

CONCORD AidWatch Report 2025

Call for consultants

April 2025

CONCORD is seeking consultants to work on the AidWatch 2025 report. Since 2005, CONCORD has published the annual AidWatch report assessing the quantity and quality of European Official Development Assistance (ODA). The report is considered a major research and advocacy tool for CONCORD members as it helps to hold the EU institutions and EU Member States accountable towards the ODA commitments and the coherence of international cooperation.

CONCORD is an equal opportunity employer and considers applicants for all positions without regard to race, colour, religion and belief, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status. All employment decisions are made entirely on merit. All qualified applicants are strongly encouraged to apply regardless of their national origin, race, colour, disabilities, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or age.

Background

As we enter the second half of the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) period (2025-2027) with renewed EU institutions, the shift in the approach to international cooperation continues. This shift confirms the direction taken by many EU Member States over the last few years: cuts in ODA allocations and an inward focus on the EU's own security and economic interests, with competition rather than cooperation - epitomised by the Global Gateway strategy - at the core of the EU's international cooperation approach.

The cuts are not confined to EU Member States. In 2024, EU Institutions also announced plans to cut €2 billion in planned development spending funds in the upcoming years, further jeopardising international cooperation commitments.

The rising number of crises, including in the EU's neighbourhood, is testing the EU's foreign policy and causing cracks in EU unity and its alignment with other parts of the world. Meanwhile, severe conflicts in many countries are being neglected. The EU is unsure how to operate in a world where many countries are no longer interested in a rules-based approach and are asserting their power and their choices. Far-right and populist parties have ridden on the wave of popular discontent and gained significant political ground and influence in many countries, large and small, across Europe. This impacts ODA budgets and how ODA is spent, with a far greater interest in curbing migration and ensuring European security than in acting in solidarity with others.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the sudden USAID Stop-Work Order is the tip of the iceberg of a crisis affecting the entire international cooperation sector.

Timeline

- The work should be carried out between **the beginning of May 2025 and the end of August 2025**, when a final draft of the report should be presented.
- Consultants are expected to deliver a **first draft by the end of June, a final draft by mid-August and incorporate any remaining feedback by the end of August.**
- The AidWatch 2025 report should **be launched in Brussels around mid-October.**

Job description

The main tasks of the work would consist of:

- Conducting **desk research to strengthen the analyses on how EU Member States and EU Institutions are inflating and diverting EU ODA;**
- Conducting desk research and interviews with CSOs, if necessary, **to collect evidence-based proposals for transforming the aid system and ensuring ODA remains effective amid current funding cuts;**
- Developing a **concept note for the AidWatch 2025**, compiling ideas of data analysis to cover the ideas explained under the point below, *“methodology and scope”*;
- Based on the results from the above, **develop the structure of the AidWatch 2025;**
- Conduct the data analysis for the 2025 AidWatch report based on the structure agreed and using the OECD DAC preliminary figures published in April 2025 as the main sources for data analysis;
- Developing a **questionnaire for quantitative and qualitative data collection** from CONCORD’s National Platforms. This task will be done in consultation with CONCORD’s AidWatch National Platforms focal points and the Secretariat;
- Designing **the structure of the country pages** and consolidating the drafting from AidWatch National Platforms focal points;
- **Conducting consultations with CONCORD members** on different aspects of the report when needed and under the guidance of the Secretariat;
- **Developing a first draft of the 2025 AidWatch report** by the end of June 2025;
- **Integrate CONCORD Secretariat, members and partners’ feedback to develop a final draft of the 2025 AidWatch report by mid-August 2025** and integrate any remaining comments **after the review of the final draft by the end of August 2025.**

Please note that due to the nature of this task, **we strongly suggest the involvement of a team of consultants. We recommend a minimum of two consultants**, with one focusing on the data analysis and crunching, while the other can help improve the report's storytelling with the main goal of making the report easier to read and more accessible to those unfamiliar with the technical aspects of ODA trends and operations.

Applicants are nevertheless invited to submit only one profile if they think it would be enough to cover the expectations for the report, or **would be happy to be teamed up with another consultant.**

2025 AidWatch report

Background

As a CONCORD flagship report, AidWatch has monitored the quantity and quality of EU Institutions' and EU Member States' ODA annually since 2005. 2025 is a special year for AidWatch: the report will celebrate its 20th anniversary in an extremely challenging context for international cooperation, CSOs and ODA, globally and in the EU.

