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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND
THE COUNCIL**

2020 Annual Report

**On the implementation of the European Union's instruments for financing external
actions in 2019**

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Table of contents

Introduction: the European Union response to world developments in 2019	1
1. Delivering on global commitments	5
1.1. The EU as a strong global actor.....	5
1.1.1. International partnerships	6
1.1.2. European Neighbourhood policy	8
1.1.3. Humanitarian aid and civil protection	9
1.1.4. EU enlargement	10
1.1.5. Security and defence.....	12
1.1.6. Crisis response and preparedness	13
1.1.7. Making a difference: New instruments and aid modalities.....	15
1.1.8. Human rights and democracy.....	16
1.2. Fostering sustainable development.....	17
1.2.1. Implementing the 2030 Agenda comprehensively and coherently.....	17
1.2.2. Implementing the new agenda	19
1.2.3. Working better together with Member States.....	20
1.2.4. Policy coherence for development	20
1.2.5. Development effectiveness	21
1.3. Working together towards the SDGs – policy level	22
1.3.1. SDG 1 No poverty.....	22
1.3.2. SDG 2 Zero hunger	24
1.3.3. SDG 3 Good health and well-being	27
1.3.4. SDG 4 Quality education	31
1.3.5. SDG 5 Gender equality.....	35
1.3.6. SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation	38
1.3.7. SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy	40
1.3.8. SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth	44
1.3.9. SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure.....	48
1.3.10. SDG 10 Reduced inequalities	52
1.3.11. SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities.....	57
1.3.12. SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production	60

1.3.13. SDG 13 Climate action.....	62
1.3.14. SDG 14 Life below water.....	64
1.3.15. SDG 15 Life on land.....	66
1.3.16. SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions	69
1.3.17. SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals	74
2. Results reporting and alignment to SDGs.....	79
2.1. The EU International Cooperation and Development Results Framework and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Performance Framework.....	79
2.2. Results from the EU Results Framework	79
2.2.1. Coverage of the EU Results Framework.....	79
2.2.2. This year’s highlighted topic: Gender equality and closing the gender data gap.....	85
2.2.3. Availability of gender disaggregated data in the EU Results Framework.....	86
2.2.4. Selected examples of projects and programmes supporting a gender data dimension	88
2.3. Results achieved with EU support per SDG	89
2.3.1. SDG 1 No poverty.....	89
2.3.2. SDG 2 Zero hunger	90
2.3.3. SDG 3 Good health and well-being	91
2.3.4. SDG 4 Quality education	92
2.3.5. SDG 5 Gender equality.....	93
2.3.6. SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation	94
2.3.7. SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy	95
2.3.8. SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth	96
2.3.9. SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure.....	97
2.3.10. SDG 10 Reduced inequalities.....	98
2.3.11. SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities.....	99
2.3.12. SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production	100
2.3.13. SDG 13 Climate action.....	101
2.3.14. SDG 14 Life below water.....	102
2.3.15. SDG 15 Life on land.....	103
2.3.16. SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions	104
2.3.17. SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals	106
2.4. The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) Performance Framework.....	106
2.4.1. Aim and coverage of the IPA PF.....	107

2.4.2. Overview of key results reported against the IPA PF.....	107
3. Implementation: Geographical overview	110
3.1. Sub-Saharan Africa.....	110
3.1.1. Western and Eastern Africa	110
3.1.2. Central and Southern Africa.....	119
3.2. Latin America and the Caribbean.....	124
3.2.1. Latin America	124
3.2.2. The Caribbean	131
3.3. Asia, Central Asia, Middle East/Gulf and Pacific	134
3.3.1. Asia.....	134
3.3.2. Central Asia	141
3.3.3. Middle East/Gulf region	144
3.3.4. The Pacific	149
3.4. Enlargement.....	152
3.4.1. Introduction	152
3.4.2. IPA priorities.....	153
3.4.3. Implementation	154
3.4.4. Humanitarian aid and civil protection - responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters.....	160
3.4.5. Crisis response and preparedness	161
3.4.6. Working towards SDGs	161
3.5. European Neighbourhood	161
3.5.1. European Neighbourhood East.....	161
3.5.2. European Neighbourhood South	170
3.6. Overseas Countries and Territories OCTs	181
3.6.1. Introduction (Policy Developments)	181
3.6.2. Implementation	182
4. Managing aid.....	184
4.1. Monitoring systems	184
4.1.1. New reporting system on SDGs	184
4.1.2. Evaluation: Review of the work programme	187
4.1.3. Lessons learned.....	192
4.2. Aid delivery modalities.....	194

4.2.1. Budget support	194
4.2.2. Blending	197
4.2.3. EU budget Guarantees	199
4.2.4. Technical Assistance: Twinning and TAIEX.....	199
4.3. Improving ways of working.....	200
4.3.1. Simplification of procedures	200
4.4. Communication & transparency	201
4.4.1. Communication.....	201
4.4.2. Transparency.....	203
4.4.3. Learning.....	203

Introduction: the European Union response to world developments in 2019

During 2019, the global outlook was marked by a slowing down of economic growth, continuous global challenges ranging from climate change to development and migration, increased geopolitical tensions, continued instability, and conflicts and domestic political upheavals in countries around the world, particularly on our southern and eastern borders. State fragility and security concerns remained challenging for the European Union from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa. Conflicts continued in Syria, Yemen, Libya and Ukraine, and there was lack of progress in the Middle East peace process (MEPP). Political tensions increased in different countries of Latin America, with the situation in Venezuela leading to a major displacement and refugee crisis. Multilateralism and the rules-based global order have been challenged and the international system features increasing confrontation and strategic competition.

Confronted with a reality in which the global and the local, and the political, security and economic dimensions, are increasingly intertwined, the EU has promoted a joined-up approach, bringing together all available EU services and Member States, and working through a collaborative and coordinated mobilisation of financing instruments. As in previous years, the EU responded comprehensively, using the entire breadth of its policies and tools, spanning diplomatic, security, financial, trade, development actions and humanitarian aid. During 2019 the EU continued working on the necessary reforms of the multilateral system to keep it relevant for present and future challenges and increased its cooperation and partnering with regional organisations. True to the principles and objectives of its Global Strategy on foreign and security policy, the EU has improved its capacity to act with others whenever possible, and autonomously if and when necessary.

Solutions to these global challenges, as ever, require international engagement and cooperation. They must be based on peace, stability, the rule of law, including compliance with international humanitarian law, respect for human rights and sustainable development. These values are at the heart of our Union and shape our policies both internally and externally, helping us to fight inequalities and to support just and sustainable societies that embrace human development. They will also enable our younger generations to fulfil their potential wherever they are in the world. The continuing implementation of the Spotlight Initiative, a transformative EU–United Nations (UN) partnership working to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, is an outstanding example of action to address gender inequality worldwide. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a central priority for the EU. At the end of 2019, Commission President von der Leyen reaffirmed the EU's commitment to sustainability by placing the SDGs squarely at the heart of EU policy-making and action. The European Green Deal, presented in December, is an ambitious new strategy for growth and will be an integral part of this Commission's strategy to implement the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, both at home and abroad.

SDGs are also reflected in the proposal for the future Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI¹) for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) period 2021-2027, as well as in the negotiations towards the EU's new partnerships with Africa, the

¹ COM(2018) 460 final of 14 June 2018.

Caribbean and the Pacific (the ACP countries) that will succeed the Cotonou Agreement. The EU will continue working towards fulfilling the SDGs.

The EU and Africa are further strengthening the strategic partnership between the 'twin continents'. This stronger alliance between the two continents is based on mutual interests and shared values to tackle together global challenges such as inequality. It encompasses peace and security, governance, mobility and migration, investment and job creation, and knowledge and skills and in future will have a stronger focus on climate change and digitalisation. The EU supports the Agenda 2063 of the African Union (AU²) and the integration of the continent through the African Continental Free Trade Area. The negotiations for a renewed partnership with ACP countries after the expiry of the Cotonou Agreement progressed well during 2019 and are near completion. Transitional measures have been put in place to ensure continuity. Supporting stability in the Sahel remains a key priority of the EU, pursued through an integrated approach providing bilateral and regional support in the political, security, development and humanitarian fields amounting to EUR 8 billion³. The EU is providing strong support for the G5 and the G5 Joint Force politically and financially and through military cooperation and training. The EU-AU-UN partnership remains truly innovative and plays a crucial role in many areas from Libya to the Horn and from Mali to the Central African Republic.

In the Middle East and North Africa, as a strategic region for engagement, the EU promoted stabilisation and regional integration in the Mediterranean. The crisis in Syria was an important focus of our work seeking to find a political solution which can ensure lasting stability and address the most critical humanitarian and resilience issues affecting Syrians and communities hosting Syrian refugees. The EU supported the stabilisation of Iraq, Libya and Yemen in close cooperation with the UN and regional partners. The two-state solution and its existing policies, including on Jerusalem, remains the basis for our engagement in the MEPP, working with both Israelis and Palestinians as well as the international community towards this aim.

In the Western Balkans, the EU increased its efforts and political engagement to move forward with credible and irreversible EU integration steps for all the Western Balkan countries and to mitigate regional friction.

The Eastern Partnership framework continued to serve well the purpose of developing economic and functional cooperation with eastern neighbours and addressing common political regional challenges. While 2019 saw an increase in the challenge posed by Russia, the five agreed principles for cooperation continue to guide our relations.

The transatlantic relationship is at the heart of the EU foreign and external policy. The EU and the US continued constructive dialogue and cooperation on a wide range of foreign policy, security and thematic issues. With Canada the EU shares a value-based agenda, working together to strengthen bilateral relations, cooperate at international level and defend multilateralism.

The EU and Latin America and the Caribbean continued working together to shape the future of the partnership. The focus is to shift progressively from development cooperation to a diversified model

² <https://au.int/agenda2063>.

³ Total development cooperation support from the EU and its Member States to the G5 Sahel countries for the period 2014-2020.

giving a more prominent role to trade, investment, research and innovation, education and the digital agenda, forging a stronger partnership on foreign policy and global issues, in defence of common values. The EU continued its support to the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia and worked with partners on finding a way forward in the multifaceted crisis in Venezuela. We seek to facilitate a political process re-establishing respect for democracy, the rule of law and human rights and to assist the countries of the region in tackling the humanitarian consequences of migratory flows. During 2019, we made substantial progress in the modernisation of our association agreements with Chile and Mexico and reached a political agreement with Mercosur.

The EU and Asia's leaders, as discussed during the last Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in October 2018, agreed to further connect both continents to boost trade, improve security, increase people-to-people contacts and preserve the environment. They renewed their support for the rules-based international order and an open world economy to boost prosperity and address global challenges. The EU is committed to ensuring an active EU security presence and engagement in and with Asia at bilateral, regional and global level, as well as to engaging with partners on the basis of sustainable connectivity between both regions. On Myanmar, the EU continued to exercise a mix of international pressure and constructive engagement to address this crisis while providing extensive humanitarian assistance to help to address the plight of Rohingya refugees. In Afghanistan, the EU coupled its strong assistance role with political engagement in support of an inclusive and united platform for peace, representing all groups in society and protecting the gains made in the last 18 years in the protection of fundamental rights such as those of women, children and minorities.

At the global level, the EU continued its engagement during 2019 to boost multilateralism, as a strong UN is the bedrock of the multilateral rules-based order. The EU played a key role in supporting UN reform and its implementation by helping UN Secretary-General Guterres secure an ambitious package across the three strands of reform (management, peace and security and the development system) and fulfilling the EU's commitment to invest and work with others on the necessary reforms to keep the UN relevant and fit for purpose.

