

# High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell travels to Ukra



On Tuesday 22 September, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep **Borrell**, will pay an official visit to Kyiv.

The High Representative/Vice-President will meet with the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, before a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dmytro Kuleba, which will be followed by a press conference at c.14:15 CET, [shown on EBS](#). During his visit, the High Representative/Vice-President will also hold meetings with the Ukrainian Minister of Defence, Andrii Taran, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, Heidi Grau, and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Yaşar Halit Çevik. He will also meet with members of civil society and the Ukrainian parliament to discuss anti-corruption developments in Ukraine. In light of the EU's [unprecedented support package](#) to Ukraine to support its response to the coronavirus pandemic, including EU-funded personal protective equipment, High Representative Borrell will also pay a visit to the Kyiv Regional Laboratory. Audiovisual footage of the visit will be provided by [Europe by Satellite](#).

Ahead of the visit, High Representative/Vice-President Borrell has given a wide-reaching interview on EU-Ukraine relations. The original can be found here in [Ukrainian](#) and [Russian](#), and a translation in [English](#) is available here.

For more information on EU-Ukraine relations, consult the [dedicated factsheet](#) and visit the [website of the EU Delegation](#) and the [EU Advisory Mission](#).

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# Irish Finance Minister welcomes expected EUR 1 billion EIB support for new investment in 2020 and accelerated support for COVID-19 business financing



- Minister Donohoe highlights strong EIB support for Irish firms impacted by COVID-19 and Brexit and climate action focus
- EIB confirms support for National Recovery Plan and diverse pipeline
- New EIB Vice President Christian Kettel Thomsen succeeds Ireland's Andrew McDowell

The European Investment Bank (EIB) expects to provide more than EUR 1 billion to support new COVID-19 and Brexit business financing programmes, climate action and education investment in Ireland in 2020 and work closely with Irish authorities to implement the National Recovery Plan.

Earlier today Paschal Donohoe, Finance Minister and Governor for the European Investment Bank chaired the video conference meeting of senior Department of Finance and EIB representatives.

A full meeting of the Ireland-EIB Financing Group will be held later this year.

“Close cooperation and continued dialogue between Ireland and the European Investment Bank Group has enabled transformational investment across Ireland to benefit from the EIB’s unique technical, financial and environmental experience and ensure that the EIB can rapidly address new challenges facing this country. In recent years the EIB has played a leading role unlocking new financing schemes to help Irish companies better face uncertainties relating to Brexit and the EIB has already launched powerful new initiative to strengthen economic resilience to COVID-19. I wish to thank Andrew McDowell for his service and enthusiasm during his four year term as Irish Vice President of the EIB and I look forward to working with his successor Christian Kettel Thomsen.” said Paschal Donohoe, Irish Finance Minister and Governor of the European Investment Bank.

“It is an honour and a pleasure to assume responsibility for EIB Group operations in Ireland and represent Ireland, Denmark, Greece and Romania on the EIB Management Committee. I am grateful and inspired by Andrew McDowell’s dedication and professionalism over the last four years. Today’s meeting provides an opportunity to assess the impact of recent EIB engagement in Ireland, in particular support for Irish companies facing uncertainties relating to both Brexit and COVID-19. My European Investment Bank, European Investment Fund and European Investment Advisory Hub colleagues and I look

forward to working with Irish partners to support the National Recovery Plan and shared priorities in the future.” said Christian Kettel Thomsen, European Investment Bank Vice President.

EIB President Werner Hoyer, new Vice President Christian Kettel Thomsen and former Irish Vice President Andrew McDowell participated in the discussion and highlighted recent and future support for connectivity, social infrastructure and support for enterprise across Ireland.

Discussions also covered future financing in Ireland backed by the new European Guarantee Fund, increasing the impact of EIB financing and enhanced support for development outside the European Union.

### **EUR 1 billion of new EIB Group financing expected in 2020**

The European Investment Bank Group is expected to provide more than EUR 1 billion of new financing for investment across Ireland in 2020.

This follows record EUR 1.1 billion of support in 2019 that backed social housing, clean transport, climate action, education, agribusiness, innovation, regional development and SME investment across the country.

