

## **Forward look: 15 – 28 March 2021**



The location and the format (physical or virtual) indicated for each meeting are subject to change.

### **Informal video conference of employment and social policy ministers, 15 March 2021**

Ministers will hold debates on the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, equality in the EU, and policies in the context of Recovery and Resilience Plans.

### **Informal video conference of foreign affairs and home affairs ministers, 15 March 2021**

Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs Ministers will discuss the external dimension of the EU's migration policy.

### **Informal video conference of economic and finance ministers, 16 March 2021**

Ministers will discuss the state of play on digital taxation and issues related to economic recovery in Europe. They will also focus on the conclusions on the retail payments strategy and international meetings.

### **Informal video conference of health ministers, 16 March 2021**

Ministers will discuss the way ahead in relation to COVID-19 and Europe's beating cancer plan.

### **Informal video conference of environment ministers, 18 March 2021**

Ministers will exchange views on the role of the Recovery and Resilience Facility in the context of Greening the European Semester. Ministers will also hold a policy debate on batteries and waste batteries and an exchange of views on the Strategy on adaptation to climate change.

### **Agriculture and Fisheries Council, Monday 22 – Tuesday 23 March**

Ministers discuss the state of play in the negotiations of the CAP reform package and the EU-UK fishing opportunities for 2021 and, for deep-sea stocks

for 2021 and 2022.

## **Foreign Affairs Council, Monday 22 March**

EU ministers of foreign affairs will be briefed about current affairs and exchange views on the Southern neighbourhood and Turkey.

## **General Affairs Council, Tuesday 23 March**

European Council, European Semester and the Conference on the Future of Europe will be on the agenda of the General Affairs Council.

## **European Council, Thursday 25 – Friday 26 March**

EU leaders meet in Brussels to discuss the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and relations with Russia among other issues.

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## **Council reaffirms commitment to combat discrimination against Roma**



Today the Council adopted a recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation, stepping up the member states' commitment to effectively fight discrimination against Roma people and to promote their inclusion in the key areas of education, employment, health and housing. The Recommendation also reflects the needs of specific groups and the diversity of the Roma population. It replaces the December 2013 Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures and has an expanded scope, including measures to:

- fight online and offline discrimination (including harassment, antigypsyism, stereotyping, anti-Roma rhetoric and hate speech)
- combat multiple and structural discrimination against Roma, in particular women, children, LGBTI persons and persons with disabilities
- promote multi-cultural awareness-raising activities and campaigns in schools.

The recommendation highlights the importance of the equal participation of Roma in society and of their role in policy-making. It outlines a comprehensive list of suggested measures in key areas ranging from access to education, the labour market and health to promoting active participation in civil society and partnerships. It also seeks to improve target setting, data collection, monitoring and reporting and to make mainstream policies more sensitive to Roma equality and inclusion. Moreover, the Recommendation highlights the importance of the gender perspective.

According to the recommendation, member states should adopt national Roma strategic frameworks within their broader social inclusion policies improving the situation of Roma, and communicate them to the European Commission, preferably by September 2021. Member states are also encouraged to include and promote rights of and equal opportunities for Roma in their national Recovery and Resilience plans.

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## [Weekly schedule of President Charles Michel](#)



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## [A new era in anti-counterfeiting technology](#)

March 12, 2021 [About the EUIPO](#)

A new era in anti-counterfeiting technology



A lot has happened since the 2018 EU Blockathon, which initiated the Anti-counterfeiting Blockathon Forum – the ecosystem of a motivated, innovative community dedicated to solving the global phenomenon of fakes with the help of technology. Based on the shared knowledge and expertise gained from these years, the EUIPO has decided to engage further to provide quality services for rights holders and public authorities with the aim of supporting innovation and entrepreneurship.

In this context, the EUIPO has approved (as part of its plan for the next five years) a dedicated strategic project to build a scalable, decentralised, blockchain authentication platform. This would interconnect products' 'track and trace' solutions with the risk analysis systems of enforcement authorities and existing EUIPO tools.

Over the past few months we have been preparing a comprehensive plan to design and implement such an authentication platform, which will start in spring 2021 with the launch of a design competition aimed at selecting the best proposals for a high-level architectural design for the future infrastructure.

We hope you will continue with us on this promising journey and encourage you to stay tuned for more details coming soon. In the meantime, please make sure to [check out the new website dedicated to this project](#).

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## [Media advisory and Background brief –](#)

# Informal video conference of health ministers of 16 March 2021



## **Indicative programme**

Chair:

**Marta Temido**, Minister of Health of Portugal

### **10.00 – 12.30 Morning session**

**Europe's beating cancer plan** – *Presentation by the Commission and Exchange of views* ([public session](#))

### **14.00 – 17.00 Afternoon session**

**COVID-19 – the way ahead** – *Exchange of views*

#### **Any other business:**

European Health Union Package – *Information from the presidency* ([public session](#))

Regulation on Health Technology Assessment (HTA) – *Information from the presidency* ([public session](#))

**At the end of the meeting (+/-18.00) press conference in [live streaming](#).**

## **Arrangements for the press conference**

Please note that the press conference after the meeting will take place remotely. In order to participate and ask questions, EU accredited journalists should register using [this link](#).

Journalists who already registered for previous press conferences of health ministers do not need to do it again.

- **Deadline for the registration: Tuesday 16 March, 16.30**

Further instructions will be sent to all registered participants after the deadline.

[Videos and photos from the event](#)

[Background brief](#)

[Visit the meeting page](#)