

# Together for Europe's recovery

Review of Germany's Presidency  
of the Council of the European Union

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**1 July to 31 December 2020**





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# Introduction

Our Presidency took place in an extremely challenging situation for the European Union. Our aim was jointly to tackle the pandemic and mitigate its impact, shape the major transformation processes of our time such as climate change and the digital transformation, strengthen the EU's ability to act externally and equip it better for future crises

We took on these challenges, drew up joint European responses and assumed international responsibility.

With the agreement on the multiannual financial framework and the Next Generation EU recovery instrument, we sent a clear signal of European solidarity and sustainability. This agreement is a major success for the whole of Europe. With the agreement on a conditionality mechanism for the protection of the budget and the financial interests of the EU, we have furthermore ensured that this is also protected in the event of breaches of the principles of the rule of law in a member state. Based on the overall compromise, the conclusion of the trilogue negotiations on the vast majority of programmes and sector regulations enabled a further important goal to be achieved. The temporary recovery instrument in particular represents a genuine innovation in terms of content and design. This now paves the way for the other remaining steps, in particular ratification of the Own Resources Decision to enable the urgently needed funds for the economic and social recovery of the EU to be disbursed as soon as possible.

We filled our motto "Together for Europe's recovery" with life at all levels and on all issues:

- We successfully adopted joint measures to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic, systematically to improve cooperation and coordination within the EU in this respect and to lay the foundations for a sustained economic and social recovery in Europe.
- We further developed the digital sovereignty, competitiveness and long-term financial architecture of the EU for a stronger and innovative Europe.
- We successfully campaigned for a fair Europe, for social cohesion, social security and solidarity.
- As regards a sustainable Europe we, in particular, paved the way for becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050.
- We took up and intensively promoted among the member states the important discussion about asylum and migration.
- We strengthened our shared values in particular with a view to the rule of law. The safety and security of our citizens was also a focal point of our work with regard to the challenges posed by modern technologies.
- We improved Europe's ability to act externally and undertook steps to strengthen the multilateral order and management of current crises.



On 24 December, the European Commission and the United Kingdom agreed on a comprehensive trade and cooperation agreement. The depth and scope of this agreement is without precedent. It will place the relations between the EU and the United Kingdom on a new footing and will form the basis for a continued close partnership in the future. The agreement will at first be provisionally applied as of 1 January 2021. This way, the European Parliament will have the opportunity to examine and approve the agreement next year. During our Presidency of the Council of the European Union, we have supported the European Commission through all phases of the negotiations and, in particular, worked to preserve the unity of the EU27 throughout the negotiation period.

Along with our trio partners Portugal and Slovenia, we will continue after our Presidency of the Council of the European Union to work actively to promote Europe's recovery.

# Europe's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

**While the COVID-19 pandemic dominated our Presidency, it also revealed that Europe is prepared to show unprecedented solidarity and assume international responsibility particularly in times of crisis. In order to be able to respond effectively to the pandemic and its repercussions, we safeguarded the Council's ability to act, improved coordination between the Union and its member states and laid the foundation for economic and social recovery in the EU. At the same time, we started to equip Europe even better for future challenges.**

## The way out of the crisis – together and in a coordinated fashion

We have worked together systematically to improve the collaboration of the EU and its member states in response to the ongoing pandemic.

- We have intensified the coordination of measures taken by the EU and its member states, which now rest on a common foundation (e.g. thanks to standardisation of the situation assessment).
- Two Council recommendations establish a common framework. This includes joint rules for a coordinated approach to measures for curbing the pandemic that have enabled us to increase transparency concerning temporary restrictions to the freedom of movement in the EU. Extensive preparatory work for the mutual recognition of antigen rapid tests has been carried out.
- Thanks to increased funding for the emergency support instrument (ESI) and bilateral contributions, a number of contracts have been concluded for the EU-wide procurement of COVID-19 vaccines. The EU is thus sending a clear signal of solidarity that it intends to care for all of its citizens in equal measure.
- The effective use of the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) and the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has significantly facilitated the acceptance of COVID-19 intensive care patients from other EU member states.
- Finally, together with the European Commission, we have brought about the interoperability of coronavirus track and tracing apps to enable better and more timely cross-border contact warning and tracing.