To date this year the EIB has signed contracts totalling EUR 397 million for new energy investment and support for Irish companies most impacted by COVID-19.

Guarantees from the European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund to Irish companies, provided through the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland and Irish banks, are guaranteeing EUR 950 million of accelerated financing for Irish companies.

In the coming weeks the EIB is expected to confirm significant support for new higher education and student housing, energy efficiency and cultural EIB investment in Ireland.

Looking ahead the EIB is currently in discussions to finance development of offshore wind energy schemes in Irish waters and the Celtic Interconnector electricity link between Ireland and France.

### **EIB technical and financing experience to support National Recovery Plan**

The EIB, the world’s largest international public bank with operations in 160 countries worldwide, will share technical expertise and financial best practice to support SME financing, social housing, energy efficiency, sustainable transport and innovation support expected to be included in the National Recovery Plan.

The EIB’s dedicated advisory teams are currently working with Irish partners to enhance the impact of future innovation, transport and energy efficiency investment.

The European Investment Bank, owned directly by the 27 EU member states, has provided more than EUR 18.5 billion for transformational long-term investment

with public and private partners across Ireland since 1974.

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## [Press release – Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya calls on MEPs to stand by the people of Belarus](#)



In her address to Members of the [Foreign Affairs Committee](#) and [Subcommittee on Human Rights](#) on Monday, Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya reiterated firmly that the ongoing Belarusian uprising is not a “geopolitical revolution (...) it is neither pro-Russian nor anti-Russian, not pro-EU nor anti-EU, (...) it is simply pro-Belarus and a democratic revolution”.

She underlined that a new Belarus has emerged since the summer, led by women, which will seek to become a “reliable partner”, based on the rule of law, and respected by the world.

**Release political prisoners, end police violence and hold free and fair elections**

“Our fight is a fight for freedom, for democracy and for human dignity. It is

exclusively peaceful and non-violent. We demand only three basic things: the release of all political prisoners, an end to police violence and to conduct new, free and fair elections”, she said.

Ms Tsikhanouskaya, who spoke alongside other members of the Belarusian democratic opposition Volha Kavalkova and Pavel Latushka, also urged MEPs and the EU to continue showing solidarity with the people of Belarus and to support the Belarusian civil society and media, which remain under constant pressure from the regime.

“Together we can create a new Belarus admired by the world. We stand and will stand united, because our future is at stake. We also ask you to stand united alongside the Belarusian people and we need your support”, she said.

### **Sanctions must be implemented**

Most MEPs praised the courageous actions of the Belarusian political opposition and the country’s citizens in the face of a brutal and repressive regime. Some issued stark reminders to the EU to not become a passive player vis-à-vis the struggle in Belarus and move from statements to actions. This also includes the matter of sanctions, on which EU governments so far have not been able to agree.

The majority of speakers reiterated the main messages of the European Parliament’s latest resolution on Belarus, adopted on 17 September. In the text, MEPs called for new elections to be held, new sanctions against Aliaksandr Lukashenka and his regime, while pointing out that Ms Tsikhanouskaya, who was the main democratic contender in the elections, is considered by many Belarusians to be the real winner of the vote and the country’s real president-elect. Read more [here](#).

For a full overview of all the statements and remarks, you can watch the debate again [here](#) (21.09.2020).

European Parliament President David Sassoli also held a bilateral meeting with Ms Tsikhanouskaya on Monday, after which he issued [the following statement](#).

### **Quote**

Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, [David McAllister](#) (EPP, DE), made the following statement after the meeting:

“I was very pleased to welcome Ms Tsikhanouskaya in person to our committee meeting today for an interesting and inspiring debate. The position of the European Parliament is very clear: we reject the results of the so-called presidential elections that took place in Belarus on 9 August, as they were conducted in flagrant violation of all internationally recognised standards. We will also not recognise Mr Lukashenka as president of Belarus once his current term of office expires. We strongly support immediate EU sanctions against all individuals responsible for falsifying the election results and the ongoing repression and violence in the country, including Mr Lukashenka himself. What Belarus needs now is a peaceful and democratic transition of

power as a result of an inclusive national dialogue between all relevant parties”.

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## [EUIPO and EBAN sign an agreement to empower SMEs](#)

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