The EU and the UN are indispensable partners to deliver peace and security and in shaping global rules. In a multipolar world, multilateralism is the most democratic way to deal with international affairs. We embrace our role as a global power and security provider, working together for peace, security and human development worldwide. Collectively the EU and its Member States represent the single largest contributor to the UN. Together we provide over a quarter of all voluntary contributions, while our Member States taken together contribute one third of the UN regular budget and over one third of the peacekeeping budget and, in some cases, even filling funding gaps.

Thanks to our strategic partnership with the UN on peacekeeping operations and crisis management, all EU crisis management missions and operations cooperate closely with several members of the UN family. More than half of EU missions and operations share the same theatre with a UN mission, including several in Africa. EU and UN missions and operations are natural partners, from planning through deployment to transition and exit; they also support African peace operations and training.

During 2019, EU continued to promote external policies and cooperation that enhance the security of the EU and its citizens, focusing on the internal/external security nexus. The EU stepped up its engagement with partners in areas including counterterrorism, non-proliferation and disarmament,

cyber security, maritime security and sanctions. The EU also played a leading role in driving forward the implementation of global agreements, notably the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Global Compacts on Migration and on Refugees. The EU stepped up its actions and public diplomacy, confirming its unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. It also increased its efforts on cyber security via the Global Tech Panel and led determined global efforts to promote international ocean governance and the Global Pact for the Environment.

This Annual Report covers the following financing instruments managed by Commission departments during 2019: the European Development Fund (EDF) and all instruments funded by Budget Heading IV (Europe in the World), namely: the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA), the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the Partnership Instrument (PI), Humanitarian Aid, the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation (INSC) and the Instrument for Greenland.

1. Delivering on global commitments

1.1. The EU as a strong global actor

The scope of EU's external action is defined by the Lisbon Treaty and is guided by the EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy published in 2016. The Global Strategy was launched at a time of great turbulence, globally as well as within the Union. Since then, the EU has achieved rapid progress on turning the strategy from vision into action. From security and defence to strengthening the EU's role in promoting a rules-based global order, decisive steps have been taken to ensure our Union is fit to address the new challenges it faces by crafting a more joined-up and effective way of working together. June 2019 saw the publication of the third progress report on the implementation of the Global Strategy, 'Three Years on, Looking Forward'⁴. The EU relentlessly promotes a joined-up approach, bringing together all available instruments from the EU institutions and Member States and working through collaboration rather than confrontation. Through the implementation of the Global Strategy, the EU improved its capacity to act with others whenever possible and autonomously if necessary.

The rules-based global order is an existential interest of the EU and a constant priority for it as a global actor. The EU intensified efforts and political engagement during 2019 in support of a global order based on international law with the UN at its core and in cooperation and in partnership with regional organisations. Advancing multilateralism means adjusting to the changing realities and distribution of power in the world while continuing to implement the five original priorities of the Global Strategy: security and defence, resilience, an integrated approach, the internal/external security nexus, regional and thematic strategies. It also means: (i) redoubling efforts to work at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels with those who still believe in the current international system; and (ii) ensuring strong implementation of key milestones of the multilateral system such as the Paris Agreement, the SDGs, the Iran nuclear deal and the UN Global Compact on migration.

In 2019, the EU implemented its comprehensive approach to conflicts and crises through timely interventions under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) and through common foreign and security policy actions across the world. The ground-breaking trilateral AU-EU-UN partnership paves the way for enhanced cooperation in the wider peace and security agenda, while support to the G5 Sahel Joint Force shows the importance for the EU of investing in regional security partnerships.

Through these actions, the EU contributed to:

- mediation, dialogue and confidence building;
- conflict prevention and post-conflict peace building;
- strengthening the rule of law;
- the fight against terrorism; and
- security sector reforms.

⁴ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_global_strategy_2019.pdf

These actions, which were closely coordinated with the relevant military EU missions on the ground, namely in Mali, Somalia and the Central African Republic, demonstrate how the EU makes this integrated approach a reality.

The EU remains one of few actors with a global presence and a complete policy toolbox. The significant steps made in security and defence show that the EU is taking greater responsibility for its defence and in assisting partners in peace and security. Intense work continues on the European Defence Fund and on the proposal for a European Peace Facility to finance peacekeeping operations. Under the common security and defence policy (CSDP), the EU operates civilian and military missions worldwide. These missions carry out a variety of tasks, ranging from supporting management of borders to training local police.

The EU also continued to pursue its strategic interests through fostering dialogue on values and global challenges with key partners across the world as well as through economic cooperation, trade and investments. Human rights and gender equality, as well as support for women, peace and security, are a central part of all EU policies. The EU seeks to broaden conversations, defend and promote European values, build new cross-regional alliances and project influence, contributing in this way to the security of the EU and its citizens. Also of importance are the EU's dialogues on non-proliferation and disarmament, cyber security, maritime security and sanctions, and on the internal/external security nexus in the area of counterterrorism.

The EU continued tackling existing vulnerabilities and responding to humanitarian crises, both natural and human-made, which are amplified by climate change, insecurity and modest economic growth. The EU and its Member States remain the world's largest donor both of humanitarian aid and of development assistance, providing more than half of official development assistance (ODA) globally, and making a huge difference to the livelihoods of millions of people around the world.

As the world's largest trading bloc and the biggest source of foreign direct investment, the EU continues to work with international partners to promote a free and fairer international trading system. The EU is deeply engaged in the reform of the World Trade Organization and will continue defending itself against unfair and distorting trade practices while expanding its regional and bilateral partnerships. Technology is creating new challenges not covered by international laws and standards and the EU will contribute decisively to shaping the response to these challenges using the strength of the single market to ensure predictability, social inclusion and prosperity.

1.1.1. International partnerships

In line with the new European Consensus for Development⁵, the EU has continued to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, both globally and with partner countries.

In doing so, the EU has continued to uphold the international rules-based order and stand up for the multilateral system, which provides the framework for a common approach to development policy and international cooperation. The EU has actively integrated SDGs across its methods, instruments

⁵ [The New European Consensus on Development 'Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future'](#).

and tools in this field. The EU also actively engaged with traditional and emerging actors in the field of development, advancing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs as a positive joint agenda to fight inequality wherever it is found, to build just and sustainable societies, to support human development globally, to ensure the world's young people are able to fulfil their potential and ensure that no one gets left behind.

The EU continued to develop tailored partnerships for effective development cooperation. For example, the negotiations for a renewed partnership agreement with the ACP countries to follow the Cotonou Partnership Agreement have started reshaping political and socio-economic relations with those partners. Progress made so far reflects the priorities expressed during the EU and ACP chief negotiators' consultations with partners in each region.

Progress was made in generating political momentum and rallying support around integrated national financing frameworks (INFFs) as a means to map the landscape for financing for sustainable development at country level and to develop country-led financing strategies to achieve the SDGs. In this context, Commission departments succeeded in bringing together multilateral and bilateral actors to work together on substantive steps towards financing strategies for the SDGs.

The Africa-Europe Alliance for sustainable investment and jobs, a key policy initiative announced in September 2018, has shown good progress. The EU has been supporting and de-risking investment through the External Investment Plan (EIP). The EU is also facilitating structured public-private dialogue in 32 African countries, as part of the Sustainable Business for Africa platform of the EIP. On enhancing education and skills, the EU is on track to meet the target of 35 000 people taking part in the Erasmus+ programme. Moreover, the African Continental Free Trade Area has enabled significant progress in continental economic integration.

Since the adoption of the Consensus for Development, the EU has been actively implementing the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda. This involves promoting the mobilisation and use of financial and non-financial means and all forms of partnerships to achieve the SDGs. Official development assistance (ODA), which still plays a significant role in many developing countries, will be used more catalytically to generate additional financing for sustainable development. This approach will be part of the future Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), which will support the implementation of the SDGs.

The EU and its Member States are firmly committed to implementing the SDGs and to eradicating poverty. In 2019, EU ODA reached EUR 75.2 billion equivalent to 0.46% of gross national income (GNI), which is slightly less than in 2018, when it stood at 0.47% of GNI⁶.

Through the Partnership Instrument, the EU pursued strategic interests globally by articulating and implementing the external dimension of internal policies and interconnecting between different policy areas. Actions promote cooperation and alliance-building for challenges of global concern such as: (i) climate change and environmental protection; (ii) the international dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive jobs and growth; (iii) improving access to

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_674.

markets and boosting trade, investment and business opportunities for EU companies (for small and medium-sized enterprises in particular); and (iv) public diplomacy.

1.1.2. European Neighbourhood policy

In 2019, the EU continued to implement its revised European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), aiming to stabilise the EU's neighbourhood, which was the overarching goal of the 2015 review. Throughout the year, the revised ENP mobilised significant support for its four refocused priorities⁷ and fully integrated the principles of differentiation, shared ownership and an incentive-based approach. Engagement with all Neighbourhood countries through political dialogue continued, and additional guidance and support was provided to ENP partner countries with their reform efforts.

The EU continued to drive forward programmes to assist Neighbourhood countries in tackling the causes of instability through a sustained focus on good governance, the rule of law and human rights, both in the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods. Significant efforts at bilateral and regional levels continued to increase the capacity of civil society across the region in terms of policy shaping to support human rights defenders and freedom, as well as the accountability of states to their citizens.

In the Eastern Neighbourhood, solid progress was recorded in the implementation of the Eastern Partnership's 20 deliverables for 2020. The high-level event dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the Eastern Partnership held in May 2019 highlighted strong achievements in three out of four priority areas: stronger economy, stronger connectivity and stronger society. Challenges remain in the areas of the rule of law, fighting corruption, shrinking space for civil society and independent media.

In the context of the bilateral relations with partner countries, the EU focused on the implementation of the Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas with Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, and the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership with Armenia. Negotiations continued for a new agreement with Azerbaijan and for new partnership priorities with Belarus.

The President of the European Commission launched a structured consultation on the future of the Eastern Partnership that ended on 31 October 2019 with over 200 contributions received from a wide range of stakeholders, including from 25 Member States and all six partner countries.

Building on this consultation, a new set of long-term policy objectives for the Eastern Partnership beyond 2020 will be prepared for endorsement at the next Eastern Partnership Summit.

In response to the conflict in the east of Ukraine, the EU continued to provide humanitarian support and assistance for stabilisation and early recovery. In addition to already existing assistance in eastern Ukraine, the EU mobilised and deployed specific EU support to the Sea of Azov region.

In the Southern Neighbourhood, mitigating the impact of the protracted Syrian crisis remained a priority throughout 2019. The April Brussels III Conference on supporting the future of Syria and the region reaffirmed the engagement of the EU in supporting Syrian refugees and host communities,

⁷ The ENP's priority areas are: good governance, democracy, human rights and the rule of law; economic development for stabilisation; security; and migration and mobility.

notably in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, through the activities of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian crisis.

A joint political declaration was adopted with Morocco, which focuses on four spaces (common values, common knowledge, social and economic cohesion, and political and security cooperation) and two horizontal axes (mobility and migration and the environment and climate change). The EU–Morocco action plan implementing the advanced status and the Single Support Framework were extended until the end of 2020. In January 2019, both the EU-Israel and EU-Palestinian Authority action plans were extended for a period of 3 years.

The EU continued to support Libya in its political transition towards a stable, secure and prosperous country. However, the security situation in the country remained an impediment to the implementation of cooperation programmes. Operations continued to be remotely managed from Tunis.

Tunisia further consolidated its democratic transition by successfully holding presidential and parliamentary elections in the autumn of 2019, the second of their kind since the 2011 revolution. The EU supported the electoral process by sending an electoral observation mission and by contributing to the UN-managed support programme.

Migration also continued to receive EU attention and support. The EU continues to apply a balanced approach to the multiple aspects of migration, with a focus on areas of mutual interest. For example, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa contributes to addressing the causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, to the fight against the trafficking of human beings and smuggling of migrants, and to the protection of migrants, their voluntary return to their countries of origin and their reintegration there.

Peer-to-peer instruments, namely the TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange) and Twinning instruments, also actively contributed to the overall reform process in line with EU political priorities.

1.1.3. Humanitarian aid and civil protection

In 2019, humanitarian needs remained at a record high because of complex crises (often leading to massive displacement of populations), natural disasters and epidemics. Against this backdrop, the EU remained a leading humanitarian donor, mobilising EUR 2.4 billion to provide relief to millions of people in more than 80 countries.

A significant proportion of EU humanitarian aid was devoted to crisis-affected people inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. Different Commission departments continued to implement the humanitarian component of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey, notably through the Emergency Social Safety Net. The EU also continued to support populations in forgotten crises such as those in the Central African Republic, Sudan, Pakistan, Venezuela, Haiti and the Philippines.

The EU continued playing a leading role in the promotion of principled humanitarian aid and respect for international humanitarian law. This was achieved through active advocacy on different crises, as well as globally as chair of the Donor Support Group of the International Committee of the Red Cross and of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative with Switzerland and through continued

commitment to humanitarian civil-military coordination. Against the backdrop of a growing funding gap, the Commission continued promoting the implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments, notably in relation to multi-sectoral joint needs assessment. The Grand Bargain is an agreement between some of the largest donors and aid providers, which aims to get more means into the hands of people in need.

In line with its previous commitments, the Commission increased funding for Education in Emergencies actions from 1% in 2015 to 10% in 2019 of the EU's humanitarian aid budget and maintained its commitment to deliver 35% of humanitarian assistance through cash transfers. 2019 also saw the adoption of operational guidance⁸ on *The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in EU-funded Humanitarian Aid Operations*.

In recognition of the importance of strengthening governments and communities' capacity for effective and efficient response (and thus helping to reduce overall humanitarian needs), the Commission continues to invest in disaster preparedness measures through its flagship DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) programme. In line with its yearly allocation, in 2019, EUR 50 million was dedicated to preparedness interventions, which directly benefited 28 million people worldwide.

In 2019, the Commission played an active role globally in first response to emergencies and disasters. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) was activated 20 times for disasters both inside and outside the EU. Forest fires continued to account for a high proportion of the activations. Firefighting assets from the rescEU reserve⁹ were deployed for the first time to combat fires in Greece in August 2019. In addition, the UCPM sent support to combat the devastating forest fires in Bolivia, Guatemala, Israel and Lebanon.

Within the EU, expertise on marine pollution was provided to Finland and France following oil leaks. Search and rescue assistance was provided to Albania following two serious earthquakes. The EU also supported communities following devastating tropical cyclones in Mozambique and the Bahamas and floods in Djibouti, India and Iran. Assistance was also provided for health emergencies resulting from Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and a measles epidemic in Samoa. This assistance was coordinated through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre.

EU humanitarian aid and civil protection assistance continued to be a tangible sign of EU citizens' solidarity towards people in need across the world.

1.1.4. EU enlargement

The Commission continued to support enlargement countries in improving their readiness to join the EU. The enlargement process continues to be based on the principles of own merits and of 'fundamentals first'. The Commission continued to focus efforts on the rule of law, including security, fundamental rights, democratic institutions and public administration reform, as well as on economic development and competitiveness. These remain the fundamentals for meeting the Copenhagen and Madrid membership criteria.

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/disability_inclusion_en.

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/echo/news/resceu-strengthened-eu-civil-protection-mechanism-enters-force_en.

The annual enlargement package, consisting of a Commission Communication on the implementation of EU enlargement policy and seven country reports, was adopted on 29 May 2019. In view of the progress made by the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia, in particular in the areas identified as crucial by the Council in June 2018, the Commission maintained its recommendation to open accession negotiations with the two countries. The European Council decided in October 2019 to return to the issue of enlargement before the EU-Western Balkans summit in Zagreb in May 2020. Negotiations were officially opened in March 2020.

In May 2019, the Commission also issued its opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for EU membership, together with an analytical report. The Commission considered that negotiations for accession should be opened once Bosnia and Herzegovina has achieved the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria. In December 2019, the Council adopted conclusions on the Commission's Opinion, which it welcomed. The Council urged executive and legislative bodies at all levels of government in the country to start addressing the key priorities identified in the Opinion, in line with the legitimate aspirations of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina that the country will advance towards the European Union.

In parallel, implementation of the flagship initiatives outlined in the 2018 Western Balkans strategy continued. The strategy focused on areas where further reforms and efforts are needed from the Western Balkan partners, and on the EU's enhanced support to the region.

The EU continued the political dialogue with the countries of the Western Balkans. Provisions under the Stabilisation and Association Agreements continued to be broadly implemented and the meetings of the joint bodies under the agreements took place at regular intervals.

In 2019, EU-Turkey relations were marked by the continued deterioration of the rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms in Turkey, as well as by the country's assertive foreign policy in Syria, Libya and the eastern Mediterranean. In light of the former, in June 2019 the Council reiterated that Turkey's accession negotiations have effectively come to a standstill, and no further work towards modernising the EU-Turkey Customs Union is foreseen. In reaction to Turkey's unauthorised drilling activities in the eastern Mediterranean, the EU took a number of decisions, including not to hold high-level dialogues and Association Council meetings, to reduce pre-accession funding, with the exception of support under the facility for Refugees in Turkey, and review sovereign lending from the European Investment Bank and to adopt a framework regime for restrictive measures.

During 2019, implementation of the pre-accession assistance to Turkey took place in this challenging context. The EU decided a further reduction of EUR 230 million compared to the allocation envisaged in the revised indicative strategy paper on the 2020 Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) budget for Turkey.

The Facility for Refugees in Turkey is a key component of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement. It continued to coordinate existing EU assistance instruments to ensure that the needs of refugees and host communities in Turkey were addressed swiftly and effectively. By the end of 2019, the Facility's operational funding allocation of EUR 6 billion had been fully committed, with EUR 4.7 billion contracted and EUR 3.2 billion of this disbursed to date. The Facility continues to support refugee

needs in the areas of education, health, livelihoods, protection, municipal infrastructure and socio-economic support.

Peer-to-peer instruments, namely the TAIEX and Twinning instruments, also actively contributed to the overall reform process in line with EU political priorities in the IPA region.

1.1.5. Security and defence

In March 2019, the two-year work programme of the European defence industrial development programme was adopted by the European Commission. In February 2019, a partial political agreement was reached on the European Defence Fund legislative proposal, with the budgetary aspects of the programme subject to the agreement on the EU's next budget for 2021-2027.

In 2019, civilian common security and defence policy (CSDP) missions were active in Ukraine, Kosovo^{*}, Georgia, Iraq, the occupied Palestinian territories, Libya, Mali, Niger and Somalia. In 2019, a new civilian CSDP mission was established in the Central African Republic to support the reform of the security forces with the aim of helping in their gradual deployment throughout the country.

Following the adoption of the civilian CSDP Compact, a comprehensive process of strengthening civilian CSDP capabilities started in 2019 with a European External Action Service (EEAS)-Commission joint action plan, Member States national implementation plans and a first annual review conference.

The capacity building for security and development (CBSD) initiative introduced a previously missing element to the EU toolbox: the possibility in specific circumstances to engage with military actors in partner countries to support civilian development objectives that cannot be implemented by other actors. This contributes to national and regional stability, sustainable development and peaceful societies. In 2019, CBSD actions were approved in Burkina Faso, Niger, Somalia and Tajikistan, as was the expansion of an ongoing CBSD action in the Central African Republic. These actions train and support military actors to contribute to the restoration of state authority and enhance the state capacity to deliver basic services in insecure areas.

In 2019, the EU supported defence and security in Africa through: (i) the African Peace Facility (APF) including deployment of African Union peacekeeping troops in Somalia and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) troops in The Gambia; (ii) support to the Multinational Joint Task Force (Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria) to bring an end to the Boko Haram insurgency; and (iii) support to the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism in South Sudan. The *G5 Sahel Force Conjointe* was also supported in its military component with the APF and in its civil (police) component through the Trust Fund and the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

Three regional projects covering the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhoods and the Western Balkans were funded by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance and the European

^{*} This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Neighbourhood Instrument to strengthen cross-border cooperation in the fight against organised crime and terrorism.

With the support of a partnership instrument approved in May 2019, the EU has started developing tailor-made security and defence cooperation partnerships with five Asian countries (Japan, the Republic of Korea, India, Vietnam and Indonesia). The partnerships include substantive activities (training, capacity and confidence building, joint exercises and technical assistance) in five priority areas (maritime security, cyber security, counter terrorism and cooperation on peacekeeping/CSDP missions).

The EU enhanced cooperation with international organisations. With the UN, progress was made on implementing the 2019-2021 UN-EU priorities on peace operations and crisis management; the priorities are: (i) cooperation between missions and operations; (ii) the women, peace and security agenda; and (iii) conflict prevention. With NATO, the EU contributed to NATO's 'Building Integrity' programme to help NATO partners in the EU Neighbourhood to prevent corruption in the defence and security sectors.

New actions with CBSD funding have been approved in Burkina Faso, Niger, the Central African Republic, Tajikistan, the Horn of Africa and Benin. Under specific circumstances, CSBD funding makes it possible to work with military actors in partner countries to deliver development activities and provide security for development activities, where these cannot be implemented through other actors. These projects will contribute to national and regional stability, sustainable development and peaceful societies.

The 2018–2020 multiannual indicative programme was approved for IcSP Article 5 (to assist in addressing global, trans-regional and emerging threats). In this context, several projects were launched to strengthen the resilience of communities and governments against violent extremism and terrorist attacks, including actions against money laundering and on counterterrorist financing.

In 2019, actions financed under the long-term component of the IcSP to address global, trans-regional and emerging threats (article 5) contributed to strengthening the resilience of communities and governments against violent extremism and terrorist attacks. In the specific area of preventing and countering violent extremism, innovative projects implemented in partnership with local communities contributed to increased understanding of local factors and drivers of violent extremism in targeted countries and regions, and supported vulnerable individuals.

The EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Centre of Excellence Initiative has continued to support capacity-building activities in eight regions (61 countries) worldwide. In 2019, several large-scale regional projects focused on prevention, preparedness and response to epidemics, natural disasters, environmental emergencies, chemical, biological or radiological attacks, accidents and trafficking.

Finally, the EU has continued to assist partner countries (Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, the Central African Republic, Tunisia, Lebanon and Jamaica) to improve the governance and effectiveness of their security sector in line with human rights and the rule of law.

1.1.6. Crisis response and preparedness

Throughout 2019, the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace remained a key tool for EU diplomacy in crisis contexts and in its quest for stability, conflict prevention and resolution, and peacebuilding. All 46 new crisis response actions adopted responded directly to EU political priorities.

Commitments under the crisis response component of the IcSP amounted to EUR 256.8 million. Under the multiannual action plan for conflict prevention, peacebuilding and crisis preparedness, EUR 35.5 million was committed to longer-term interventions. The IcSP was used to support actions in all major crises worldwide, including 17 out of the 20 lowest ranking countries listed in the 2019 Global Peace Index¹⁰: Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, Venezuela and Yemen.

The 2019-2020 IcSP multiannual action programme, approved in 2019, reflects a strong focus on conflict prevention and on actions to address the root causes of violent conflict, in line with the EU's 'integrated approach' to external conflicts and crises.