## Sustainable economic and social recovery

We have laid the foundations for overcoming the economic and social impacts of the pandemic with groundbreaking decisions.

- By adopting the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework, the temporary recovery instrument, the Own Resources Decision and the 2021 EU budget, we have laid the foundation stone for a sustainable economic and social recovery of the EU that at the same time promotes ecological and digital transitions. For example, with REACT-EU as part of the recovery instrument, the European regions are receiving additional funds of 50.6 billion euro.
- Following the Council Decisions in the autumn, there are also 90.3 billion euro available in the SURE instrument aimed at mitigating unemployment risks in an emergency for the temporary support of national short-time work schemes.



## Drawing the right European conclusions from the crisis

Alongside joint management of the pandemic and its impacts, we have drawn initial lessons in the areas of health, civil protection, logistics and hybrid threats and introduced targeted processes aimed at enabling the EU to respond even better to challenges in the future.

- With Council conclusions, the member states have unanimously laid the foundation for an improvement in EU crisis management and spoken out in favour of strengthening the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).
- Furthermore, a political agreement on the independent health programme EU4Health was reached and measures for safeguarding medical supplies in the EU were drawn up in order to avoid and mitigate supply bottlenecks sustainably.
- Regarding the reform of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (EU CPM) aimed at even better preparation for emergency situations, we have achieved a general approach and commenced trilogue negotiations.
- Key points for a pandemic and crisis contingency plan now permit better preparation of European goods transport flows and logistics supply chains in crisis situations.
- We have strengthened resilience and the combating of hybrid threats, including disinformation, by agreeing on central measures in Council conclusions.

## Our international responsibility in the COVID-19 pandemic

At the international level, we have jointly demonstrated Europe's ability to assume responsibility as a strong partner committed to solidarity.

- In order to support the fair global distribution of vaccines, medicines and diagnostics, we have continuously supported the multilateral Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator initiative, with the EU contributing 500 million euro to its vaccine pillar (COVAX).
- We have made key EU proposals for strengthening the WHO in global health by means of Council conclusions, particularly with regard to its ability to prepare for and respond to health crises and a leading role by the EU in this process.
- Especially in view of the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, we have created significant momentum for sustainable corporate management and implementation of the 2030 Agenda by means of Council conclusions on human rights and decent work in global supply chains.

# A stronger and more innovative Europe

**During our Presidency of the Council of the European Union, we set the course in the areas of the digital transformation, economy and finances to pave the way to Europe's emergence from the crisis and prepare us for the future. The focus here was on expanding digital sovereignty and strengthening competitiveness as well as the long-term financial architecture of the EU.**

## Expansion of digital sovereignty of the EU

We have laid essential foundations for expanding Europe's digital ability to act particularly in the areas of infrastructure and data policy and strengthening European standards and values also in the digital sector.

- The political agreement in the trilogue on the Digital Europe programme and ambitious investments in digital transitions (at least 20 percent of the funds from the Recovery and Resilience Facility) have laid the financial foundations for further ambitious work. The Digital Compass requested by the European Council and expected in early 2021 will specifically trace the EU's targets until 2030.
- With the declaration on the European Cloud Federation, we have created a joint European reference framework for secure and sound data infrastructure.
- In data policy, we have initiated negotiations on the governance of shared European data space and adopted conclusions, among other things, on the European Health Data Space.
- In a declaration, we launched the European initiative on processors and semiconductor technologies with a view to reducing Europe's dependence on microchips from non-member countries.
- We have strengthened European values in the digital age, in particular by means of a Berlin Declaration on Digital Society and Value-Based Digital Government, Council conclusions on digitalisation and the environment, Presidency conclusions on fundamental rights in the context of AI and the digital transformation, a political discussion about a European approach to artificial intelligence and conclusions on intellectual property.
- With the Passau Declaration, we have provided answers with respect to the shape that the future mobility data space is to take.
- We are strengthening the European cybersecurity sector with the political agreement in the trilogue on the establishment of the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre.

## Strengthening competitiveness

We have carried out important recovery measures while also investing in the sustainability of the European economy in the areas of the single market and industrial policy, as well as regulatory, competition and structural policy.

- With the political agreement in the trilogue on the Single Market Programme and the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon Europe, we have set the course for a sustainable European policy in the areas of competitiveness (including small and medium-sized enterprises), the single market, knowledge, research and education.





