

Middle-income countries: Council affirms the EU's commitment to establishing tailored partnerships



The Council today approved conclusions affirming the EU's commitment to **engaging in policy dialogue and international partnerships** with middle-income countries, in line with the new **European Consensus on Development**. Further engagement with middle-income countries should be done through the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI – Global Europe).

The conclusions emphasise the role of middle-income countries as **key partners** in the achievement of the **2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), and of the objectives of the **Paris Agreement**. The Council also recognises the strategic importance of these countries in the current geopolitical context, and their role in supporting the EU in promoting its interests and priorities, as well as its multilateral agenda.

The Council calls on the EU to address the specific challenges faced by middle-income countries while taking into account their diverse character and wide geographic scope. This should be done in the context of **partnerships tailored to country-specific situations and regional dynamics**, where a Team Europe approach should be used to engage with actors from the private sector and civil society representatives, in order to ensure ownership and alignment.

The Council notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on developing countries, eroding developing gains and negatively affecting human development. More should be done to prevent further setbacks and promote a sustainable and inclusive recovery in line with a '**build back better and greener**' approach.

At the same time, the EU should support a **transition to newer, more sustainable forms of development financing and cooperation** for least developed countries (LDCs) whose income is rising to lower-middle income.

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