

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

## Main results

Foreign affairs and home affairs ministers jointly held a debate via videoconference on the **external aspects of the EU's migration policy**, under the new pact on migration and asylum.

The meeting was co-chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, **Josep Borrell**, and the Portuguese Minister for Home Affairs, **Eduardo Cabrita**.

Any successful EU migration policy requires close cooperation with our third country partners and our message today is clear: now is the time to act! Is time for concrete results. We will work together to build migration partnerships which are better tailored to take account of our partners' priorities and which are more seamlessly integrated into our wider relations.

Eduardo Cabrita, Portuguese Minister for Home Affairs

The EU needs and wants to ensure that migration, in all its aspects becomes an important element of our overall relations with third countries. Regular, well-managed and safe migration can be an additional tool at the service of the EU external policy and an asset to our and partners' economies.

Josep Borrell, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

During the debate ministers focused in particular on **migration as an important element in relations with key third countries**. They discussed how to best develop and further enhance cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination in a comprehensive and mutually beneficial manner.

Ministers highlighted that pursuing a balanced approach, which takes into consideration all relevant aspects of migration policy, is key. They also reiterated the need to mobilise all relevant policies and tools at the EU's disposal to support these comprehensive, balanced and mutually beneficial partnerships, including development cooperation, visa, trade and investments, employment and education. More coherent, strategic, flexible and focused EU funding will also be essential.

New policy approaches, such as the post-Cotonou EU-ACP partnership and the recent Commission agenda for the Southern Neighbourhood should be further developed.

The discussion also focused on how to **improve coordination and cooperation within the EU** to achieve migration objectives. Ministers elaborated in particular on how EU and member states tools and resources, including financial resources, could reinforce each other to tackle common challenges linked to irregular migration and forced displacement, while also looking at the opportunities that well-managed migration can offer.

As a general conclusion of the works carried out today, there was a clear focus on the importance of convening, on a more regular manner, meetings such as the one organized by the Portuguese Presidency of the Council, between Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs. Guaranteeing a very pragmatic approach to the initiatives to be built, from now onwards, with the partner countries, was also underlined by most of the delegations. There was a clear call for roadmaps to be prepared, with concrete timetables and with set out objectives in order to reach these mutually beneficial partnerships.

Under any other business, the presidency presented elements of a proposal for a **comprehensive dialogue on justice and home affairs with partner countries in North Africa**.

- [New pact on migration and asylum \(European Commission\)](#)
- [EU migration policy \(background information\)](#)
- [EU asylum reform \(background information\)](#)
- [Migration flows: Eastern, Central and Western routes \(infographic\)](#)