- We have agreed with Council conclusions on key fields of action for strengthening the sustainability and resilience of the single market.
- With Council conclusions on industrial policy, we have underlined the importance of industry for the economic recovery and the green and digital transformation and agreed central initiatives for improving competitiveness, in particular by strengthening key enabling technologies. With concrete proposals for greater efficiency of public procurement, the Council conclusions on public procurement have prepared the ground for urgently needed public investments.
- With the Council conclusions on better regulation, we have made the regulatory framework future-proof by making greater use of regulatory sandboxes and experimentation clauses for trying out innovations.
- With broad political agreement on the legislative package of the EU Structural Funds, we have laid the foundation for a modern policy that plays a key role in the economic recovery and strengthening of competitiveness.
- With the New Mobility Approach, we have provided ideas during our Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the future focus of European transport policy on sustainability and climate protection, innovation and resilience.
- With Council conclusions, we have contributed to the further development of the European Research Area and launched a joint research and innovation initiative on green hydrogen.
- The signing of the Bonn Declaration on Freedom of Scientific Research sends an important signal for strengthening the foundation of shared values both in the European Research Area and in global collaboration.

### **Sustainable financial market architecture, stable financial policy and tax equity**

In the financial sector, we have strengthened both the foundations of the financial market architecture and crisis management capabilities.

- We have provided important impetus with Council conclusions on fair and effective taxation and strengthening efforts to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. We have succeeded in bringing about an agreement on revising the Mutual Assistance Directive for enhanced administrative cooperation and transparency.
- In order to facilitate the financing of the economic recovery via the capital markets, an agreement was reached with the EP on a targeted adjustment of the legal framework for the European financial markets. Priorities were also set with Council conclusions for the long-term further development of the capital markets union.
- In order in future to be able to make better use of the opportunities of digitalisation for the European financial services sector, we have pushed ahead with the negotiations for a legal framework to strengthen operational resilience in the financial sector and for crypto-assets.
- We have adopted Council conclusions with the aim of achieving a stronger and more coherent EU customs union.

# A fair Europe

**The COVID-19 pandemic has made deep and lasting inroads into the everyday lives of many Europeans and exacerbated inequalities. This has made our commitment to social cohesion, social security and solidarity, the cornerstones of a fair Europe, all the more significant.**

## Strengthening the social dimension and social cohesion

We have promoted the implementation of the European pillar of social rights.

- We have started negotiations for the development of an EU framework for decent minimum wages, advanced the trilogue negotiations concerning the regulations on the coordination of social security systems, spoken out by means of Council conclusions in favour of strengthening minimum income benefits in the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond and prepared the new EU strategy for people with disabilities. We have also expressed support for families with small incomes in Council conclusions.
- In Council conclusions, we have spoken out in favour of better working conditions for seasonal and other mobile labour and through dialogue on the Council provided important impulses for a legislative initiative for fair operating conditions and social protection in the platform economy.
- In the Osnabrück Declaration, we have reached agreement on specific actions for aligning vocational education with transitions to digital and green economies. We have agreed in the trilogue to expand learning mobility within the scope of Erasmus+ to all areas of education.
- In the Council conclusions on digital education, we have confirmed their importance in all areas of education as part of a cultural transformation.

## Equal opportunities

In terms of gender policy, we have resolutely pursued our goal of achieving equal opportunities for all people in all areas of our society. We will consistently promote our initiatives on the basis of our trio Presidency Declaration on Gender Equality.

- In Council conclusions on reducing the gender pay gap, we have taken into account improvements with regard to the evaluation and distribution of paid gainful employment and unpaid care work, promoted the visibility of the first LGBTIQ Equality Strategy of the European Commission and intersectionality with an international conference and adopted conclusions on the subject of gender equality in the culture sector. This serves to underline their importance as the key to strengthening cultural diversity in the EU.
- By setting up a Europe-wide help desk phone number, we wish to protect women better against violence particularly during the pandemic. We have promoted the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by all member states and supported the Commission in its endeavours for an EU accession.
- With Presidency conclusions on the Commission's Gender Action Plan III, we have paid tribute to the role of women in the external action of the EU.
- We have forged ahead with work on the Council Recommendation on equality, inclusion and participation of Roma.