The main priorities of the programme are:

- support to civil society in third countries to prevent conflicts and build peace;
- the enhancement of EU's early warning capacities;
- EU support to mediation and peace processes;
- the reinforcement of third countries' security sector governance and reform;
- the active involvement of the EU in the women's peace and security and youth peace and security agenda;
- the EU's engagement in the field of social media and peace.

Crisis response actions adopted in 2019 included:

- support to the ongoing transition process in Sudan;
- rapid action in the wake of the Easter bombings in Sri Lanka;
- support to accompany the signature of the peace agreement in Mozambique;
- committed engagement in north-eastern Syria in areas liberated from Da'esh by the Global Coalition;
- efforts to prevent conflict in Ethiopia in connection with the 2020 elections;
- continued support to UN-led peace efforts in Libya and Yemen;
- continued support to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

In addition, newly adopted actions in the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia, as well as ongoing programmes in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Niger and Ukraine, directly complement the work of CSDP missions, contributing to the implementation of the EU

¹⁰ Global Peace Index 2019, Institute for Economics and Peace: Israel, North Korea and Russia are the only three among the 20 lowest ranking countries where no IcSP crisis response action is ongoing.

integrated approach in response to conflicts and crises. In 2019, the use of CBSD was further strengthened as part of the IcSP. In addition to the actions launched in 2018, the IcSP mobilised additional CBSD actions in Burkina Faso, Niger, Somalia and Tajikistan, where the instrument will accompany state authorities in their efforts to step up their presence and exert control over their national territory.

A global CBSD action was launched to support regional training centres in west Africa, east Africa and the Middle East to train military actors in the areas of health, humanitarian demining and civil protection.

Work to coordinate international efforts in conflict and post-conflict settings continued with the UN and other international organisations, notably the World Bank and the African Development Bank, reflecting the EU's strong commitment to multilateralism. In 2019, the first EU contribution to the UN Peace Building Fund (UNPBF) was made through the IcSP to support the fund's strengthened role following the UN reform. The financial contribution went hand in hand with closer collaboration between the IcSP and UNPBF teams. The EU also provided support to the UN Mediation Stand-by Team in Ukraine through the IcSP.

1.1.7. Making a difference: New instruments and aid modalities

In order to finance the SDGs and respond to an increasingly complex world, development finance needs to rely on a combination of funding sources. To increase the impact of official development assistance (ODA), public and private funds must be leveraged as efficiently as possible.

In partner countries, the EU must be ready to adapt and further develop its financial instruments and policy tools for investments in order to deliver on its ambitious commitments.

To this end, in 2017 the European Commission developed the External Investment Plan (EIP), a new EU initiative offering an innovative way to attract more investment, in particular from businesses and private investors, to countries in Africa and the EU Neighbourhood. At the core of EIP, the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD¹¹) combines a new guarantee instrument (total EUR 1.54 billion) with two regional investment platforms (the Africa Investment Platform (AIP) and the Neighbourhood Investment Platform (NIP)). These two regional platforms together account for EUR 3.1 billion, by blending EU financial support with loans and equity from eligible institutions that finance and manage development projects in countries outside the EU.

The EFSD guarantee aims to support investments in less developed and more risky countries in Africa and the European Neighbourhood by attracting private sector players into sectors in which they do not traditionally get involved. Under the EFSD guarantee, the Commission provides partial guarantees to eligible financiers, who pass on the benefits of the guarantee to investment operations, directly or via local private banks, investment funds or microcredit institutions, to end borrowers such as micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, through a wide range of financial instruments. These may include loans (including local currency loans), guarantees, counter-

¹¹ [Regulation \(EU\) 2017/1601 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 September 2017 establishing the European Fund for Sustainable Development \(EFSD\), the EFSD Guarantee and the EFSD Guarantee Fund.](#)

guarantees, capital market instruments, any other form of funding or credit enhancement, insurance and equity or quasi-equity arrangements.

The EU blending allocated for 78 projects in sub-Saharan Africa and for 79 projects in the Neighbourhood is expected to leverage nearly EUR 29.5 billion in sustainable investment.

Overall, programmes and projects approved by the EFSD by the end of 2019 are expected to mobilise around EUR 47 billion in investment, exceeding the EU's target to unlock EUR 44 billion by over EUR 2 billion.

In 2019, three EFSD guarantee programmes were signed: one focusing on providing access to finance across Africa for high potential small businesses by piloting capital market solutions, with the Italian development finance institution Cassa Depositi e Prestiti¹²; another with the Dutch development finance institution Financierings-Maatschappij voor Ontwikkelingslanden N.V. to guarantee venture capital to start-up companies, in particular led by young entrepreneurs in the digital space; and the third with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to boost financing in renewable energy resources in the Neighbourhood.

1.1.8. Human rights and democracy

The 2030 Agenda reflects a human rights-based vision, which is fully consistent with the EU policy framework¹³. While several SDGs make an explicit link between development and human rights and democracy (in particular SDGs 5, 10 and 16), others are underpinned by human rights in a more general sense.

The year 2019 marked the final phase of implementation of the EU action plan on human rights and democracy (2015-2019), the 10th anniversary of the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 2019, the EU reaffirmed its support to human rights, democracy and the rule of law through its financial instruments, both by strengthening the rights-based approach in development cooperation and by dedicating targeted support to human rights and democracy worldwide.

Through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) in 2019 the EU funded a total of 268 projects, both in partner countries and globally, mostly through calls for proposals and implementation by civil society organisations. The overall financial support provided by the EIDHR to these projects totalled EUR 119.5 million. These projects addressed all five objectives assigned to EIDHR by its multiannual indicative programme for the period 2018-2020: (i) defending human rights and human rights defenders where they are most at risk; (ii) promoting other EU human rights priorities; (iii) democracy support; (iv) electoral observation missions; and (v) support to targeted global and regional actors on human rights. In 2019, EU Delegations worldwide dedicated more funds to support the protection and capacity of human rights defenders and to promote human rights where they are most at risk, responding to a global context of increasing attacks against human rights defenders and fundamental freedoms.

¹² Cassa Depositi e Prestiti countersigned the guarantee in February 2020.

¹³ Promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms is a key EU foreign policy objective as stipulated in the EU Treaty (Articles 2 and 21 of the Treaty on the EU (TEU)).

The EU human rights defenders mechanisms, including ProtectDefenders.eu and the EU Emergency Fund for Human Rights Defenders, have provided support to more than 30 000 human rights defenders and their families since 2015. These mechanisms were renewed at the end of 2019 for another 3 years, with a combined budget of EUR 18.3 million.

The 21st EU-NGO Forum on Human Rights held in Brussels on 3-4 December 2019 brought together human rights defenders from more than 90 countries to exchange views on challenges and identify solutions around the human rights and environment nexus.

The European Endowment for Democracy, with renewed financial support from the EU, further extended its operations in the Neighbourhood, Turkey and the Western Balkans, with 260 new grants and 41 emergency grants funded in 2019 in support of civil society, independent media and democracy activists.

The EU also provided financial support to key UN human rights actors and mechanisms such as the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and the mandate of three UN Special Rapporteurs (human rights defenders, freedom of association and freedom of expression). This support illustrates the EU's strong support to a rules-based multilateral system in a complex global context. UN institutions and political dialogue in UN forums remain indispensable to promote the universality and indivisibility of human rights, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Treaty on the European Union.

In a context of continuing decline in the quality of democracy worldwide, the EU Foreign Ministers adopted in the October Council *Conclusions on Democracy - a comprehensive framework to advance democratic governance*¹⁴. Cooperation projects in support of democracy in 2019 aimed to support the development of accountable institutions, the organisation of elections, support for national parliaments and political parties, and the development of independent and quality media. The largest share of budget support, representing 40% of EU bilateral cooperation, went to democratic governance, providing an essential opportunity to strengthen dialogue in support of democracy, justice reforms and the rule of law.

Against a backdrop of continuing challenges to global democracy, the EU continues to reaffirm its commitment to democratic processes, launching programmes totalling more than EUR 47.2 million in some 30 countries in 2019. These programmes aim to support the electoral process and institutions, parliaments, political parties, civil society and wider democratic governance. The EU also deployed eight fully fledged election observation missions, six electoral expert missions and seven follow-up missions in 2019. Electoral expert follow-up missions aim to ensure that follow-up work focuses on the election observation mission recommendations for the improvement of electoral processes; they are increasingly important in the context of results-oriented management. In addition, the EU has developed a public database, which provides access to a central repository of recommendations issued by EU election observation missions¹⁵. The EU also supported local electoral observers in 11 countries.

¹⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/14/democracy-eu-adopts-conclusions/>

¹⁵ <http://database.eueom.eu><http://database.eueom.eu>

1.2. Fostering sustainable development

1.2.1. Implementing the 2030 Agenda comprehensively and coherently

Rising inequalities, growing hunger, global warming, biodiversity loss, social unrest, conflicts and migration represent current trends, and are reflected across the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2019 SDG Summit to review progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda underlined the need for a shift in development pathways and for greater speed in meeting the SDGs by 2030. In September 2019, the UN Secretary-General called on all sectors of society to mobilise for a decade of action. The Decade of Action calls for accelerating sustainable solutions to global challenges ranging from poverty and gender to climate change, inequality and closing the finance gap.

At the UN High-Level Political Forum in New York in July 2019, the EU presented progress made in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within Europe and through EU international cooperation. EU action to implement the 2030 Agenda internally was presented in the EU reflection paper *Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030*, while the 2019 Eurostat monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context evaluated how well the EU and its Member States are advancing on this issue, while highlighting the SDGs' cross-cutting and interconnected nature.

In addition, the EU and its Member States produced the first joint synthesis report on the progress they had made in promoting implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the European Consensus on Development in developing countries. The report showed good progress against the five Ps of the 2030 Agenda (people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships), and included summaries of the many actions underway under each SDG. The 2019 EU report on policy coherence for development showcased the EU's progress in formulating policies which consider impacts on developing countries from the outset.

In the political guidelines of December 2019, the President of the new European Commission put the SDGs at the heart of EU policy-making and action, sending a strong message about Europe's commitment to sustainability. The European Green Deal was presented at the same time as an integral part of the Commission's strategy to implement the UN's 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The Green Deal is the EU's agenda to steer economies and society towards a more sustainable future path. It focuses on actions in Europe, but recognises the need to promote progress worldwide consistent with the Green Deal through diplomacy, policy coherence and cooperation with partners. As part of the Green Deal, the Commission will refocus the European Semester process of macroeconomic coordination to integrate the SDGs, thus putting sustainability and the well-being of citizens at the centre of macroeconomic policy.

In terms of external action, the EU will continue to implement the European Consensus on Development together with Member States and pursues the SDGs through external actions, as

proposed in the future NDICI financing instrument¹⁶. The Consensus aligns the EU with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The Consensus is set out in the framework of EU external action provided by the Treaty on the European Union (Article 21 on external action) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Articles 208-211 on development) and in the EU Global Strategy. The enlargement and revised European neighbourhood policies also contribute to achieving the SDGs.

The EU continues to engage actively with partner countries through policy dialogues based on the SDGs, making use of national development plans and voluntary national reviews of SDGs. This goes hand in hand with the EU objectives to promote a 'working better together' approach through joint programming and joint implementation with the Member States in partner countries and to enhance cooperation with the UN. In accordance with the Consensus, the Commission is continuously updating reporting systems for consistency with the 2030 Agenda's follow-up processes and indicators, and is working closely with Member States for greater impact at country level through joint programming, joint implementation and joint results frameworks in line with the 'Working better together' commitment.

SDGs are also reflected in major initiatives such as the proposal for the NDICI instrument and in the negotiations towards the EU's new partnerships with Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific that will succeed the Cotonou Agreement and continue working towards fulfilling the SDGs.