The AidWatch 2023 report [Bursting the ODA inflation bubble](#) was a turning point as it moved away from the *4Es approach* (enough, employed correctly, effective and equality-focused ODA) and adopted the OECD DAC criteria defining ODA to assess EU's ODA quantity and quality.

The AidWatch 2024 report, [Whose Interests Does Official Development Assistance Truly Serve?](#) explored three main questions: i) To what extent do EU Member States and EU Institutions **inflate and divert** European ODA (ODA that does not meet the OECD's DAC own ODA definition and eligibility criteria) ii) To what extent do **EU Member States prioritise the EU's interests instead of partner countries' economic development and the welfare of partner countries in their ODA allocations** (ODA fourth criterion)? iii) Whether and to what extent EU Member States **are living up to the responsibility of maximising EU ODA's impact to fight inequalities** through a series of analyses.

Objectives

The AidWatch 2025 should aim at:

- **Assessing the quantity and quality of EU ODA.**
- **Holding the EU institutions and national governments accountable** towards their ODA commitments, the cuts and the coherence of international cooperation.
- **Adapting its narrative and analyses** given the shift in the EU's paradigm for international cooperation.

Format

The AidWatch 2025 report will continue to be a digital tool, with improved visuals and graphs. The report should be more concise, with a snappier tone and a stronger focus on storytelling in the analysis. **To mark AidWatch's 20th anniversary, consultants are invited to shape ideas and analyses for a two-part report**—one looking back at the evolution of EU ODA, the other looking forward to what's next. **It is key that AidWatch 2025 react and adapt its narrative and analyses to the shift in the paradigm of the EU's international cooperation.**

Methodology and scope

To assess the quantity and quality of EU ODA, CONCORD **will continue to use the four criteria set by the OECD DAC** as per the methodological update in 2023. We will also develop the thinking behind **diverted ODA when it is clear that the funds leave the EU but don't comply with the OECD DAC's fourth criterion**¹.

Some areas of the OECD DAC modernisation process, such as **the reporting of private sector instruments (PSIs), will need further research in the AidWatch 2025 report,**

¹ This criterion determines ODA principle objective.

especially in light of the end of the transition period for EU MS to report PSIs. Given the predominance of the EU's Global Gateway as the EU's main offer for international cooperation, **CONCORD will also seek to gather strong evidence to determine whether clearer conclusions can be drawn about how the EU's Global Gateway strategy is diverting ODA funds² from development cooperation objectives, poverty reduction and the fight against inequalities**

AidWatch 2025 should have a stronger focus on **inequalities, human development and gender equality**. As part of the **focus on inequalities and human development**, the report could examine which countries receive more ODA, both quantitatively and proportionately to human development needs by comparing ODA allocations to partner countries' ranking as per the Human Development Index (HDI). Based on data availability, integrating analyses linked to the Inequalities Adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) to assess how much countries spend on human development sectors could also be explored. **In complementarity to analyses on human development, the AidWatch 2025 will track EU Member States and EU Institutions' performance towards their commitments to allocate at least between 0,15% and 0,30% of GNI to ODA to Least Developed Countries (LDCs)**. Finally, on gender equality, the AidWatch 2025 report will update the figures tracking ODA allocation to different spending targets according to methodological updates from the DAC in that regard, if any, so that the asks can also be useful for advocacy on the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and the MFF negotiations.

AidWatch 2024 introduced comments on the relationship between ODA allocation modalities and partner countries' external debts. **The 2025 edition will build on evidence to further investigate this**. The climate crisis is a debt crisis - one that disproportionately affects countries with the greatest human development needs. A report published in 2022 by the Climate Action Network³ found that around 50% of the climate finance provided by EU MS and institutions is provided as loans, exacerbating debt levels. In this context, **AidWatch 2025 will provide updated data on ODA allocated to climate adaptation and mitigation. It could also assess the balance between loans and grants distributed across countries, disaggregated by income level and HDI**. Finally, the report will revisit the cumulative "aid debt" owed by EU Member States and EU institutions resulting from decades of falling short of the longstanding 0.7% ODA commitment.

