

H.E.  
Mrs. Riina Sikkut  
Minister for Health  
of the Republic of Estonia

**Invitation: High-Level Conference of European Ministers responsible for  
Family Affairs – Vienna, 13 June 2024; reception and visit to Vienna  
International Centre, 12 June 2024; special tour Spanish Riding School,  
13 June 2024**

Vienna, March 2024

Excellency,

the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 1994 as the International Year of the Family (IYF) in order to create awareness for the central role that families hold in society. The thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF+30) offers an opportunity to refocus on the importance of families and family policy making.

Families are an important part of society. They are one of the key agents for education, security, social cohesion, development, protection, care and recovery. The main purpose of family policy is to support families in fulfilling their numerous functions for the overall benefit of society.

Families have changed over the past thirty years. Family life has become more complex. Demographic, social and economic trends determine changes to families in Europe, such as declining fertility rates, an advancing ageing population, increased international migration and a rise in urbanization.

In light of these developments, it is my honour to invite you to a High-Level Conference of European Ministers responsible for Family Affairs, which will take place in Vienna on 13 June 2024 (from 9:00 to 14:00).

The Meeting on the topic „Importance of families in society” will provide the opportunity to discuss the central role that families hold within EU Member States. European Ministers responsible for Family Affairs are invited to share good practices in family policy.

Furthermore, Member States are invited to sign a declaration on creating the best possible conditions to enable and promote family life. The text of the declaration will be circulated prior to the Conference.

Please note that the High-Level Conference is scheduled to commence on 12 June 2024 with an evening reception at 19:00 at the Austrian Federal Chancellery.

As Vienna is one of the four headquarters of the United Nations, a visit to the Vienna International Centre will be offered on 12 June 2024, from 15:00. The cultural programme will also include a special tour at the Spanish Riding School following the conference on 13 June 2024.

We kindly ask you to confirm your participation as early as possible, but no later than 11 April 2024. For further details, please refer to the attached practical information and the concept note. The conference language is English.

For further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Department Family Policy (Ms Regina Hartweg-Weiss, [regina.hartweg-weiss@bka.gv.at](mailto:regina.hartweg-weiss@bka.gv.at)) or the Protocol Department ([visits@bka.gv.at](mailto:visits@bka.gv.at)) of the Austrian Federal Chancellery.

I look forward to welcoming you in Vienna.

Yours sincerely,



Susanne Raab