1.2.2. Implementing the new agenda

A mix of financial and non-financial resources are required to implement the 2030 Agenda. In line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the EU has a comprehensive and integrated approach to mobilising financing from all available sources (public and private, domestic and international) as well as promoting other means of implementation, including the establishment of good policies and policy coherence for development, which are needed to fulfil the SDGs.

The EU is helping partner countries make the most of the diverse financing sources available to support SDG implementation. Progress was made in generating political momentum and rallying support around integrated national financing frameworks (INFFs) as a means to map the landscape for financing for sustainable development at country level and to develop country-led financing strategies to reach the SDGs. In this context, the EU succeeded in bringing together multilateral and bilateral actors to work together on substantive steps towards financing strategies for the SDGs. So far, some 16 partner countries have confirmed their willingness to engage in an INFF.

Other more specific EU achievements in 2019 include bringing together aid, investment, trade, domestic resource mobilisation and policies designed to unlock the full potential of all financial flows.

Support for mobilisation of domestic resources is helping to improve the transparency, fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of tax systems in partner countries.

¹⁶ COM(2018) 460 final of 14 June 2018.

Through the European External Investment Plan (EIP), the EU encourages investments in partner countries in Africa and the EU Neighbourhood region. Originally expected to leverage at least EUR 44 billion in investment in sustainable development in these regions by 2020, the EIP is now expected to exceed EUR 47 billion. With the establishment of the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD), a key innovation is the increased importance of investments underwritten by a new external action guarantee. The EU signed two guarantee agreements for projects with a total EFSD guarantee contribution of EUR 90 million that are expected to leverage total investments of over EUR 1.5 billion. The EFSD also increased its allocation with blending, with over EUR 3 billion allocated as of the end of 2019. With approved project funding reaching EUR 4.65 billion, the EFSD uses guarantee and blending operations to leverage other sources of public and private finance. Through these instruments, the EU supports action to prevent climate change and promote the social and economic empowerment of women.

The private sector is duly acknowledged as a major contributor to sustainable and inclusive growth and the creation of decent jobs. The EU has taken measures to promote local private sector development in partner countries, notably through entrepreneurship and access to finance support. Attractive investment climates and regulatory frameworks are also of paramount importance for the private sector, and accordingly the EU promotes public-private dialogue processes and events and has stepped up its assistance to investment climate reforms.

The EU is also facilitating the development of the ‘total official support for sustainable development’ (TOSSD) statistical measure to help identify available means of implementation for emerging donors (e.g. investment, private mobilised resources, south–south and triangular cooperation and financial flows). The international TOSSD task force co-chaired by the European Commission and South Africa finalised the drafting of the TOSSD methodology in 2019. The first TOSSD data survey (the results of which were published in October 2019) was a success. TOSSD was also submitted for inclusion in the global SDG indicator framework.

1.2.3. Working better together with Member States

Working better together for the SDGs is about the EU developing a European approach for development cooperation and external action in a partner country that adds value to collective bilateral cooperation, both in terms of policy dialogue and technical and financial support. The key components that strengthen this framework are joint programming, the joint results frameworks and joint implementation.

Good progress was recorded in progressing joint implementation, which helped to increase the impact of EU funds. By December 2019, there were 20 joint programming documents in place globally. Intensified efforts to reach the same level of commitment in preparation for the future joint programming are under way in another 26 partner countries. During 2019, joint programming documents were launched in the Central African Republic, Honduras and Mali, while Cambodia’s European development cooperation strategy was extended to 2019 and 2020.

Three training courses for EU and Member State staff on the *working better together* approach were organised, along with a global learning event in Uganda to promote the sharing of knowledge among practitioners. A joint mission by the EU and Member States to Zimbabwe also signalled closer

European collaboration in development cooperation and external actions. Furthermore, three studies were published in early 2019 on joint programming contributions to the SDGs, on how joint programming can work in middle-income countries and on how joint programming can be put into operation in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

The Twinning and TAIEX instruments continued to mobilise Member State experts to great effect. For more on Twinning and TAIEX see Section 4.2.4. Positive collaboration between the EU and the Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation continued during 2019 with a focus on inclusiveness (i.e. looking at how to support the involvement of all Member States in a European approach to development cooperation), and the mobilisation of public sector expertise in development cooperation.

1.2.4. Policy coherence for development

In all the policies that it implements, the EU is committed to embracing the objectives of development cooperation likely to affect developing countries. This is known as policy coherence for development (PCD) and is enshrined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union¹⁷.

Through this commitment, the EU aims to minimise contradiction, build synergies among its different policies to the benefit of partner countries, and increase the effectiveness of development cooperation.

As highlighted in the 2017 European Consensus on Development, PCD is an important contribution to the achievement of SDGs by partner countries and to the broader objective of policy coherence for sustainable development.

Given that implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires a whole-of-government approach and coordination efforts at all levels, work on PCD has been integrated into the Commission's work on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda across all its policies. This new approach to PCD was reflected in the *2019 EU Report on Policy Coherence for Development*, which was published in January 2019, closely linked to the publication of the *Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030* reflection paper. A discussion on this report followed in Council, and Council Conclusions on policy coherence for development were adopted in May 2019. Reference to the PCD report was also made in the Council Conclusions on *Towards an ever more sustainable Union by 2030 Agenda* adopted in April 2019. At the High-Level Political Forum in July 2019, the *2019 EU Report on Policy Coherence for Development* was presented as one of the deliverables at the EU's side event about the state of play of the EU's internal and external efforts on 'Delivering the SDGs in Europe and in the world'.

In February 2019, the Commission also published another staff working document on the external evaluation of PCD covering the period 2009-2016, in which the Commission presented its conclusions on the external evaluation.

Reporting from EU delegations on PCD issues continued to increase in order to provide better evidence of the impact of EU policies in partner countries.

¹⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT:EN:PDF>

1.2.5. Development effectiveness

In the European Consensus and successive high-level forums on aid development¹⁸, the EU and its Member States committed to applying the key principles of development effectiveness: ownership of development priorities by partner countries; focus on results, transparency and accountability; and inclusive development partnerships. The EU coordinates and supports Member States in the implementation of these principles, promoting a European approach that enables common positions and practices to be developed in light of the 2030 Agenda.

The global monitoring reports of effectiveness, undertaken biannually by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) show, however, that the effectiveness of development cooperation at country level is declining¹⁹: progress by provider countries has weakened and demand from partner countries for effective cooperation has fallen. In addition, the inclusion of civil society and private sector stakeholders in policy-making has not progressed.

The Commission supports the GPEDC activities and represents the European providers in its Steering Committee. It played a leading role and successfully influenced the GPEDC to prioritise effectiveness at country level, accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and to redesign the global monitoring system to link it with partner countries' own systems and make it more influential in promoting change. The Commission was also active in GPEDC's efforts to advance the concept of effectiveness to new forms of development cooperation. In this context, the Kampala Principles on effective private sector engagement in development cooperation were drawn up.

The Commission directly contributes to, discusses and promotes use of the evidence generated by the GPEDC progress reports. It also undertook studies to explore how to improve access to procurement by local contractors, support the use of country systems and increase the impact of development effectiveness principles on results.

In addition, the Commission successfully pushed for a workstream on effectiveness within the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

1.3. Working together towards the SDGs – policy level

1.3.1. SDG 1 No poverty

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the 17 SDGs at its core, is the principal international blueprint for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Eradicating poverty in all its dimensions, tackling discrimination and inequalities and leaving no one behind are at the heart of the European Consensus on Development. Tackling the various

¹⁸ Nairobi Outcome Document from the second High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation GPEDC in 2016 and others.

¹⁹ 2014, 2016 and 2018 global monitoring reports.

dimensions of poverty requires actions on all fronts (including education, health, social protection, gender equality and strengthening resilience). The EU and Member States' actions under all SDGs contribute in some way to the core goal of eradicating poverty. Poverty eradication is the result of many interacting activities.

To reduce poverty, the EU supports development of policies that seek to maximise positive social outcomes and impacts. In this context, domestic resource mobilisation is seen as key to ensuring long-term inclusive growth, sustainable development and the provision of social services. In this regard, social protection systems, including minimum subsistence levels, are essential to ensure that no one is left behind, as stated under SDG 1.3. They are fundamental to prevent and reduce poverty across the life cycle, including cash transfers for children, for mothers with new-borns, for persons with disabilities, for those who are poor or without jobs, and for older persons.

Overview and trends

Extreme poverty has been reducing over the long term. According to the most recent estimates by the World Bank²⁰, based on additional and revised data, in 2015, 10% of the world's population, or 734 million people, lived on less than USD 1.90 a day. That is down from nearly 36%, or 1.9 billion people, in 1990. However, this trend is expected to deteriorate in future reports. It is also becoming increasingly difficult to reach those remaining in extreme poverty, who often live in fragile countries and remote areas.

Moreover, social protection is still not a reality for the majority of the global population. 55% of the world's population in 2016 (four billion people) were not covered by any social protection cash benefits, with the figure as high as 87% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa.

The EU works to enhance social cohesion, to reduce inequality of outcomes and to promote equal opportunities for all. It also works towards inclusive sustainable growth, and universal, sustainable and equitable social protection systems. In line with the new European Consensus on Development, the EU has confirmed its commitment to allocating at least 20% of its official development assistance to social inclusion and human development²¹. It implements a rights-based approach to development, respecting all human rights and promoting inclusion and participation, non-discrimination, equality and equity, transparency and accountability. It sees this as key to leaving no one behind.

Although poverty has reduced, the related challenge of inequality within countries has increased in many parts of the world. Of the 10 most unequal countries in the world in terms of income distribution, seven are in sub-Saharan Africa. To sustain and improve gains in poverty reduction, it will be key to also address inequalities and improve the distributional impact of programmes. In addition, given the expected concentration by 2030 of extremely poor people in fragile and conflict-affected regions, the EU continues to strengthen ways to address the needs of the poor in those regions.

²⁰ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/march-2020-global-poverty-update-world-bank-new-poverty-estimates-2018>.

²¹ The share of EU-funded international cooperation and development assistance directed at supporting human development for 2019 is 20.5% (SWD Part II, p. 222, table 3.2).

The EU attaches great importance to the link between humanitarian aid, as a rapid response measure in crisis situations, and more medium- and long-term development action. More than 70 million people were forcibly displaced in 2019, and most of them were hosted in developing countries with limited resources. Throughout 2019, the EU continued to support refugees' self-reliance in protracted displacement. The EU 'humanitarian development-peace nexus' encourages humanitarian, development and political/diplomatic actors to work closer together to address fragility and vulnerabilities, strengthen livelihoods and build local capacities for risk reduction, resilience, conflict prevention and resolution and other durable solutions. The EU participated in the first Global Refugee Forum in Geneva on 17 and 18 December 2019, showcasing its engagement in refugee situations worldwide, in line with the EU approach to forced displacement.

Case studies

Case study – Social protection and public finance management

Context

In social protection, the EU supports bilateral social protection programmes financed through geographic funding allocations in 29 partner countries. Half of this EUR 1 billion investment is implemented through budget support (direct transfers of funds to partner country authorities); the other half follows a programme approach.

Objectives

In addition to these programmes, and to increase universal social protection coverage to pursue SDGs 1.3 and 10.4, the EU started a new thematic programme on improving synergies between social protection and public finance management (PFM). PFM is a key dimension of a social protection policy, bringing together reliable and feasible planning and execution of the budget.

Impact

The expected impact of support in social protection is poverty eradication and inequality reduction, inclusive economic growth and job creation, crisis prevention and recovery, and promotion of peaceful societies.

The planned results of the thematic programme are:

- design and financing
- implementing and monitoring
- development of shock-sensitive social protection systems.

