



# Press kit

**Informal meeting of Higher Education Ministers,  
29.02.2024 & 01.03.2024, Egmont Palace**





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# Programme

The programme for the delegations is indicated in grey. Press opportunities are indicated in blue.

The Media Centre will open one hour prior to the commencement of the handshake/doorstep ceremony.

## Day 1 – Thursday 29 February 2024

12:00 – 13:30

Social lunch (The Hotel)

12.30

Opening of the press centre

13:30 – 14:00

Arrival of the delegations at the Egmont Palace

- **Doorstep interviews** – Doorstep interviews will be given by the meeting Chair and Ministers allowing accredited journalists to gather some thoughts and insights before the meeting starts. The doorstep interviews will be broadcast on the channels of the Belgian presidency.
- **Handshake** – As tradition requires, the meeting Chair – in this case minister Françoise Bertieaux – will welcome his fellow ministers with a handshake before starting the meeting. Accredited journalists and photographers will get the chance to take photos of this moment. The handshake will be broadcast on the channels of the Belgian presidency.
- **Round table** – Accredited media will get the opportunity to film Ministers taking their seat a few minutes before the start of the meeting. These short video clips are meant to provide media with additional visuals for their report.

14:00 – 14:10

Opening speech by Minister Françoise Bertieaux, Minister for Higher Education, Government of the French Community of Belgium

14:10 – 14:20

Speech by Iliana Ivanova, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

14:20 – 14:50

Introductory presentations on international mobility leading to a qualification in OECD countries and student mobility within Europe

14:50 – 15:45

Presentation of 5 national situations (panel) :

- > Martin Polaschek, Austrian Federal Minister for Education, Science and Research
- > Christina Egelund, Danish Minister of Higher Education and Science
- > Robbert Dijkgraaf, Dutch Minister of Education, Culture

and Science

- > Ligia Deca, Romanian Minister of Education
- > Juan Cruz Cigudosa Garcia, Spanish Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Universities

<b>15:45 – 16:15</b>	<b>Family photo and coffee break</b>
16:15 – 17:15	Ministerial exchange session
17:15	Closure of the first working day
17:15 – 18:30	Free time
18:30 – 19:00	Transfer of the delegations (Magritte Museum)
19:00 – 20:00	Welcome drink and optional tour of the Magritte Museum
20:00 – 22:30	Opening of the ministerial dinner

## Day 2 – Friday 1st March 2024

8:30-9:00	Arrival of the Heads of Delegation at the Egmont Palace
<b>09:15</b>	<b>Opening of the press centre</b>
9:00 – 9:20	Opening and summary of the first day's discussions
9:20 – 10:15	Political debate: round of table discussion (part 1)
<b>10:15 – 10:45</b>	<b>Presentation of the student exhibition and coffee break</b>
10:45 – 11:45	Political debate: round table discussion (part 2)
11:45 – 12:00	Conclusions
<b>12:15</b>	<b>Press Conference</b>
12:15 – 13:30	Social lunch (Egmont Palace) and departure of the delegations

The press will be accompanied to the press conference room 15 minutes in advance.

The Media Centre will close two hours after the conclusion of the press conference.

# Background information

## General context

Broadly speaking, the promotion of mobility has long been at the heart of the European project, and stems from the principle of free movement enshrined within it. Hence the European Union's endeavours to pursue an ambitious policy to encourage student mobility and cooperation in higher education. The Erasmus+ programme is one of the most visible forms of this policy. For students, this mobility is seen as a means of increasing their independence and ensuring their personal growth. At the same time this also contributes to their educational, linguistic, and cultural integration. At a broader level, mobility and the resulting cross-disciplinary skills help to address the training needs and demands of companies, administrative bodies, and public administration and, more generally, various socio-economic and cultural environments. For the European Education Area and European integration, mobility contributes not only to a Europe of knowledge, but also to European citizenship.

It is widely acknowledged that mobility in higher education has many benefits, both for students and for national higher education systems and higher education institutions. In this context, this informal ministerial meeting aims to address, more specifically, degree mobility and its various associated aspects and consequences in this regard. Degree mobility is understood as leading to the completion of a training course or the award of a qualification in another country.

## Objectives of the meeting

Mobility is often approached from the point of view of its beneficiaries, i.e. the students. Even so, it is also useful to explore the way in which it is translated and experienced by each Member State, viewed as an entity that supports and sustains mobility. Despite the growing interconnections between higher education systems and the common goal to which they aspire, the realities of each country may still be different. These fundamental differences include, for example, the size of their higher education systems, their accessibility, and the body of national regulations built up over time. Furthermore, attractiveness policies or enhancement measures (in terms of scholarships, languages, educational opportunities, geographical proximity, etc.) vary from one country to another. Similarly, there may be differences in the challenges they face (availability of student accommodation, quality of teaching, asymmetric mobility, etc.).

These discussions will provide an opportunity to identify points of convergence or common interests, and to pave the way for possible avenues for discussion or collaboration in the future.

Following this informal ministerial meeting, the Belgian Presidency wishes to produce a document summarizing the discussions on the issues raised during the exchanges.

## Event structure

The first day of the informal ministerial meeting will begin with two introductory presentations by an OECD expert and a professor from a Belgian university (UCLouvain).

In order to be able to discuss specific national experiences, a panel made up of five Member States will be invited to present the state of mobility (incoming and outgoing) in their countries, as well as the incentives for mobility put in place by their state government and the challenges

they may face. These presentations will then be followed by an open discussion, led by a facilitator, between the ministers present. The ministers will be able to give their feedback to the presentations on a voluntary basis. They will also be able to draw parallels between the presentations given and the situations, experiences or policies specific to their own country.

The second day of the informal ministerial meeting will be organised around a round table of European higher education Ministers. In the form of a debate, this second part could be an opportunity to share good practice or to consider possible courses of action, at both national and European level, to ramp up the support for mobility in the sense of broader, fair, balanced, and beneficial mobility for every citizen within the European Education Area.

## Website and sources

Website	<a href="http://www.belgium24.eu">www.belgium24.eu</a>
WhatsApp	Join us on <a href="https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VaFqS8T4yltFsRomvU2m">https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VaFqS8T4yltFsRomvU2m</a>
X	<a href="https://www.x.com/EU2024BE">https://www.x.com/EU2024BE</a>
Threads	<a href="https://www.threads.net/EU2024BE">https://www.threads.net/EU2024BE</a>
Facebook	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/EU2024BE">https://www.facebook.com/EU2024BE</a>
Instagram	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/EU2024BE">https://www.instagram.com/EU2024BE</a>
LinkedIn	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/eu2024be/">https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/eu2024be/</a>
YouTube	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/@EU2024BE">https://www.youtube.com/@EU2024BE</a>
Flickr	<a href="https://www.flickr.com/photos/EU2024BE/albums">https://www.flickr.com/photos/EU2024BE/albums</a>
Hashtag	#EU2024BE