As the paradigm of international cooperation continues to shift, AidWatch 2025 will have to adapt its narrative too. The narrative making the case for ODA when certain conditions are respected should be strengthened. This means coming back to the basics on why ODA can still be part of the solution if:

- ODA criteria and definition, including its concessionality are respected;
- ODA is used as a resource to fight against inequalities between and within countries and not to create dependencies;
- ODA is used to support poverty reduction;

² Finding information about project-level activities part of the Global Gateway proves difficult. This is corroborated by a [Court of Auditors report](#) published in 2024 which also points out the lack of information on the "results achieved" by the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD) and EFSD+. For more evidence on this see CONCORD's research "[Gateway to Equality](#)", May 2024 and Eurodad, Oxfam and Counter Balance report "[Who profits from the Global Gateway](#)", October 2024

³ See Climate Action Network report [Why climate justice must include debt justice](#), 2022

- ODA allocations do the right targeting (allocate more ODA to LDCs, FCAS and countries ranking at the bottom of the HDI instead of allocating ODA based on the EU's geopolitical interests...)

Candidate profile

Successful candidates for this offer will respond as much as possible to the following profile:

Essential:

- Experience in quantitative and qualitative data analysis (including OECD DAC databases for ODA reporting).
- Excellent English writing and editing skills.
- Ability to write about complex issues engagingly.
- Excellent knowledge of EU development cooperation issues.
- Very good understanding and knowledge of the aid/development effectiveness agenda and the current debates on reforming ODA.
- Experience in coordinating and managing networks or multiple stakeholders would be an advantage.
- Experience in challenging ODA narratives and practice.

Desirable:

- Experience of working in an NGO environment, with complex multicultural networks and under pressure.
- Experience in communication.

Application process

If you are interested, please upload as one document the following information, in the portal below:

- Your CV outlining your relevant expertise to meet this assignment (1 page max);
- Your proposal on how you will undertake this research, including a suggested number of days and their distribution between the different tasks and phases of the work and your day rate (2 pages max).

The closing date for applications is 4 May at midnight.. We encourage applicants to send their proposals as soon as possible.

For any additional information, don't hesitate to contact Lur Fernandez Salinas at his email address lur.fernandez-salinas@concordeurope.org before the deadline.

Budget

Please note that project proposals should not exceed 30 000 EUR, including VAT.

NATIONAL PLATFORMS	 Global Responsibility Austrian Platform for Development and Transnational Aid	 BELGISCH PLATFORM PLATE-FORME BELGE CONCORD CNCO-11.11.11 11.11.11 ACODEV ugo-actosuisse	 BPID Bulgarian Platform for International Development	 Platforma za mednarodno gradbenstvo solidarnost hrvaške Croatian Platform for International Citizen Solidarity CROSOL	 FORS	 GLOBAL FOCUS	
	 fingo	 COORDINATION SUD	 VENRO ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN AID NGOs	 Hellenic Platform for Development	 HAND	 dóchas The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations	
	 CONCORD ITALIA	 LAPAS Lithuanian Platform for Development and Cooperation	 VDP Výskumná vedecká a odborná platforma	 Cercle de coopération des ONGD DU LUXEMBOURG	 SKOP Solidarjeta u Koperaciji	 PARTOS	 ZAGRANICA
	 ONGD PORTUGUESA	 FOND Finnish Association for International Development and Humanitarian Aid	 Ambrella Platform for Development Organisations	 SLOGA Slovenian Global Action	 LA COORDINADORA DE ORGANIZACIONS PER A L'ESPANOL	 C&CNCORD SWEDEN	 bond
	NETWORKS	 actalliance eu EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION	 actionaid	 ADRA	 Alliance 2015 towards the eradication of poverty	 CARE	 caritas europa
		 ChidFund Alliance	 CIDSE Together for good jobs	 eucord EUROPEAN UNION CONFEDERATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS	 GNDR	 Habitat for Humanity	 handicap international
	 LIGHT FOR THE WORLD	 OXFAM International	 PLAN INTERNATIONAL	 Save the Children	 solidar	 SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES INTERNATIONAL	 Terre des Hommes International Federation
 wecf	 Wetlands INTERNATIONAL	 World Vision EU REPRESENTATION	 WWF	ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	 alda European Association for Local Democracy	 CARDET	
 ea ca EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS	 European Partnership for Democracy	 EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM	 INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE		 NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL		