transition to higher development status remains challenging.

Ministers will be asked in particular to elaborate on how the EU and member states can strengthen the partnerships with MICs to address global challenges, support a renewed rules-based multilateralism, as well as EU's interests and values.

Ministers will also share their views on what such an approach implies for the EU's joint objectives to promote a green and inclusive recovery in MICs, supporting their access to sustainable finance and leaving no one behind.

The ministerial discussion will take place in the context of the launch of the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) - Global Europe for the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework.

- [NDICI-Global Europe: final green light for the new financial instrument to support the EU's external action, press release 9 June 2021](#)
- [Council Conclusions on Team Europe 23 April 2021](#)
- [The EU's development cooperation initiatives](#)

Human development

High Representative Borrell will invite foreign ministers to exchange views on the EU's international human development initiatives with a focus on **global health and vaccine action, as well as education** and youth during the **post-pandemic recovery**.

The current COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated inequalities and underscored the importance to reinvigorate investments in human development. For an effective recovery, the EU is willing to step up its **support to health and education** and empower women and youth as key agents for change, development and innovation.

On **vaccines**, the EU and its member states have made great contributions to international solidarity, including as one of the biggest donors to COVAX. Following up on the recent summits, ministers will discuss how to enhance the EU's collective support to national health systems in partner countries and the EU's coordinated positioning in global funds and programmes. Ministers will be asked in particular to elaborate on how the EU and its member states can work together in a Team Europe approach to **strengthen education systems in partner countries** to promote quality education and enhance learning outcomes for all, including skills for jobs. Specific emphasis will be put on the **role of youth in external action** and its link to a successful COVID-recovery.

On **health**, ministers will be asked how the EU and its member states can better support COVAX and vaccine rollout and ensure greater equity in the access to vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics globally. Guidance is expected from ministers on how they intend to support the Team Europe Initiative on Manufacturing and Access to Vaccines, Medicines and Health Technologies in Africa, and how they plan to reinvigorate investments in health systems strengthening in partner countries.

In line with the **European Consensus on Development** and EU's support for multilateral development efforts, the EU is committed to supporting social inclusion and human development efforts by designating **20%** of its **Official Development Assistance** for such projects and initiatives.

- [European Consensus on Development](#)
- [EU support for Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- [The EU's international solidarity during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

Other issues

On the same day of the video conference, the **Council** (meeting in its Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council configuration) is due to adopt **conclusions** on **middle-income countries**, **human development**, the **annual report 2021** to the European Council on **EU development aid targets**, and on the **European financial architecture for development**.