### **Promotion of an active civil society, social cohesion and the protection of all generations**

We have particularly campaigned for all generations to be able to participate actively in our society. We have promoted a vibrant democracy and cultural exchange in Europe.

- With the Council Recommendation A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee, we have set the course for more support of young people on the labour market.
- With the European Youth Work Agenda, we have created a framework to promote the wide range of activities of young people in all areas of our society.
- We have used Council conclusions to advocate greater participation on the part of older people in the digital age.
- With our innovative cultural programme “Earth Speakr” by Olafur Eliasson, we have provided children throughout Europe with the opportunity to participate creatively in the debate about the future of our planet and contributed to European public awareness with many other cultural projects.
- With measures pertaining to EU legislation (publication of documents, communication), we have increased transparency in the EU and achieved a trilogue agreement on the Transparency Register that interest representatives have to sign into if they wish to exchange views with European institutions.
- We have promoted the Joint Declaration and preparations for holding the Conference on the Future of Europe and have thus laid the foundation for the go-ahead for this important, broad-based and pan-European dialogue with citizens to take place as soon as possible.

# A sustainable Europe

**In terms of climate policy, we have underpinned the internationally pioneering role of the EU with the conclusion of negotiations within the Council on the new EU 2030 climate target and the EU Climate Law. In so doing, we have also further advanced the necessary economic, technological and societal transformation processes to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 and promote implementation of the 2030 Agenda.**

## **Ambitious climate, environmental and energy policy**

We have consistently promoted the reorientation of European climate, environmental and energy policy in line with the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal.

- With the conclusion of deliberations within the Council on the European Climate Law, including an increase in the EU greenhouse gas reduction target for 2030 to at least 55 percent below 1990 levels, we have made a key contribution towards implementing the European Green Deal. With this ambitious updated European contribution to the Paris Agreement, we are assuming a globally pioneering role in climate protection.
- In order to cushion the economic and social impact of this ambitious climate policy, a new Just Transition Fund is being launched on the basis of a political agreement we reached between the Council and Parliament. Altogether, at least 30 percent of the funds from the multiannual financial framework and the recovery instrument are to be invested in climate protection and biodiversity is to be strengthened with a new spending target.
- The Council has expressed its support for the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and in doing so laid the foundation for committed participation of the Union in the negotiations for a new global framework for biological diversity after 2020 under the umbrella of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- We have agreed in Council conclusions to push ahead with the transition to a resource-efficient circular economy, make better use of digital technologies for environmental and climate protection and keep the energy and resource consumption of digital infrastructures low.
- We have laid a basis for the amendment of the energy framework to achieve the new EU 2030 climate target. We have used Council conclusions to promote better EU underlying conditions for the cross-border expansion of renewable energies (especially in the area of offshore wind energy) and the development of European and global markets and infrastructures for hydrogen.
- In order to shape mobility in Europe in a more sustainable and affordable manner, we have agreed within the Council on a revision of the Eurovignette Directive with CO<sub>2</sub> differentiated tolling. By presenting the Trans-Europ-Express (TEE 2.0), we have also placed an important emphasis on strengthening European long-distance passenger traffic.

## **Sustainability in agriculture and fishing for sustainable rural areas**

We have succeeded in strengthening the foundation of our agriculture and fishing in the interests of economic and environmental sustainability.

- With the general approach to the common agricultural policy (CAP) after 2020, we have launched a fundamental new approach towards greater environmental, climate, animal and biodiversity protection in agriculture and at



the same time safeguarded the CAP's important contribution to maintaining the competitiveness of agricultural enterprises and the agro-structural diversity of rural areas. The agreement on the transitional regulation for the CAP after 2020 has created planning certainty for the transition phase up until 2022.

- With Council conclusions on the Farm to Fork Strategy, we have issued a clear commitment to sustainable and economically viable agriculture from the producer to the consumer. The Council has also adopted conclusions on the EU animal welfare label. With Council conclusions on standardised EU food labelling, we have sent out a signal for more transparency towards consumers in Europe.
- The conclusions of the Council on the future EU forestry strategy are intended to provide the Commission with guidance for drawing up the strategy announced for 2021.
- In the area of fishing, we have agreed on the next European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and, by setting the allowable catches and catch quotas for EU waters and preliminary EU catch quotas for stocks managed jointly by the United Kingdom and Norway for 2021, made an important contribution to the sustainable use of fishery resources.
- With Council conclusions on updating the Leipzig Charter and by adopting the 2030 Territorial Agenda, we have championed the sustainable and balanced development of rural and urban areas.

