



EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION:

YOUR opportunity to eradicate global poverty.

WHY THE NEXT FIVE YEARS ARE CRUCIAL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In today's interconnected world, we cannot just focus on Europe and turn a blind eye to the rest of the world. The well-being of people wherever they are is the only way of ensuring a stable and prosperous European Union. This goal should be at the centre of the work of the European institutions. Indeed, the Lisbon Treaty recognises development cooperation, understood as poverty eradication, as one of the priorities of the European Union's (EU) external action in pursuit of sustainable development and the Union's interests and values.

The European Union is an **influential actor** on the global geopolitical and economic scene, including in the field of development cooperation, where the EU contributes substantially to global efforts to reduce poverty. Not only does the EU provide a platform for collective action, it also has a global reach through EU delegations, leading to **well-informed partnerships** with states and regional bodies all over the world. One example is the **Cotonou Agreement** between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of countries and in which the Parliament is actively involved including through the EU-ACP Joint Parliamentary Assembly. Moreover, the EU has a comprehensive range of external instruments which, if used efficiently, can address complex global development challenges as well as problems in fragile contexts, going far beyond what any Member State could achieve on its own. It is therefore not surprising that a recent Eurobarometer showed that 85% of EU citizens express support for EU development aid.

The new European Parliament starts its mandate at a time of great reflection, change and opportunity for the international development sector. Since the year 2000, development efforts worldwide have been focused on achieving the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**. The 2015 deadline to achieve the MDGs is approaching fast. While good progress has been made, several goals will not be reached and Sub-Saharan Africa is clearly lagging far behind. 2015 is also the deadline to fulfil the EU **commitment to spend 0.7%** of its Gross National Income on development cooperation.

It is also the time to shape the future development agenda. Over the course of the coming year, the global community will make decisions on a new global development framework, agreeing **Sustainable Development Goals** that will replace the MDGs, to achieve economic, environmental and social sustainability worldwide. This new framework could have an **enormous impact on the lives of people worldwide**, not just in third countries, but also in Europe and its Neighbourhood, as it will include responsibilities for all countries to address challenges that impact us all. 2015 will also see important negotiations linked to this process such as the **International Conference on Financing for Development**.

European NGO confederation
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Also in 2015, we will celebrate the **20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration**, which was a milestone in the fight for gender equality and women rights. The international community will review what progress has been made and what remains to be done. Finally, 2015 should end with a successful conclusion of a **new global climate agreement in Paris**, which should set the world on track to limit warming below 1.5-2 degrees Celsius, and stop climate shocks from causing major setbacks in development gains and global food security. Further ahead, in 2017, the EU will go through the **mid-term review of the EU's Multi-Annual Financial Framework**. This will be an opportunity

to review the EU's contribution to global sustainable development.

The decision to make 2015 the **European Year on Development** is very timely and provides a valuable platform to reconnect with a large majority of European citizens, including children and young people, who want to see more equality, more justice and less poverty both in Europe and abroad. The European Parliament needs to hear the voice of its citizens and harness these opportunities to ensure these new frameworks and commitments become effective tools to tackle these challenges both at the global level and in Europe.

KEY OUTCOMES CONCORD WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN THESE FIVE YEARS

1. Focus on poverty eradication

The Lisbon Treaty commits the EU to eradicating poverty and makes development cooperation a priority in the context of external action (Article 208). This core principle has been subsequently developed by two other documents: the European Consensus on Development, where the EU and its member states have committed to provide 0.7% of their GNI to fund development; and the Agenda for Change which puts tackling global poverty and inequality at the core of EU action.

Through these documents, the EU has committed to reduce poverty while promoting human rights, democracy, environmental sustainability, good governance, and respecting and supporting the development paths chosen by developing countries. The European Parliament plays a central role in making this happen by monitoring and holding the EU and its Member States to account for the ambition, objectives and results of the EU development policy.

2. Policy coherence for development

Another key principle in the EU's development cooperation policy is the concept of policy coherence for development (PCD) enshrined in article 208 of the Lisbon Treaty. This principle essentially means that EU policies should support or at least not be detrimental to EU development objectives. PCD acknowledges that if we want to eradicate poverty, aid will not suffice as long as there are policies in place that prevent developing countries from fulfilling their potential.

The implementation of the principle of PCD outside a few niche areas directly related to development remains a challenge. The post-2015 debate offers an opportunity to make real progress and put Europe at the forefront of global sustainable development. To do so, Europe needs to assess the impact of all its policies on developing countries. There are some key areas where policy coherence is particularly important:

- **Trade and investment:** European trade and investment policies and agreements are designed in response to European interests and often have a negative impact on developing countries. For example, the prohibition of export taxes on raw materials and primary agricultural commodities tips the balance in favour of the EU and limits the policy space of developing countries.
- **Migration:** as highlighted in the EU's Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, migrants bring many benefits to both the country of origin and destination, but they could have a greater impact. Reducing the costs of remittance transfers could significantly increase the amount of money flowing into developing countries, while combating discrimination could help maximise migrant's contribution to the EU.
- **Energy and natural resources:** an adequate impact assessment system is required to prevent negative impacts. The lack of proper impact assessment regarding European renewable energy targets for 2020 boosted the demand of food-based biofuels, which in turn contributed to increase world food prices as well as land grabbing.

- **Tax justice:** when companies and individuals do not pay their taxes they are depriving governments of valuable tax revenues. Every year, developing countries lose more income in taxes than all the aid they receive. In Europe, estimates put the yearly figure at €1 trillion.
- **Fair and sustainable production and consumption patterns:** While the world produces more than enough food for everyone, over 800 million people go to bed hungry every night. At the same time 1/3 of the food produced for human consumption gets lost or wasted.

3. Sufficient and effective aid and other forms of finance for development

Aid remains a crucial source of finance for development and efforts should continue to meet aid quantity and quality objectives. These include the 0.7% per cent and existing aid effectiveness commitments made in Paris, Accra, Busan and Mexico. Aid plays a number of roles and cannot be easily substituted by other forms of finance. As public finance, aid often pays for essential public services, helps ensure universal access, can provide and protect global public goods and promote democratic governance. It is also more flexible, predictable, counter-cyclical, and less volatile than private flows, and can play an important stabilising role during crises.

Additional public finance is required to fund the fight against climate change. Urgent action is required to stop global warming, bring it to a reasonable level and deal with its impacts. These needs are additional to development objectives and the estimated costs exceed the €100 billion mark. It is clear that we need a much larger overall envelope to tackle both development and climate change. In practice, climate and development sometimes overlap. In these cases, it is important to make sure that climate finance comes on top of aid and it is not counted towards the 0.7% commitment.

In addition, given the limited amount of public funds currently available, Europe also needs to **explore sources of innovative public finance** like a financial transaction tax or carbon taxes. These are two potential sources of new public finance which would also reduce negative externalities: financial instability through speculation and carbon emissions. **At the same time, we need to adopt a cautionary approach to other sources of finance for development.** Private finance, for example, comes in very different forms, from long

term sustainable investments to short-term speculative investments. It is important to explore in greater detail how the private sector can best contribute to development before committing to it.

Domestic revenues are the most important source of development finance. Domestic revenues, especially tax income, are significantly larger than aid and private flows in most developing countries and pay for the lion's share of investments in public services, social security systems, infrastructure, etc. It is important that international commitments are made to protect and nurture these sources of finance. In particular, greater efforts need to be made to strengthen tax authorities in developing countries, while adopting a coordinated approach at the international level to tackle the cross-country dimensions of tax evasion and avoidance.

Human rights and gender equality

The European Parliament should **work to translate into practice the principles that lay at the core of the European treaties.** Our Europe must be a place where human beings are treated equal irrespective of their gender, free from social exclusion and discrimination and where children rights are protected and enforced. This includes upholding the rights of migrants and refugees and adopting political measures to address the roots of migration. In addition, everyone should be able to meaningfully participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of (EU) policies and actions that impact the realisation of their rights.



CONCORD believes the **European Parliament has the capacity to help Europe achieve these goals** by enacting legislation and providing a space for people's voices to be heard. The parliament also plays a strong role in holding EU government to account for their implementation of the UN Declaration on human rights, the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the Lisbon treaty and other legal instruments in every action they plan and take.

The Parliament can also help strengthen the commitment towards the respect, promotion and fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights, by raising issues pertaining to this matter in multilateral fora, bilateral dialogues with EU partner countries and through the UN Special Procedures, such as the Universal Periodic Review mechanism. A human rights based approach is also crucial to ensuring policy coherence between EU development policy and other areas.

