



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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European Development Days 2018 – empowering women and girls to shape sustainable development

The 12th European Development Days (EDDs) will open tomorrow, bringing together Europe's and the world's development community, under the theme 'Women and Girls at the Forefront of Sustainable Development: protect, empower, invest'.

Commission President Jean-Claude **Juncker**, who will open the EDDs tomorrow, said: "There can be no sustainable development if half of the world's population is left behind. We need equal participation and leadership of women and girls in all spheres of life – both in Europe and in the world. This is what we will focus on during these European Development Days."

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** emphasised: "The EDDs gather the development community from all corners of the globe to learn from each other and to inspire new partnerships. Only if we act together, will we manage to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, and empower them to truly be at the forefront of sustainable development".

From the European Commission, the President Jean-Claude **Juncker**, together with High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini**, First-Vice President of the European Commission Frans **Timmermans**, as well as Commissioners Cecilia **Malmström**, Neven **Mimica**, Christos **Stylianides**, Phil **Hogan** and Mariya **Gabriel**, will participate at the event.

The European Development Days will furthermore be joined by many high-level speakers and participants including: **Her Majesty Mathilde**, Queen of the Belgians; **Her Majesty Queen Letizia of Spain**; **Her Royal Highness Mary**, the Crown Princess of Denmark; President of Malta Marie-Louise **Coleiro Preca**; Prime Minister of Norway Erna **Solberg**; President of the European Parliament Antonio **Tajani**; President of Rwanda Paul **Kagame**; President of Burkina Faso Roch Marc Christian **Kaboré**; President of Niger Mahamadou **Issoufou**; President of Liberia George **Weah**; Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Amina J. **Mohammed**, and many more.

Sixteen Young Leaders from around the world will join high-level panels to exchange ideas and experiences with policy-makers and world leaders. Participation and voices of young people will be additionally promoted this year by a large Youth Lounge that would facilitate youth organisations and activists' gatherings and discussions on gender equality and other development issues.

The Lorenzo Natali Media Prize 2018 will be awarded to journalists for their outstanding reporting on sustainable development, with a special focus on the elimination of violence against women and girls.

Today, in the margins of the European Development Days, Commissioner **Mimica** will sign new support for Burkina Faso, together with President **Kaboré**. More information will be

made available at 18:00 here. On Wednesday, he will sign a new package of assistance for Liberia, together with Liberian President George **Weah**.

A full **cultural programme** featuring international artists, musicians and film-makers will complement the event, while the Global Village(link is external), a fair composed of 92 stands, will bring together international stakeholders to share projects or reports related to the EDDs' main themes and thread.

For More Information

<https://www.eudevdays.eu/>

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