



Questions & Answers: The new European Consensus on development

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The new European Consensus on development is a shared vision and framework for action for development cooperation for the European Union (EU) and its Member States. It is a blueprint which aligns the Union's development policy with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This new, ambitious collective European development policy addresses in an integrated manner the main focus points of the 2030 Agenda: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. The new Consensus contributes to the objectives and principles of EU external action as laid down in the Lisbon Treaty, and supports the Global Strategy on the EU's Foreign and Security Policy presented in June 2016 by the High Representative. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be a cross-cutting dimension for the implementation of the EU's Global Strategy.

Why do we need a new Consensus on Development?

As the world's largest provider of official development assistance, reaching [EUR 75.5 billion collectively in 2016](#), the EU and its Member States are already a force for a fairer, more prosperous and sustainable world. But, as outlined in the Commission's reflection paper on **Harnessing Globalisation**, more still needs to be done.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals by the international community in 2015 marked a significant milestone in the way the we approach poverty eradication and the achievement of sustainable development globally. The European Union played a leading role in the negotiations leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and is fully committed to its implementation. In order to do so, this fundamental shift in the way we tackle global challenges now also needs to be reflected in the development policy of the EU and its Member States. .

The first European Consensus on Development was agreed in 2005 and was aligned to the Millennium Development Goals, which guided international development policy until 2015. The new Consensus updates our vision of development policy to take account of the 2030 Agenda, and to respond to fundamental changes and new challenges in the global context. It also seeks a coordinated implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and other milestone international agreements.

What is in the new Consensus?

Poverty eradication remains the primary objective of development policy under the new Consensus. However it now better integrates the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The Consensus text is structured around the '5 Ps' framing the 2030 Agenda: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership.

It underlines the interaction between development and peace and security, humanitarian aid, migration, environment and climate. Implementation is addressed in a comprehensive manner, drawing on the framework agreed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in 2015, in which aid is combined with other resources, sound policies and a strengthened approach to Policy Coherence for Development. It puts emphasis on better-tailored partnerships with a broader range of stakeholders and partner countries.

How was the Consensus developed?

The Consensus was developed in an open and transparent manner, involving all European institutions and EU Member States. The Commission proposal for a new Consensus was part of a package for implementing the SDGs in the EU published on 22 November. It accompanied a Communication on "Next Steps for a Sustainable Europe", relating to implementation of the SDGs through internal and external policies and actions.

The proposals for a new Consensus built on a series of extensive consultations on aligning development policy with the 2030 Agenda (the results of which were published in a [Staff Working Document](#)). The consultation phase included a wide range of feedback opportunities, centred around an open, internet-based public consultation. This was complemented with targeted meetings with major stakeholder

groups. EU Member States, other EU institutions such as the European Parliament, other EU bodies such as the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Investment Bank, partner governments, international organisations and financial institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector, think tanks and academia contributed to the consultation process. Further outreach was sought via social media engagement.

Since the publication of the Commission proposal, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission have engaged in an intensive series of inter-institutional discussions on the new Consensus, culminating in the adoption by EU Member States at a recent Foreign Affairs/Development Council and adoption by the European Parliament in a recent Resolution. The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions also contributed to the debate. The President of the European Parliament, the Prime Minister of Malta, on behalf of the Council and Member States, the President of the European Commission and the High Representative formally signed the Joint Statement at the European Development Days on 7 June 2017.

What are some of the new approach set out in the Consensus and how will they translate into concrete action?

The new Consensus recognises the interlinkages between different Sustainable Development Goals and places particular emphasis on areas where actions can create co-benefits and meet multiple objectives in a coherent way. The Consensus therefore highlights important cross-cutting elements, which offer real transformative potential and without which it will be impossible to achieve the ambitious vision set out in the 2030 Agenda. These elements include:

- **Youth** – The EU and its Member States will focus on concrete actions to meet the specific needs of young people, such as increasing quality employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, enhancing their skills and access to digital technologies and services, and strengthening their rights and empowerment.
- **Gender equality** – The EU and its Member States will ensure that the gender perspective is systematically mainstreamed across all policies and will accelerate their efforts to achieve true gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
- **Mobility and Migration** – The EU and its Member States will step up efforts to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, and to promote the better management of migration in partner countries in all its aspects, addressing the challenges and harnessing the positive aspects. They will consolidate migration as a key part of EU foreign policy dialogue, including through the elaboration of tailor-made responses and strengthened partnerships in a transparent and democratic manner, seeking clear developmental impacts.
- **Sustainable Energy and Climate Change** - The EU and its Member States will pursue three interlinked key objectives: addressing the lack of energy access; increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy generation to achieve a sustainable balance between energy production and consumption; and contributing to the global fight against climate change.
- **Investment and Trade** - The EU and its Member States will take action to boost investment by combining public and private funding for sustainable development, technical assistance to develop sustainable projects and attract investors, and measures to help improve economic governance and business environments, fight corruption and engage with the private sector. The European Union will also continue through its trade policy to ensure that developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable, reap the benefits of inclusive growth and sustainable development.
- **Good Governance, Democracy, the Rule of Law and Human Rights** - The EU and its Member States will promote accountable and transparent institutions and foster participatory decision-making and public access to information. They will promote independent and impartial courts, and support the provision of fair justice. They will support initiatives to tackle corruption.
- **Innovative engagement with more advanced developing countries** – Whilst focusing traditional development assistance on the poorest and most vulnerable countries, the EU and its Member States will develop new partnerships with more advanced developing countries in order to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through a broader range of cooperation tools – including through trade, knowledge-sharing and technical assistance,. The EU and its Member States will work with these countries to promote South-South and triangular cooperation consistent with development effectiveness principles.
- **Mobilising and Using Domestic Resources** - The EU and its Member States will promote effective and efficient resource mobilisation and use, including through initiatives such as the “Collect More, Spend Better” approach. They will address tax evasion, tax avoidance and illicit financial flows as well as the efficiency, effectiveness and fairness of tax systems and of social

protection financing.

Under the new Consensus, the EU and its Member States will further improve the way they deliver their cooperation, including by **working together better**, making the most of their respective comparative advantages.

At country level, for example, the EU and its Member States will enhance Joint Programming in development cooperation to increase their collective impact. Joint Programming is expected to lower transaction costs for partner governments and promote a clear and coherent division of labour between donors and partner governments.

The EU and its Member States, where appropriate, will also look for opportunities to pool resources and apply quick and flexible decision-making and implementation, in particular through EU Trust Funds.

Blending grants and loans, as a way to leverage additional private finance, is another important means to implement the 2030 Agenda. Stronger engagement of the private sector will be needed, using innovative financial instruments to help attract more private finance for sustainable development, including for climate action. [Proposals](#) presented last September for a new EU External Investment Plan to help leverage support from other sources are an example of this new approach.

The development effectiveness principles, namely, ownership of development priorities by developing countries, focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, transparency and mutual accountability, will underpin all forms of EU development cooperation.

How will the new Consensus relate to the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda?

The new Consensus places strong emphasis on regular monitoring and follow-up of progress. This includes accountability to EU citizens through the European and national parliaments.

The EU and the Member States will progressively adapt their reporting systems in the field of development cooperation to be consistent with the 2030 Agenda's follow-up process and indicators, and to better measure reports at country level.

Every four years, when the United Nations' High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development meets at Heads of States level, the EU and its Members States will produce a joint synthesis report on the implementation of the Consensus, as a contribution to the global reporting at UN level.

The Commission Communication "Next steps for a sustainable European future" of November 2016, explains how the Commission's ten political priorities contribute to implementation of the 2030 Agenda and how the EU will meet the SDGs in future in areas beyond development policy. The Commission has decided to launch a multi-stakeholder platform to support the follow-up and exchange of best practices on wider SDG implementation.

What are the next steps in the process?

The United Nations' High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level. In the context of this year's Forum (10-19 July) Commissioner Mimica will present the new Consensus at a dedicated event involving partner countries, key international development institutions and the civil society. This will be the first major political event outside the EU offering the opportunity to take forward the implementation of the new Consensus together with our international partners.

For more information:

[Press release: Europe adopts a new joint vision for development policy](#)

[A Joint Statement by the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission: A new European Consensus on development: Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future](#)

[EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy](#)

[Commission Reflection paper on Harnessing Globalisation](#)

[Communication on the next steps for a sustainable European Future](#)

[Communication on a new European Consensus on development](#)

[Staff Working Document Synopsis Report on the consultation on the new European Consensus on Development](#)

[The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

[The Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#)

[The United Nations' High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#)

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