

Remarks by President Charles Michel after his meeting with German Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz



Good evening, everyone. First of all I would like to congratulate you, dear Chancellor, on your election. I would like to welcome you to Brussels. Your visit here today sends a very strong signal. I would like to express my gratitude for your very strong pro-European commitment and engagement.

We had the opportunity today to discuss several topics on the agenda of the European Council next week and over the coming months.

First, we are convinced that the rule of law and our fundamental democratic principles are at the core of the European project, and it is very important to fight to promote our fundamental values and principles.

Second, prosperity and the twin transitions, climate change and the digital revolution, are important common challenges. We need to cooperate and coordinate to address those challenges and make them opportunities for more growth, more economic development, more innovation and more jobs, everywhere in Europe.

Finally, on security and stability, we understand very well that there are very serious challenges. That is why it is important to be engaged, and not only in Europe's neighbourhood: it is important to develop an ambitious international agenda. On a regular basis, we have the opportunity at the level of the European Council to exchange views and to develop what I call the 'collective intelligence' of the European Council and of the European Union. We work together to identify our common goals and the tools we are ready to use to promote our values and defend our interests and the interests of our citizens everywhere in Europe.

Again, dear Chancellor, it is a pleasure to welcome you, and we will have occasion to meet again very soon in Brussels, for the Eastern Partnership summit on Wednesday – it will send a very strong message. We will also meet for the European Council meeting on Thursday, with many important topics on the agenda.

Forward look: 13 – 26 December 2021



Agriculture and Fisheries Council, Sunday 12 and Monday 13 December 2021

Agriculture and fisheries ministers will gather in Brussels to agree on fishing opportunities for 2022 in EU and non-EU waters, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The Council will also seek to adopt conclusions on the new contingency plan for food security, and a policy debate will take place on unfair trading practices in the food supply chain.

Under other business, delegations will discuss topics including the fisheries control regulation, the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, and the proposed regulation on deforestation-free products.

Foreign Affairs Council, Monday 13 December 2021

The Foreign Affairs Council will exchange views on EU-Africa relations, Central Asia and Venezuela, and be informed about current affairs. It is also due to adopt conclusions on the Civil CSDP Compact.

General Affairs Council, Tuesday 14 December 2021

Enlargement, European Council preparations and Rule of Law will be on the agenda of the General Affairs Council on 14 December.

Eastern Partnership Summit, Wednesday 15 December 2021

The leaders of the EU, EU member states and of the Eastern Partners countries will meet for the sixth Eastern Partnership summit in Brussels. The summit will focus on support to five key areas – economy, governance, the environment, digital and society.

European Council, Thursday 16 December 2021

EU leaders will meet in Brussels to discuss developments related to COVID-19, crisis management and resilience, energy prices, security and defence, migration and the situation in Belarus.

Environment Council, Monday 20 December 2021

EU environment ministers will hold a policy debate on the progress reached on the proposals of the Fit for 55 package that fall under the remit of the Environment Council and on the proposal for a regulation concerning batteries and waste batteries.

Media advisory – Foreign Affairs Council of 13 December 2021



Indicative programme

All times are approximate and subject to change

from 08.30

Arrivals ([live streaming](#))

+/- 09.00

Doorstep by High Representative Josep Borrell

+/- 09.30

Beginning of the Foreign Affairs Council

- Adoption of the agenda
- Approval of “A” items
 - Non-legislative list
- Current Affairs
- EU-Africa
- Central Asia
- Venezuela
- Any other business

At the end of the meeting (+/- 17.30) – Press conference in [live streaming](#).

Arrangements for the press conference

The press conference will take place in a hybrid format: EU accredited journalists will be able to participate and ask questions either remotely or [in person at the Justus Lipsius press room](#).

If you haven't registered for previous Foreign Affairs Council press events, please use [this link](#) to do so and have the possibility to ask questions remotely.