This is achieved through: (i) technical assistance available in the medium term (1 to 2 years) supporting eight priority countries (Angola, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Nepal, Paraguay, Senegal and Uganda); and (ii) short-term technical assistance on demand.

1.3.2. SDG 2 Zero hunger

Introduction

If current trends continue, SDG 2 is unlikely to be achieved by 2030. World hunger and food insecurity have again been on the rise in the past few years. According to the 2019 Global report on food crises, more than 113 million people across 53 countries experienced acute hunger requiring urgent food, nutrition and livelihoods assistance in 2018. The worst food crises in 2018, in order of severity, were: Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Syria, Sudan, South Sudan and Nigeria (specifically the north of the country). These eight countries accounted for two thirds of the total number of people facing acute food insecurity, amounting to nearly 72 million people. While the figure of 113 million people represents a slight improvement over the figure for 2017, when an estimated 124 million people in 51 countries faced acute hunger, the main drivers of food insecurity - conflict and insecurity, climate shocks and economic turbulence – continued to erode livelihoods and destroy lives.

The EU and its Member States remain strongly committed to achieving SDG 2 and therefore continued working with partners to collectively step up support to address hunger in all its forms, including by promoting sustainable and resilient agriculture. Agriculture and rural development can be powerful drivers of growth, job creation and poverty reduction and thereby contribute to other SDG targets.

Overview and trends

Support to sustainable agricultural growth includes initiatives focused on scaling up research and innovation. The DeSIRA (development smart innovation through research in agriculture) initiative, launched at the One Planet Summit in December 2017, has brought fresh energy and momentum to the EU, its Member States and other partners, with stakeholders rallying around the benefits of enhancing climate-relevant research and innovation in agriculture. The EU has increased his efforts and helped energise support and action in 2019, by providing a platform and mobilising around EUR 95 million to build capacities for innovation at country, regional and global levels leading to rural and agriculture transformation.

While ongoing research activities on, for example, pests and crops and support to regional and national research centres continue, new activities were developed in 2019. These include enhancing fisheries management and aquaculture development in Africa; strengthening governance of invasive pests, transboundary diseases and food safety affecting hunger and malnutrition; and supporting farmers' organisations.

Building resilience has been a key component of support to agriculture and food and nutrition security for the EU and it is the foundation of sustainable development. The 'Food & Agriculture in times of crises' high-level event held in Brussels on 2 and 3 April 2019 marked a new phase in the work of the Global Network against Food Crises, showing its convening power, political coordination and its ability to go beyond joint analyses towards strategic investments to end food crises. A key outcome was a commitment to enhance humanitarian development-peace collaboration. Having spearheaded the 'Global report on food crises' back in 2016, the EU continued to work hard with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to attract additional partners to produce the 2019 Global report on food crises. Based on this report, and through the EU's flagship resilience initiative (PRO-ACT), EU actions in more than 12 countries will support resilience building, complementing humanitarian responses. Resilience is also further promoted by the Commission's ASAP (anomaly hotspots of agricultural production) system, which

provides satellite and model based early warning of production issues for food security crises prevention and response planning. The Commission's Knowledge Centre on Global Food and Nutrition Security also provides a publicly accessible repository of information on food security topics, including resilience-building initiatives. The EU has also promoted investment in agricultural value chains, using innovative financing instruments with the aim of de-risking investment in sustainable agricultural growth. The smallholder is at the heart of the EU's concern in investment programmes. More than EUR 130 million has been agreed or signed, while a further EUR 120 million is in progress in the EU's country programmes.

In September, the EU published its fourth progress report on the Commission's action plan on nutrition. The report indicated that the anticipated number of children that will have avoided stunting since 2012 is 4.9 million across 40 countries that have prioritised nutrition in their national indicative programmes. However, the pace of stunting reduction has slowed down slightly, and will need to accelerate to reach the pace necessary to achieve the target of 7 million children to have avoided stunting by 2025. For the EU, this means further escalating nutrition-relevant actions at country level, by mobilising the full potential of sectoral interventions necessary to address the range of causal factors of stunting.

Case studies

Case study - Afikepo Nutrition programme in Malawi

Context

The Afikepo programme addresses Malawi's problems of undernutrition, particularly in children aged under five, and their negative consequences on their cognitive, social and economic development.

Objectives

The programme aims to enhance nutrition security in Malawi through increased and diversified dietary intake, nutrition education, good governance for optimal nutrition for women of childbearing age, adolescent girls, infants and young children.

Impact

- Agriculture diversification through provision of better-quality extension services and technologies to farmers, increasing income opportunities. Extension workers and farmers followed a training course, in which nutritional aspects are included.
- Women safeguarding and strengthening their capacity to provide for the food and nutrition security and health of their families, which will be achieved by improving nutrition knowledge and practice among rural families to encourage them to eat diversified and nutritious foods, contributing to supporting agriculture diversification and gender equality in Malawi.
- School feeding and nutrition education. As well as a direct effect on the health of pupils, this also has a positive impact on attracting and retaining children in school.
- All agriculture-related interventions promoted the use of climate-smart technologies, making Malawian farmers more resilient to climate change effects.
- Improved irrigation management of natural resources at the community level, especially in the river catchment areas.

Case study - Diversifying diets and livelihoods

Context

The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) is a research centre co-funded by the EU and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. The centre has a project in Kenya called the 4K club. Implemented in partnership with local NGOs in Machakos (100 km south-east of Nairobi) 50 students cultivated a diverse, nutritious and healthy food system in their school garden.

Objectives

The fruit and vegetables from the garden are used to provide healthy school meals. Clubs from surrounding communities also participated in the project by taking saplings and seeds home for their own farms, thus helping to tackle malnutrition issues at community level.

Impact

As of 31 December 2018, the Nutrition Food Portfolio has been developed for 16 sites across Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. Participants in such projects improve their diets and can generate additional income by selling their produce.

1.3.3. SDG 3 Good health and well-being

Introduction

The EU supports progress towards SDG 3 through a comprehensive range of EU instruments (bilateral programmes on health, population, gender and nutrition) and contributions to global initiatives, UN agencies and civil society organisations, working closely with other EU services and Member States. Effective health policy and programmes require complementary work and progress in other sectors and SDGs such as SDG 2 (nutrition), SDG 4 (education), SDG 5 (gender equality and women's empowerment) and SDG 10 (reducing inequalities). At the same time, good health is a global public good and an essential component of the human development of each country, and hence a co-determinant for its economic and social development. The EU and its Member States support partner countries in pursuing a 'health in all policies' approach and encourage cross-sectoral and coordinated efforts aimed at effectively and sustainably improving the quality, coverage and affordability of healthcare for all, and particularly the strengthening of health systems.

Overview and trends

EU assistance for health issues amounts to EUR 2.6 billion in the period 2014–2020. 50% is allocated to global initiatives, while the other 50% is implemented through bilateral and joint EU actions in 17 countries²² aimed at strengthening country health systems and supporting countries to reach their SDG 3 targets, including universal health coverage. Many of the 43 countries that received EU health aid from previous financial frameworks are still benefiting from programmes with a similar objective

²² Afghanistan, Belize, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Grenada, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, South Sudan, Tajikistan and Zimbabwe.

of sustainably strengthening country systems and ensuring the most vulnerable and marginalised population groups are being reached, including children under the age of five, adolescents and young people, and pregnant and breastfeeding women. Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are priority areas for support, as reflected in the new European Consensus on Development and the second EU Gender Action Plan (GAP II) (2016–2020), and represent an entry point for gender equality and the empowerment of women. An estimated 30% of EU health aid is spent on reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health.

The EU plays a significant role in shaping the international policy agenda through its contributions to global initiatives such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM); GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance; the Universal Health Coverage Partnership of the World Health Organisation (WHO); and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). During 2019, the Commission pledged EUR 550 million to the Global Fund for the period 2020–2022. This represents about 5% of total resources spent. In 2018, EU support helped provide life-saving HIV treatment for almost 19 million people, detect and treat over five million cases of tuberculosis (including notification of over 100 000 cases of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis), distribute 130 million mosquito nets to prevent malaria and treat close to 110 million cases of malaria²³. The Commission's support to GAVI (EUR 200 million for 2016–2020, representing about 2% of total resources spent) helped to immunise 66 million children in 2018²⁴. Furthermore, the Commission provided in 2019 a grant to WHO of EUR 104.85 million for the Universal Health Coverage Partnership. This programme aims to contribute to improving donor coordination and aid effectiveness and to strengthening health systems in 115 partner countries. The EU's contribution to the UNFPA Supplies Trust Fund (two grants, totalling EUR 45 million, for 2016–2020) helped improve access to SRHR, including family planning in 46 mainly low-income countries. In 2018, the programme supported 3.2 million safe abortions and prevented 10.4 million unintended pregnancies, 157 000 child deaths, and 25 000 maternal deaths²⁵.

In the context of enlargement negotiations, the Commission continued to support the candidate countries and potential candidates to align with the EU *acquis* and standards on health protection. Through the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA and IPA II), support was provided to Serbia on substances of human origin (EUR 3 million) as well as support to microbiology laboratory surveillance system and emergency services. In 2019 there was a proposal for a project covering the roll-out of an information system for clinical, laboratory and epidemiological information, and under the IPA 2019 civil protection action there is a specific health-focused action related to emergency situations (this will be part of a EUR 7 million overall budget). This aims to contribute to the establishment of a better organised and more coherent operational response in this sector.

In 2019, support was also planned for Albania for the Tirana University Hospital Centre reform programme Phase 2 (EUR 0.48 million) and for Kosovo for the construction and rehabilitation of healthcare infrastructure (EUR 1 million).

²³ <https://data.theglobalfund.org/investments/results> <https://data.theglobalfund.org/investments/results>.

²⁴ <https://www.gavi.org/progress-report/>.

²⁵ https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA_Supplies_report_05_web.pdf.

The EU also supported action against global health threats such as air pollution and antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and strengthened the preparedness and responsiveness of countries' national health systems against epidemics. The EU provides around EUR 200 million every year to support humanitarian health programmes. Under the EU's Partnership Instrument (PI), a EUR 9 million contract will address AMR issues in seven Latin American countries through development of national 'One health' action plans. A similar Partnership Instrument initiative is being formulated for Asia.

Case studies

Case study - Progress towards universal health coverage and improved health equity in Laos

Context

The Supporting public health institutes programme (SPHIP) (2015–2020) strengthens institutes of public health in eight low-income countries so that they are better able to assist national authorities with evidence-based policy-making in key public health areas. In the SPHIP projects, knowledge translation influences public health policy development by guiding relevant health sector stakeholders on the use and communication of research data.

Objectives

The LEARN (Lao Equity through Policy Analysis and Research Networks) project aims to improve Universal Health Coverage in Laos through better informed public health policies and their implementation, monitoring and evaluation. LEARN supports the Lao Tropical Public Health Institute (Lao TPHI) in providing national health authorities and stakeholders with expertise, documentation and relevant tools. LEARN provides evidence to policymakers, with a focus on nutrition, reproductive health, cost-effectiveness and the socio-cultural dimensions of health.

Impact

The LEARN project helped Lao TPHI strengthen its communications and produce a knowledge translation strategy. Research on reproductive health, adolescent health and nutrition was performed and shared with stakeholders. A new Master of Public Health course was established, while four trainers obtained PhDs. In 2019, the Ministry of Health appointed 'knowledge translation focal points' within all the departments of the Ministry to inform health policy development processes.



Case study - Progress towards universal health coverage and improved health equity in Myanmar

Context

In Myanmar, the Supporting public health institutes programme (SPHIP) is also reaching out to community groups, such as inclusive self-help groups.

Objective

To contribute to the process of health reform in Myanmar to achieve equitable and universal healthcare goals.