#### **Greater consumer protection**

- The informal meeting of consumer protection ministers under Germany's Presidency of the Council of the European Union has created a new forum at ministerial level for consumer protection issues.
- The trilogue for the Regulation on Railway Passengers' Rights and Obligations was concluded under our Presidency.

# A Europe of security and shared values

**Our commitment to strengthening our community of law and shared values played a central role in our Presidency. Even and particularly in times of crisis, we also worked to ensure that Europe remains a place in which all people – regardless of their origin, conviction or belief – can feel free and safe. Moreover, we actively took up the important discussion about a European migration and asylum policy based on the proposals of the EU Commission and in doing so prepared the way for an ambitious reform.**

## Strengthening fundamental values and basic rights

In the area of fundamental values, we succeeded in establishing a constructive dialogue on the rule of law as well as strengthening our basis of values.

- We have established a new rule of law dialogue within the Council. Based on the new annual report from the Commission, we conducted a horizontal and an initial country-specific debate about the situation in five member states. This country-specific debate is in future to be organised every six months.
- Despite the difficult underlying conditions owing to the pandemic, the Council has addressed in detail the two Article 7 Procedures for the protection of our shared fundamental values.
- The negotiations for the accession of the EU to the European Convention on Human Rights were resumed during our Presidency.
- We have strengthened culture and the media among other things with a political agreement on the Creative Europe programme with significantly better funding allocation. The Council conclusions on safeguarding a free and diverse media system represent a strong commitment to media pluralism and freedom of opinion.

## Strengthening the security of citizens

In the area of security, we made progress particularly in the fight against terrorism, the fight against organised crime and in police cooperation, also with a view to challenges in cyberspace.

- During our Presidency, attacks in France, Austria and Germany sadly underlined the threat posed by terrorism in Europe. In the light of this, we have reaffirmed our unwavering unity and solidarity in the fight against all forms of terrorism in a joint declaration with the member states. At the initiative of Germany's Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 15 member states have so far set up central contact bodies for victims of terrorism.
- As part of the fight against terrorism, we have agreed with the European Parliament on a regulation on preventing the dissemination of terrorist content online and undertaken to improve the exchange of information about potential terrorists. We have intensively addressed the threat posed by violent right-wing extremism and right-wing terrorism, the fight against hate speech and against antisemitism within the Council and also adopted a declaration on this by the Council.
- We have adopted Council conclusions on the question of how internal security and cross-border police cooperation (European police partnership) can be further strengthened in practical terms. The course has thus also been set for the future of Europol and for more effective combating of organised crime, as well as, by way of Council conclusions, for improvements to implementation of the European arrest warrant.



- We have strengthened digital security with a resolution of the Council on encryption, a debate on artificial intelligence and with Council conclusions on IT security standards for devices connected with the Internet. We have also underlined the opportunities posed by the digital transformation for access to justice in Council conclusions.
- In order to improve civil judicial cooperation, we have adopted the revised versions of the EU Regulation on the Service of Documents and the EU Taking of Evidence Regulation.

### **Resumption of the debate on European migration and asylum policy**

In the area of migration and asylum policy, we have, first and foremost, initiated the important discussion about the New Pact on Migration and Asylum and made some initial progress.

- We have conducted intensive discussions within the Council about the Pact on Migration and Asylum presented by the Commission, in particular with regard to the sharing of responsibilities in a spirit of solidarity, procedures prior to admission, secondary movement, the external dimension and legal migration. We have documented the achievements pertaining to the core elements of this pact in a progress report and in so doing laid the foundations for an ambitious reorientation.
- In order to guarantee effective protection of the external borders, we pushed ahead with swift operationalisation of the new Frontex mandate and the standing corps and supported this with concrete recommendations for action in connection with repatriation measures.
- We successfully concluded the political negotiations with the European Parliament on an extensive modernisation of the EU Visa Information System. In the future, alongside automated data exchange with other EU security and migration databases, among other things information about visas for permanent residence and national residence permits of the EU member states will also be retrievable throughout Europe.

