

# Migration crisis in Venezuela: The EU and Spain to convene a Donors Conference in solidarity with Venezuelan refugees and migrants in countries in the region, amid the COVID-19 pandemic

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## Press releases

Today, the European Union and the Spanish Government announced the launch of an International Donors Conference in solidarity with Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Latin American countries. This conference will take place virtually, coordinated between Madrid and Brussels, on 26 May 2020. The European Union (EU) and the Spanish Government will convene the donor conference, with the support of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The objective of the conference is to make the international community aware about this unprecedented crisis, mobilise resources to support the displaced population and the main host communities, tackle the aggravated situation created by COVID-19, and facilitate greater commitment and coordination of key actors.

The organisers alert the international community about the serious lack of attention paid to this crisis, which now faces further difficulties caused by the spread of COVID-19 to host countries.

For the High Representative/Vice-President, Josep **Borrell**: *"Venezuela's neighbouring countries have shown great generosity in hosting many Venezuelans that have fled their country. Their effort and solidarity should serve as an example to all. We are committed to supporting them at this critical time."*

As stated by the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Arancha **González Laya**: *"the international community cannot remain aloof from the drama of the Venezuelan exodus. It is necessary to act without further delay"*.

Over 40 countries will participate in the conference, along with United Nations Agencies, International Financial Institutions and representatives of national and international civil society. The conference will give visibility to the worst displacement crisis suffered by Latin America in its recent history and will provide resources to support the people in need.

## Background

This donor conference follows on from the commitment made by the EU, at the solidarity Conference of October 2019 in Brussels, to follow-up with a donor conference as soon as possible. The EU, Spain, UNHCR and the IOM call on the international community to intensify its support for humanitarian and development programmes in the region in order to support displaced populations and to strengthen public services, including the health and education systems of host countries. The lives and welfare of millions of Venezuelans and of their host communities depend on it.

The number of refugees and migrants forced to leave Venezuela in the last five years already amounts to over five million people, with 80 per cent of them displaced in countries in the region. This is the second most serious external displacement crisis in the world, only behind the Syrian crisis.

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