



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1313 Vienna, 13 May 2021

#### **EU Statement on post Covid-19 recovery in light of the EU Porto Declaration**

COVID-19 has impacted our societies and ways of living in a sudden and deep manner. In the face of a new challenge fast decision-making and short-term measures were required to address the pandemic and its negative spill-overs. The pandemic is not only a health crisis, but it has also had a strong socioeconomic, humanitarian, security and human rights impact.

The EU would like to bring to the Permanent Council's attention the "Porto declaration", adopted at the Informal meeting of Heads of state or Government of the European Union, held 7-8 May. This declaration underlines the importance of a fair, sustainable and resilient recovery, ensuring equal opportunities for all and that no one is left behind.

The Porto Declaration underlines specific areas where further and decisive action is needed. We would mention some of them:

- Priority to education and skills, as the green and digital transitions will bring enormous opportunities, but also many challenges;
- Reducing inequalities, defending fair wages and fighting exclusion, including the risks of exclusion for particularly vulnerable social groups;
- Fighting discrimination and working actively to close gender gaps and to promote equality and fairness for every individual in our society;

- Prioritising action to support young people. We must make sure that they become the driving force of the inclusive green and digital recovery.

The pandemic has demonstrated that besides national measures global solidarity and multilateral institutions are crucial to global health, prosperity, and security. Our pledge to international cooperation and effective multilateralism is unwavering.

The EU is working relentlessly to ensure a green, sustainable, digital and inclusive post COVID-19 recovery, first and foremost through international cooperation and multilateral action by delivering at the same time on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The challenges posed by the current crisis also show that it is time to build resilience and better prepare our societies for future shocks.

Through the “Team Europe” approach, we have mobilized around €40.5 billion to support the most vulnerable in the fight against the pandemic with humanitarian needs (in health, water, sanitation and nutrition systems) as well as tackling the immediate socio-economic consequences. Our long-term response embedded in the programming of our cooperation for the period 2021-2027 focuses on the COVID-19 recovery efforts, including the strengthening of health systems and the increase of local manufacturing capacity in partner countries.

The challenges we face in addressing the pandemic are far from over. The crisis has evolved globally and there is need for a long-term and comprehensive response to COVID-19. We must therefore work collectively to set the stage for a recovery that builds on more sustainable, greener and more inclusive societies, making the world a more resilient place.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

\* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.