

# Meryame Kitir



Minister of  
Development Cooperation  
and of Major Cities



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Meryame Kitir's father left Morocco as a migrant worker in the early sixties. He settled in Limburg to work in the coal mines. Her mother joined him in Maasmechelen, the city where Meryame Kitir was born. After losing her mother as a toddler and her father on the verge of adulthood, she started working at the Ford automotive factory in Genk at 19 to take care of her brothers and sisters. At the factory she took up trade union activities standing up for solidarity and equal opportunities. These values were at the core of her engagement when she was first elected into Parliament at the age of 27. Meryame Kitir continued working at the factory during her parliamentary mandate to keep the strong bond with the workers that voted for her.

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Also today - as a Minister of Development Cooperation and of Major Cities - solidarity and equality of opportunities guide her engagement.

"I want to empower people - men, women, the young and the old - in a sustainable way. Here, close to home, but also far away, across borders. Self-reliance and a better future are only to be attained through solidarity, organized in government structures. In case no government is near because of conflict for example, it is our duty to look for different options of support. But always with the very same objective: to empower people. International solidarity is not an act of charity. To the contrary, it is a matter of common sense. In the end, by joining our efforts we will all be better off."

# Meryame Kitir

Born on 20/04/1980  
in Maasmechelen (Belgium)

## Career

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<b>1998</b>	<b>Sint-Barbara Instituut</b> Diploma Secondary Education • <i>Specialism: Commerce</i>
<b>1999 – 2015</b>	<b>Ford Genk</b> Blue-collar worker
<b>2000 – 2004</b>	<b>Ford Genk</b> Representative at the Committee for Prevention and Protection at Work
<b>2004 – 2015</b>	<b>Ford Genk</b> Representative at the Works Council

## Political career

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<b>2006 – 2006</b>	<b>City of Maasmechelen</b> Municipal Councillor
<b>2007 – 2015</b>	<b>The Chamber of Representatives</b> Representative, Member of the Social Affairs commission
<b>2015 – 2020</b>	<b>The Chamber of Representatives</b> Group leader of the socialist party sp.a Member of the Investigation Committee • <i>Terrorist Attacks 22 March 2016</i> Member of the Home Affairs Committee Member of Committee P (supervision of police forces) Member of Committee I (supervision of intelligence services)
<b>2018 – to date</b>	<b>City of Genk</b> Municipal Councillor
<b>2020 – to date</b>	<b>Federal Minister of Development Cooperation and of Major Cities</b>

## Miscellaneous

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<b>2015 – to date</b>	Sponsor of the Bodhi project active in the slums of Delhi and Bhubaneshwar and in the OfERR refugee camps
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