- **Deadline for registration: Monday, 13 December 2021, 16.30**

Further instructions will be sent to all registered participants shortly

after the deadline.

[Videos and photos from the event](#)

[Visit the meeting page](#)

[ESMA publishes 2021 ESEF XBRL taxonomy files and ESEF conformance suite](#)

ESMA aims to facilitate the implementation of the European Single Electronic Format (ESEF) by providing to XBRL taxonomy files and Conformance Suite test files that reflect the requirements contained in the 2021 [draft update](#) to the ESEF Regulation and the 2021 [update](#) to the ESEF Reporting Manual.

The 2021 draft update to the ESEF regulation was submitted by ESMA in May 2021, it was [adopted](#) by the European Commission on 29 November 2021 and it is currently subject to the scrutiny of the European Parliament and Council. In the absence of any objections by the co-legislators, the 2021 update to the ESEF regulation should enter into force approximately by the beginning of March 2022.

The 2021 ESEF taxonomy is based on the 2021 [IFRS Taxonomy](#), prepared and updated annually by the IFRS Foundation. The IFRS Foundation also publishes a [versioning document](#) explaining the changes compared to the previous taxonomy. The taxonomy package includes labels in all EU languages.

The ESEF Regulation requires that all issuers with securities listed on an EU regulated market prepare their annual financial reports in xHTML and mark-up the IFRS consolidated financial statements contained therein using XBRL tags and the iXBRL technology.

The 2021 ESEF taxonomy files and the updated conformance suite may be used by issuers to fulfil the ESEF obligations for their annual financial reports concerning financial years beginning on or after 1 January 2021 only after the entry into force of the 2021 update to the ESEF Regulation. Issuers may in any case continue to use the 2020 ESEF taxonomy files and conformance suite for their annual financial reports concerning financial years beginning on or after 1 January 2021.

Further information:

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[ECDC launches the report 'Countering online vaccine misinformation in the EU/EEA'](#)

The report explores the evidence base for how to counter online vaccine misinformation in the EU/EEA, current strategies used by public health authorities in a selection of EU countries, and training needs on this topic.

“Vaccine misinformation poses risks to national vaccination efforts as it can lead to increased vaccine hesitancy which, in turn, reduces vaccination uptake. Addressing the root causes for the spread of misinformation needs new approaches aimed at enhancing the public’s critical assessment, and these should involve a wide variety of actors, including (social) scientists, and communications experts”, says Mike Catchpole, ECDC Chief Scientist.

Vaccine hesitancy has been recognised as a major global health problem: in December 2018, the European Council called for stronger European cooperation against the risks posed by vaccine misinformation; and in 2019, WHO put vaccine hesitancy on their top 10 list of global health threats.

The current pandemic offers a unique insight into how rapidly vaccine misinformation can spread and why it is necessary to counter it quickly and effectively. Timely actions are needed to address emerging and evolving narratives that can adversely affect the prevention and control of COVID-19 and hamper efforts to achieve high vaccination coverage.

Research for the study included a literature review, interviews with representatives of national public health authorities from six EU Member States (Estonia, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, and Romania) and several pan-European and international organisations involved in countering vaccine misinformation, as well as a social media analysis in the six participating countries.

The study identifies several key actions for public health experts in Member States to take to counter online vaccine misinformation:

1. Monitoring of misinformation on social media;
2. Pre-emptive interventions aimed at promoting people’s digital, health and science literacy;
3. Correcting misinformation through debunking techniques;

4. Evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions aimed at countering online vaccine misinformation.

The study showed that existing practices for addressing online vaccine misinformation vary across Europe, and it also identified both the need and potential for expanding monitoring and evaluation of interventions being conducted in this area. It also indicates that consideration should be given to ensuring that sufficient resources are devoted to supporting national public health authorities in these efforts.

To support public health authorities, ECDC will also develop a training package on addressing online vaccine misinformation for public health and communication professionals in the EU/EEA Member States.