



General Affairs Council **Luxembourg, 22 June 2021**

Chair: Ana Paula Zacarias, Portuguese Secretary of State for European Affairs

The **meeting** will **start** at 09.00.

The Council will prepare for the European Council meeting on 24-25 June 2021. Ministers will also exchange views on the Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process. The presidency will provide an update about the Conference on the Future of Europe. The Council will hold hearings on the rule of law in Poland and on the values of the Union in Hungary (Article 7 (1) TEU procedure). Under any other business, the Council will be informed about EU-Switzerland relations.

A presidency **press conference** will be held at around **16:30**.

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[General Affairs Council, 22 June 2021 meeting page](#)

[Press conference by video streaming](#)

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

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

European Council on 24-25 June 2021

EU leaders will meet in Brussels to discuss COVID-19, economic recovery, migration and external relations, including relations with Turkey and Russia.

The European Council will take stock of the epidemiological and vaccinations situation and pursue coordination efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with the February 2021 statement of the members of the European Council, the Commission is expected to report on the lessons learned from the pandemic so far.

EU leaders will review the state of play of the implementation of Next Generation EU.

They are expected to discuss the recommendation on the economic policy of the euro area.

The European Council will address the external dimension of migration.

In line with the statement of the members of the European Council of 25 March 2021, leaders will resume discussions on relations with Turkey.

In line with its conclusions of 24-25 May 2021, the European Council will resume discussions on relations with Russia, on the basis of a joint communication, published on 16 June 2021, by the High Representative and the Commission.

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[Statement of the members of the European Council on COVID-19 and health, 25 February 2021](#)

[COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic: the EU's response \(background information\)](#)

[Infographic - Next Generation EU – COVID-19 recovery package](#)

[A recovery plan for Europe \(background information\)](#)

[EU migration policy \(background information\)](#)

[Statement of the members of the European Council, 25 March 2021](#)

[European Council conclusions on Russia, UK, Middle East and Mali, 24 May 2021](#)

[Joint communication on EU-Russia relations](#)

Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process

The Presidency will provide information on progress attained this semester, and the Council will have an exchange of views on all files related to the Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association process.

In particular, the Council is expected to discuss the recent political agreement with the European Parliament on the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III). IPA III is set to have a total budget of over €14 billion for the period 2021-2027. The political agreement still requires the final approval of the Council.

On 6 May, the Council agreed on the application of the revised enlargement methodology to the accession negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro. This paved the way for the holding of the first "political" Intergovernmental Conferences, which will take place in the margins of the Council meeting.

The Council will also have an exchange of views on the accession negotiations with the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Albania.

[Enlargement: new enlargement methodology will be applied to Montenegro and Serbia](#)

[EU reaches provisional agreement on pre-accession financial assistance](#)

[Serbia: EU enlargement negotiations](#)

[Montenegro: EU enlargement negotiations](#)

Conference on the Future of Europe

The Presidency will inform ministers of the outcome of the Lisbon European citizens' event on 17 June and of the Conference's first plenary on 19 June.

The Conference on the Future of Europe is aimed at involving citizens in a wide-ranging debate on Europe's future over the coming decade and beyond, including in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On 10 March the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission signed a joint declaration that sets out the objectives, structure, scope and timing of the Conference.

The Conference on the Future of Europe was formally inaugurated on 9 May in Strasbourg, following the launch of the Conference's digital platform on 19 April. A number of ideas and events have already been posted on the platform.

[Conference on the Future of Europe: launch of the citizens' platform on 19 April](#)

[The Conference on the Future of Europe gets green light from the Council](#)

[Joint declaration](#)

[Conference on the Future of Europe - revised Council position \(3 February 2021\)](#)

[Conference on the Future of Europe - Council position \(24 June 2020\)](#)

Rule of law in Poland

The Council will hold a hearing on the rule of law in Poland (Article 7 (1) TEU procedure). The substantive scope of the hearing will be the reasoned proposal of the European Commission that triggered it.

After triggering the Article 7(1) TEU procedure on 20 December 2017, on 27 February 2018 the Commission presented its reasoned proposal to the Council and debriefed it on the state of play. Regular debriefings followed in March, April and May 2018. Hearings of Poland were held at the General Affairs Council on 26 June, 18 September and 11 December 2018.

On 22 September 2020, the state of play was discussed at the GAC.

[Reasoned proposal \(16007/17\) triggering the procedure of Article 7\(1\) TEU for Poland.](#)

[Standard modalities for hearings referred to in Article 7\(1\) TEU](#)

Values of the Union in Hungary

The Council will hold a hearing on the rule of law in Hungary (Article 7 (1) TEU procedure). The substantive scope of the hearing will be the reasoned proposal of the European Parliament that triggered it. On 16 September 2019, a first hearing of Hungary was held. It had a general scope and covered all the issues raised in the European Parliament's reasoned proposal.

On 10 December 2019, a second hearing of Hungary was held, covering specific topics (freedom of expression - including media pluralism -, academic freedom and the independence of the judiciary).

On 22 September 2020, the state of play was discussed at the GAC.

[Reasoned proposal of the European Parliament \(12266/1/18\) triggering the procedure of Article 7\(1\) TEU for Hungary](#)

[Standard modalities for hearings referred to in Article 7\(1\) TEU](#)

Any Other Business

Under any other business, the Council will be informed about EU-Switzerland relations.