# A European Union capable of taking action for a rules-based international order

**During Germany's Council Presidency, the EU undertook a large number of concrete steps aimed at sustainably shaping its external relations and the multilateral order as well as globally mastering the challenges caused by COVID-19.**

## **Our geostrategic priorities and central projects**

The following results in particular were achieved with regard to cohesive external action and a stronger geopolitical role for the EU:

- In Council conclusions and a joint communication, the EU has offered the future US government extensive cooperation for establishing new transatlantic collaboration.
- As the basis for relations between the EU and China, the European Council endorsed the strategic outlook of March 2019. An agreement on geographical indications of origin was signed on the fringes of the virtual meeting of EU leaders with China on 14 September 2020. Furthermore, a high-level EU-China climate dialogue was agreed. Council conclusions were adopted in response to the passing of the national security law in Hong Kong.
- The strategic partnership between the EU and ASEAN was approved in December and will allow us to place relations with this region on a new footing.
- An assessment took place for implementation of the five EU principles for relations with Russia with a view to their full implementation in the future. Several conferences took place for strengthening the Eastern Partnership.
- In order to strengthen relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific states, the EU and the ACP countries achieved the political conclusion of negotiations on the post-Cotonou agreement.
- In order to strengthen the bi-regional relations between the EU and Latin America, an informal EU27-LAC meeting of foreign ministers was held in Berlin.
- In the field of enlargement, we have succeeded in largely finalising the necessary negotiating framework with Albania and North Macedonia for the initial Accession Conference on the basis of the new accession methods.

## **Dealing with conflicts and promoting peace**

The EU has stepped up its commitment to dealing with current crises and addressing major international conflicts:

- At the international donor conference for Afghanistan, the EU and its member states pledged to contribute around 1.2 billion US dollars for 2021.
- The EU has adopted several packages of sanctions in response to the election fraud in Belarus and the repression of peaceful demonstrators.
- The EU has imposed restrictive measures against those involved in the poison attack on Alexej Nawalny.





- In order to support the Berlin Process, the EU has adopted sanctions against actors in Libya standing in the way of a political solution to the conflict. Operation IRINI has strengthened the monitoring of the UN arms embargo.
- Following intensive efforts to achieve a de-escalation in the Eastern Mediterranean, the European Council has repeated its offer of a positive agenda, but in view of ongoing provocations from Turkey also decided on 10 December to impose further sanctions.
- The EU continued its support for a solution to the Middle East conflict at the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers in Berlin by way of a discussion with the Israeli foreign minister and a virtual meeting with the Palestinian foreign minister.

### Instruments for a strong EU in the world

Substantial progress was achieved for successful implementation of the integrated approach and the long-term strengthening of the EU's rapid reaction capability in external action. The same also applies with regard to a rules-based and resilient trade policy:

- The EU has established a global human rights sanctions regime targeted at those responsible for serious human rights violations. Furthermore, the 2020-2024 EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy was adopted.
- The European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management was opened in Berlin.
- The participation of non-member states in permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) was approved. This defence policy framework is thus available to partners such as the USA, Canada, Norway and the UK. This also helps to strengthen the European pillar in NATO and EU-NATO cooperation.
- The submission of the first EU threat assessment created the basis for development of the so-called Strategic Compass as an EU security policy document.
- With the European Peace Facility (EPF), for which a political agreement was reached, the EU will, in the future, be able to support partners better in independently assuming security responsibility.
- With the political agreement in the trilogue on the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), we have set the course for new, more coherent, more efficient and more flexible external financing.
- We have further expanded Team Europe as a European label for a coherent presence in international partnerships.
- The establishment of the Digital Diplomacy Network by the foreign ministers was welcomed in Council conclusions. Several prominent Team Europe initiatives (including the African-European Digital Innovation Bridge) were launched in development cooperation.
- The peace mediation of the EU was substantially strengthened by updating the EU mediation concept and corresponding Council conclusions.
- With intensive discussions on the reorientation of the EU's trade policy, we have taken a stand in favour of the opening of markets, rules-based trade and the diversification of trade relations.

- The agreement with the EP on the enforcement regulation will enable the EU in future to take more effective action against unlawful trade measures of non-member states. The agreement on the dual-use regulation will bring competitiveness, security interests and the protection of human rights better into alignment with one another.



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