Impact

In Myanmar, the SPHIP non-communicable diseases (NCDs) research project helped the government to develop a national NCD strategy and training materials for health workers nationwide in diagnosis, treatment and inclusion of NCD services in the package of care. 340 township health officers were trained in management and control of NCDs. Ten policy briefs and factsheets were produced, as well as a mental health strategic plan.

The University of Public Health was supported in strategic planning and its scientific staff strengthened.

Initial evaluation of the project showed an increase in the demand for services; however, improvement is still needed to achieve universal healthcare.

The Minister of Health and Sports for Myanmar said: ‘The impact of the EU supported project was immense, and we consider this as the stepping stone for NCDs prevention and control initiatives in the country. While we thank EU for their support, we also request EU to continue support for NCD interventions to sustain the effort of this project.’



Case study - TAIEX supporting Georgia on public health

Context:

Advancement in the health sector is key under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. Georgia has committed to implementing EU legislation on communicable diseases and organ transplantation. Through a series of events in 2018-2019, TAIEX provided support for harmonising legislation on organ transplantation, as well as assessing the preparedness and effectiveness of the country's disease control system, in close cooperation with the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC).

Objectives:

- Assess compatibility of the national regulatory framework with EU directives on donation, procurement, testing, preservation and distribution of human organs intended for transplantation.
- Assess capacity of Georgia's health governance, surveillance, preparedness and response.
- Suggest areas for improvement, with the objective to prepare the country for participation in the EU's communicable diseases surveillance networks.

Impact:

- Development and implementation of an action plan to harmonise legislation and reform the organ transplantation sector. The plan will enable the country to provide quality and affordable transplantation services to the population, for instance through the creation of a deceased donation system.
- Assessment of Georgia's disease control system, including a set of concrete recommendations, as part of the ECDC report on the state of play, needs and areas for improvement in Georgia with regard to communicable disease.

1.3.4. SDG 4 Quality education

Introduction

Education is key to shaping future generations. Access to quality education is an essential means of achieving sustainable growth and jobs: it helps citizens and professionals to grasp the opportunities created by digital technologies, strengthens societies' resilience to emergencies and crises, and contributes to sustaining peace and preventing violent extremism. It has also a powerful role to play on climate change, environment and gender equality through skills building, awareness raising and strengthening resilience. The EU continued its proactive engagement towards achieving SDG 4, supporting around 100 countries and offering support to global education partnerships such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW). The main focus is on education system strengthening, focusing on access, quality and management.

Overview and trends

The EU, together with its Member States, is the biggest contributor to GPE, which supports basic education, focusing on the poorest countries and/or those in fragile situations. For 2018–2020 an additional EUR 100 million was pledged, on top of the EUR 375 million for 2014–2018. GPE's priority is to provide all children access to quality education. Through its support for the GPE, the EU has contributed to the enrolment of millions more children in school.

Through the Erasmus+ programme, the EU continued to help partner countries facilitate mobility of individuals, and reinforce intercultural dialogue and understanding. Between 2015 and 2019, under Erasmus+ mobility in higher education, more than 130 000 students and university staff moved between partner countries and Europe and vice versa. A pilot vocational education and training (VET) mobility scheme has been introduced in the Western Balkans and Africa to allow students and staff to participate in mobility in EU countries.

Moreover, between 2014 and 2019, at least 7 500 scholarships for Erasmus Mundus joint master's degree programmes were awarded to students from partner countries. Furthermore, 735 projects for capacity building in higher education were funded to modernise higher education institutions, develop new curricula and build relationships between higher education institutions and enterprises.

An additional 351 projects for youth exchanges were awarded during the period 2017 to 2019 for the Eastern Partnership, Western Balkans and Tunisia thanks to a financial top-up.

Jean Monnet Activities are designed to promote excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide. 275 supplementary projects were funded for Georgia and other countries receiving assistance under the Partnership Instrument.

The SELFIE (Self-reflection on Effective Learning by Fostering the use of Innovative Educational Technologies) tool, designed to help schools embed digital technologies into teaching, learning and student assessment, can contribute to assessing the situation in schools at a national level. It has been piloted in Serbia and Turkey to highlight what is working well in schools (primary, secondary and VET), where improvement is needed and what the priorities should be. National SELFIE coordinators have been designated in the Western Balkans. The tool is currently available in more than 24 languages and can be translated for any interested country.

SELFIE gathers, anonymously, the views of students, teachers and school leaders on how technology is used in their school. The statements cover areas such as leadership, infrastructure, teacher training and students' digital competence.

2019 saw the start of support to enhance youth cooperation and youth exchange in the Western Balkans through the Regional Youth Cooperation Office. This involved tailor-made training on financial management, monitoring and administration and on youth participation, as well as the development of a methodology for consultative meetings with young people.

The EU supports a variety of education in emergency actions, with over half of them promoting education for girls. By making education in emergencies a part of its humanitarian response and linking it closely with development cooperation, the EU makes full use of its humanitarian and development funding instruments to support children affected by crises. The share of the European

Commission's humanitarian aid budget allocated to education in emergencies has substantially increased from 1% in 2015 to the 10% target in 2019, reaching EUR 164 million in 2019. The EU has thus become a global leader in education in emergencies, setting an example (the sector receives 3% of global humanitarian aid).

The EU also contributes to the Building Resilience in Crises through Education (BRiCE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW) initiatives. BRiCE supports access to quality education at preschool, primary and lower secondary levels for children in fragile and crisis-affected environments in several African countries, with EUR 24 million contributed for 2018–2021. ECW has enabled the provision of: (i) education to 1.5 million children and youth, half of whom are girls, in 19 crisis-affected countries; and (ii) training to more than 21 000 teachers. In addition, a specific mental health and psychosocial support for children in conflict has been incorporated into ECW-supported actions. The EU financial contribution for the period 2018-2021 amounts to EUR 21 million.

Case studies

Case study – Disadvantaged groups in the Western Balkans

Context

EU action targets the most disadvantaged groups in Western Balkan societies.

Objectives

An IPA programme in Kosovo focused on improving primary education attendance of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian minority students in Kosovo and bridging the educational achievement gap between them and the majority students.

Impact

- Support was given to 10 learning centres in seven municipalities in Kosovo and some 600 scholarships for upper-secondary education provided in collaboration with the national ministry.
- The gap in retention between these community students and the majority dropped to 37.5%, from 78.8% in less than 2 years.

Case study - Pakistan: improving access and gender equality in education in Balochistan

Context

In Pakistan's Balochistan province, 78% of girls are out of school²⁶. On top of difficult school access, many other reasons lead to fewer girls in schools. A lack of appropriate hygiene facilities within school premises contributes to school dropout in puberty, and the absence of safe education environments contributes to school-related gender-based violence.

The Balochistan basic education programme (BBEP) supports the Provincial Government in improving the education system governance and providing quality, gender-sensitive education in 1 200 schools.

Objectives

- Strengthen education management information systems to design gender-sensitive educational planning.
- Help building capacity for primary schools run by women teachers.
- Support inclusive school development plans and menstrual hygiene management that benefit women teachers and girls.

Impact

The programme has implemented school development plans that support gender equal, safe school environments. These have positively affected almost 140 000 children, 40% of whom are girls. Girls' enrolment has increased by 27%, while girls' participation in the new grade 8 exam has increased by 25% since 2016.

The menstrual hygiene management programme has reached over 18 000 girls, 2 340 teachers and nearly 3 000 mothers. Teachers involved in the initiative report that the attendance rate of adolescent girls in grades 6 to 8 has increased by 55%.

²⁶<https://www.unicef.org/pakistan/education>.

Case study - Namibia: improving early childhood education

Context

50% of pre-primary-age children around the world are not enrolled in education, despite evidence showing its positive impact on health, education and earning levels in adulthood.

In Namibia, only 31.3% of children aged five to six years old were attending pre-primary education in 2018 and learners' performance remains a concern.

Objectives

- Through budget support, the EU contributes to strengthening the Namibian education system in order to improve equitable and inclusive access to quality pre-primary education and early childhood development (ECD).
- It also contributes to increasing the quality of teaching through extended quality teacher training and continuous professional development of teachers.

Impact

- The percentage of primary schools with pre-primary classes is now 70% (compared to 52.5% in 2013) and the number of children enrolled in ECD centres is more than 83 000 (compared to 57 422 in 2013).
- The enrolment ratio in pre-primary education has been increasing since 2013.
- The public budget dedicated to ECD and pre-primary education has gradually increased, allowing for investments in access and quality training, teaching and learning materials, etc.

1.3.5. SDG 5 Gender equality

Introduction

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are EU core values and principles embedded in its development and international partnerships policy. The EU Gender Action Plan (GAP II) 2016-2020 is the current framework to support gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external relations; the new GAP III announced in 2019 will be adopted at the end of 2020.

Overview and trends

Through the implementation of the GAP II, with its target of at least 85% of all new programmes promoting gender equality by 2020, the EU has substantially contributed to gender equality and women's empowerment in the 2030 Agenda. In 2018, 76% programmes were marked with OECD gender equality policy marker G1 or G2 (+5% compared to 2017). Data for 2019 are being processed.

In 2019, the EU increased commitments to ending discrimination against women and girls (SDG 5.1). New actions focused on access to justice (+21%), promotion of the rule of law, and justice and security systems reform (+43%). Work on implementing prevention and response to violence against and exploitation of women and girls (SDG 5.2) has also increased, prioritising the empowerment of gender-based violence survivors (+25%) and the prevention of child and forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The continuing implementation of the Spotlight Initiative, a transformative EU-

UN partnership aiming to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls worldwide, greatly contributed to this target. The partnership was launched in September 2017 with an initial investment of EUR 500 million and by 2019 EUR 460 million was committed to specific projects. In Asia, actions include the 'Safe and Fair' programme (EUR 25 million) aiming to improve the working conditions of women migrants. In sub-Saharan Africa (EUR 220 million) actions focus on preventing, combating and prosecuting sexual and gender-based, child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation in Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Similar programmes started in the Caribbean (Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana) and Pacific (Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Samoa and Vanuatu). Regional interventions in central Asia, including Afghanistan (EUR 45 million), are also planned.

SDG 5.1 is also a priority across all Neighbourhood countries, where the Commission in cooperation with the Council of Europe and civil society, is supporting the signature and ratification of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). As a result, Tunisia has formally requested accession to the Convention. In 2019, in the Southern Mediterranean region, a campaign to end violence against women was launched and the 'Ensuring sustainable democratic governance and human rights' programme was again funded (EUR 3 million). Policy dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment with the Union for the Mediterranean led to the identification of gender-responsive indicators to monitor the Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society (Cairo, 2017) (SDG 5.C). In Morocco, the EU supported the first government plan for equality. Under the enlargement and neighbourhood policies, focus was placed on preventing gender-based violence, changing gender norms and stereotypes and enabling legislative and policy environment via the 'Implementing Norms, Changing Minds' regional programme. The annual regional forum, which established a mechanism of knowledge sharing and dialogue on the Istanbul Convention, was extended until 2021 (EUR 2.5 million). In the Eastern Partnership, the EU is supporting rule of law, quality and efficiency of the judiciary and women's access to justice through the 'Partnership for Good Governance', implemented by the Council of Europe.

Support to ending gender-based violence in humanitarian aid has also increased (+20%). In line with its policy on gender in humanitarian aid²⁷, the EU addressed prevention of sexual violence and response through a multi-sectoral approach including medical care, psychological support, referral to legal services and, where possible, livelihood support or socio-economic assistance²⁸.

The EU remains strongly committed to ensuring women's full participation in leadership and decision-making (SDG 5.5). In 2019, new commitments (+18%) aimed to increase the proportion of seats held by women (and minorities) in national parliaments and local governments. Examples of initiatives in this area include the 'Social Contract: Contributing to state building and inclusive politics' project in Somalia and the enhancing of indigenous women's political participation in Paraguay.