People and Planet First: put people and the environment at the centre of European policies

There is an urgent need to **reconnect with European citizens** and involve them in the decisions that affect their lives. Europe must uphold its long democratic credentials and promote active citizenship. Given the role of Europe in the world, this also involves listening to the needs and voices of citizens in other countries, including them in decision-making processes through participatory tools, and acting upon their recommendations.

The first step is to **put citizens back at the centre of European policies** and laws and the European Parliament is best placed to do so. To thrive in the long term, Europe must be transformed, moving from bureaucratic, market-led and growth-centred reasoning to empowered, people-centred policies and, first of all, choices. When you put people and planet first, fair and sustainable development and well-being will follow. This also applies to Europe's policy towards its Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood, where social issues and local economic development often remain in the shadow of 'bigger' priorities like energy security or trade.

The Parliament can also contribute to put citizens at the centre of EU development cooperation by enhancing the dialogue between EU institutions and CSOs in the context of the **EU Policy Forum on development (PFD)**, a multi-space actor where CSOs can directly contribute to shape EU development cooperation policies.

Another crucial step is to **create an enabling environment for civil society organisations**: a set of interrelated conditions – such as legal, organisational, fiscal, informational, political, and cultural – that increase the capacity of civil society organizations to engage in policy processes in a sustained and effective manner. The Parliament should also promote these principles abroad and pay attention to any national and international measures aiming to criminalize peaceful social protests.

WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE WORK

CONCORD is the European confederation of Relief and Development NGOs. We are made up of member organisations: 28 national associations in each EU member state, 18 international networks and 2 associate members that represent over 1,800 NGOs, supported by millions of citizens across Europe. We were founded in 2003 by development NGOs to act as the main interlocutor with the EU institutions on development policy.

We work as a member led confederation with the main aim of strengthening the impact of European development NGOs. The members of the Confederation engage in the daily work of CONCORD through a number of working structures which feed the political debate and contribute to improve the formulation of European policies affecting development co-operation and humanitarian aid.

Representing NGOs from all over Europe, CONCORD channels the aspirations of Europeans regarding their global citizenship, as well as the experiences of citizens in developing countries. Such first-hand information is invaluable to informing EU decision making, and it shows the impact EU decisions have on the ground.

For more information visit www.concordeurope or call us on: +32 2743 87 60

CONCORD WORKING STRUCTURES

AidWatch
European task force of Beyond 2015
CONCORD Advisory group on Strategic Alliances and Partnership
Coordination Group
Cotonou Working Group
CSO Development Effectiveness
Development Awareness Raising and Education Forum
Enlargement, Pre-accession and Neighbourhood
EP elections taskforce
European Year 2015 Task Force
Financing for Development Task Force
Funding for Development and Relief Working Group

Gender Working Group
HIV and AIDS Working Group
HRBA Task Force
Migration & Development group
Policy Coherence for Development, includes:
Raw Material Task Force
Trade reference group
European Food Security Group
Climate Change and Development Task Force
Policy Forum
Policy Forum on Development Task Force
Private Sector Taskforce

CONCORD MEMBERS

National platforms:

Austria: Globale Verantwortung
Belgium: Concord Belgian platform
Bulgaria: BPID
Cyprus: CYINDEP
Czech Republic: FoRS
Croatia: CROSOL
Denmark: CONCORD Denmark
Estonia: AKU
Finland: Kehys
France: Coordination SUD
Germany: VENRO
Greece: Hellenic Platform for Development
Hungary: HAND
Ireland: Dochas
Italy: CONCORD Italia
Latvia: Lapas
Lithuania: LU
Luxembourg: Cercle
Malta: SKOP
Netherlands: Partos
Poland: Grupa Zagranica
Portugal: Plataforma ONGD
Romania: Fond
Slovakia: MVRO
Slovenia: SLOGA
Spain: Coordinadora ONGD
Sweden: CONCORD Sweden
United Kingdom: Bond

Networks:

ActionAid
ADRA EU
APRODEV
CARE International
Caritas Europa
CBM International
CIDSE
EU-CORD
Handicap International
IPPF European Network
Islamic Relief Worldwide
Oxfam International
Plan International
Save The Children International
Solidar
SOS Childrens Villages
Terres des hommes IF
World Vision International

Associate members:

ALDA -The European Association for Local Democracy
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)