²⁷https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf.
https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf.

²⁸https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid_en.
https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid_en.

The EU is at the forefront of the promotion of universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SDG 5.6). In 2019, new programmes focused on providing young people with comprehensive sexuality education (a 25% increase) and family planning. In the Philippines, the 'Improving availability of reproductive health services in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao' project targets adolescents' reproductive health. In Mauritania, the EU supported gender mainstreaming in the Health Ministry regional budgets. In Gabon, sexual and reproductive health is an entry point for women's and girls' inclusion in governance and political dialogue. In Egypt, actions on sexual and reproductive health include child protection, inclusive education and engaging men and boys on gender-based violence.

In 2019, the EU built key alliances to strengthen equal rights to economic resources (SDG 5A), particularly through the Partnership Instrument, and increased commitment on women's access to financial services (+13%), including land rights (+4%). In Libya, the EU supported young women and youth entrepreneurs. Under the EU Trust Fund for the Syrian crisis, initiatives focus on strengthening the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey. Through the EuroMed Feminist Initiative, the EU is strengthening access to protection, participation and services for Syrian women refugees, internally displaced people and host communities.

The EU is also strategically promoting empowerment of women through technology (SDG 5.B). A partnership with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) has been set up under the Digital2Equal initiative promoting online platforms to women's opportunities (EUR 535 000 for peer learning). IFC will convene 17 companies to facilitate the exchange of goods, services or capital.

Case studies

Case study - Partnership Instrument actions

Context

The Partnership Instrument continued to implement the EUR 22.5 million 'WeEmpower' programme to increase the public and private sectors' commitment to gender equality and to women's empowerment in the world of work at all levels.

Objectives

The programme has three main components:

- 'WE EMPOWER G7 countries' facilitates multi-stakeholder dialogue and exchanges between companies, governments and public institutions in Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom.
- 'WIN WIN' promotes the economic empowerment of women in the corporate sector in Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Jamaica and Uruguay.
- 'WE EMPOWER Asia' promotes the economic participation and empowerment of women in China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. It focuses on the role

that the private sector can play in partnership with the public sector and networks of women entrepreneurs, women-owned business and associations.

Impact

The programme has helped companies develop and implement corporate policy and practice by: (i) providing training on how to measure, monitor and report progress in women's empowerment implementation; and (ii) facilitating dialogue to develop tools and incentives for improving the situation of women at work.

Case study - Spotlight Initiative in Honduras

Context

Samuel, 18, is a social change activist in Honduras. Passionate about human rights, he is volunteering with a local association, Women in the Art, to end violence against women in his community. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, Women in the Art engages young people to challenge gender stereotypes that perpetuate violence by using drama and art illustration to make them reflect on social norms and suggest solutions to break the cycle of violence.

Objectives

Samuel is one of an estimated 15 000 teenagers who will benefit from similar Spotlight Initiative-funded interventions over the next 3 years in Honduras. Most the Initiative's investment (26%) is focused on preventing violence.

Impact

The Spotlight Initiative's programmes are working on changing long-held narratives around masculinity, gender roles and power relations between men and women.



1.3.6. SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation

Introduction

Access to water and sanitation is a human right and a precondition to life. Water is vitally important for human life and health, ecosystem management, agriculture and energy. It plays a fundamental role in achieving the entire 2030 Agenda. In 2019, the EU continued to support access to water and sanitation, sustainable and integrated water management and capacity building. The European Green Deal provides further impetus to maximise the impact of actions linked to water in EU external actions.

Overview and trends

Despite recent progress, data suggests that achieving universal access to basic water and sanitation services by 2030 will require doubling the current annual rate of progress. Water scarcity affects more than 40% of the global population and more than 80% of wastewater is discharged into rivers or sea without any treatment. In 2019, the EU Council Conclusions on the human rights guidelines on safe drinking water and sanitation were approved, reinforcing the EU commitment to human rights defenders. The EU supports external action on water and sanitation through the facilitation of investments, the promotion of sustainable water management and governance and the reinforcement of knowledge and capacities.

Case study - Improved access to (waste-) water services in Jordan for host communities and Syrian refugees

Context

Jordan is one of the most water-scarce countries globally and the deterioration of water services has fuelled tensions between host communities and Syrian refugees. This project (2016-2020), implemented by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) with support worth EUR 21.5 million from the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis²⁹ addresses this problem in Jordan's Irbid Governorate.

Objectives

To increase resilience in host communities and Syrian refugees through improvements to water and wastewater services. The aim was to create jobs, strengthen, restructure and extend water supply, reduce water bills and provide better wastewater services and improved conditions for households to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases.

Impact

The project reached 1 018 200 Jordanian and Syrian beneficiaries. Basem from Deraa, Syria, fled the war in 2012 and now lives in Jordan. 'The water pressure was bad before and the water had sand in it. It was not healthy. Now it is different,' says Basem. These improvements are making life for Basem much easier. He is now able to save on water bills and all the leakage issues are now fixed.

Case study - Promoting accession to the Water Convention to strengthen transboundary water cooperation

Context

Transboundary water cooperation is increasingly vital to prevent conflicts and ensure effective and sustainable use and management of shared resources. However, cooperation in many water basins is inadequate to tackle the existing problems and challenges, including weak legal and/or institutional frameworks, insufficient implementation of joint policies and low capacity. The EU funded this action to promote universalisation of the Water Convention with a first tranche of EUR 2.35 million that will be increased by an additional EUR 3 million in 2021.

Objectives

To support accession to the Water Convention by building capacity and providing technical and legal advice to support countries in their accession process to the Water Convention.

Impact

In addition to Chad and Senegal, who were the first two countries outside the Pan-European Region to join the Convention, nine additional countries are at an advanced stage in the accession process and another 16 have expressed interest in acceding to the Water Convention.

²⁹https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/content/home_en.

1.3.7. SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy

Introduction

Sustainable energy is key to achieving the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement targets and has a pivotal role in the European Consensus on Development³⁰ and in the external dimension of the European Green Deal. In 2019, the EU continued to support access to sustainable energy across the world as well as actions towards energy efficiency and decarbonisation of energy.

Overview and trends

In 2019, at the Africa-Europe High Level Platform on Sustainable Energy Investments, the energy task force under the Africa-Europe Alliance presented key recommendations to speed up investments in the African energy sector. The recommendations span 11 key areas, including policy and regulations, financing measures and capacity building.

The EU's innovative financial tools to boost private sector investment in development cooperation are expanding. Eight guarantee instruments under the European Fund for Sustainable Development³¹ have been endorsed (totalling EUR 603.5 million), of which six focus on Africa. The Electrification Financing Initiative (ElectriFI³²) has grown rapidly and has a portfolio of 28 projects, expecting to give electricity to 10.6 million people and save 835 000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions (equivalent to 180 000 cars driven for one year). Climate Investor One³³, a USD 850 million blended finance facility delivering renewable energy projects in emerging markets, has a portfolio of 14 projects under development and construction across Africa and Asia, expecting to provide electricity to about 6.8 million people and save some 2 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

The EU continues to support the Africa-led Africa renewable energy initiative³⁴ (AREI) to accelerate and scale up the continent's huge renewable energy potential. In 2019, AREI reached its objective to achieve at least 10 GW of new and additional renewable energy generation capacity by 2020. This encouraging result has come about thanks to the adoption of 200 projects, 78 of which are financed or co-financed by the EU, to the tune of EUR 1.1 billion. AREI is now aiming to achieve another 300 GW by 2030, an ambition that will require scaled-up action.

During 2019, the strong cooperation with the African Union Commission to support a harmonised regulatory framework for the electricity market in Africa continued. This included improving regulatory frameworks, establishing energy efficiency minimum performance standards, and supporting the development of a continental power system master plan that aims to ensure that competitive electricity markets are developed at regional and continental levels.

Energy security and energy efficiency continued to be among the key priorities for EU cooperation with Eastern partnership countries. The 'EU4Energy' initiative produced new laws and improved governance in the energy sector. The 'High-Level Energy Efficiency' initiative was implemented,

³⁰ https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/24004/european-consensus-on-development-2-june-2017-clean_final.pdf

³¹ https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/181213-eip-28-guarantees-brochure-final_en.pdf

³² <https://www.electrifi.eu/>

³³ <https://climatefundmanagers.com/funds/#CIO>

³⁴ <http://www.arei.org/>

bringing together international financial institutions to upscale energy efficiency reforms and investments.

On 6 February 2018, the Commission adopted a strategy on 'A credible enlargement perspective for an enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans,' which confirmed the merit-based prospect of EU membership for all countries in the region with a comprehensive action plan including components on connectivity and energy.

In the three regions, the EU continues to support the 'High-Level Energy Efficiency' initiative. In this action plan, the EU and the participating international financial institutions³⁵, as well as the Energy Community Secretariat, have put together a set of actions and initiatives to support energy efficiency in pilot countries (Georgia, Serbia, Tunisia and Ukraine) to successfully move to sustainable energy and climate policies.

The EU Partnership Instrument also contributes to achieving SDG 7 by promoting policy cooperation with countries of strategic interest to the EU, in particular the G20 countries. In 2019, the EU Partnership Instrument continued its work on themes such promoting the development of renewable energy technologies and ensuring market access for EU companies, support to energy efficiency measures including business to business events to promote energy efficiency in industry and buildings, support to the global just energy transition and the development of flexible and fair liquefied natural gas (LNG) markets to contribute to the EU's energy security.

A strong added value of the PI projects is the close coordination between bilateral policy dialogue and the supporting actions to ensure mutual interests and with consideration of the external dimension of European energy policy. The partner countries are Argentina, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, China, India, Iran, Japan, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the USA, as well as regional and global actions such as the LNG market for the Eastern Partnership or the support to the International Solar Alliance. The Partnership Instrument also contributed to areas relevant to SDG 7 in several other countries through the International Urban and Regional Cooperation programme, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and the Strategic Partnerships for the Implementation for the Paris Agreement (SPIPA).

In December 2019, the European Council endorsed an ambitious goal for the EU to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 putting climate and environmental issues at the top of the European agenda. The Commission is strengthening efforts towards green humanitarian responses and reducing its climate and environmental footprint. For example in sectors like water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, shelter and logistics, looking for more environmentally sustainable solutions, and encouraging its partners to reduce their environmental footprint, through the humanitarian implementation plans. At the Global Refugee Forum (17-18 December 2019), the EU expressed its support for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) Clean Energy Challenge for all refugee settlements and nearby host communities to have access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy by 2030.

³⁵ The international financial institutions are the International Finance Corporation, the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and German development bank KfW.

Case studies

Case study - PEG Africa³⁶

Context

Most of the 940 million people that lack access to electricity live in remote rural areas. Solar home systems (SHS) that are stand-alone photovoltaic systems offer a cost-effective way of supplying power to remote off-grid households. EU-funded Electrifi has invested EUR 4.5 million in PEG Africa, a SHS distributor in remote off-grid areas in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal.

Objective

The project aims to provide people with affordable and clean high-quality energy in remote households, replacing kerosene and solar lanterns.

Impact

PEG Africa has over 75 000 customers and over 450 full time staff working in 72 service centres across Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal.

Case study - Achwa 1³⁷

Context

Uganda has vast renewable water resources with rivers, lakes and wetlands covering approximately 18% of its surface area including Lake Victoria, Africa's largest lake and a major source of the river Nile. However, the country's poor infrastructure limits further development.

Objective

Climate Investor One has invested in the construction of Achwa 1, a 42 MW run-of-river hydropower project in Uganda, which will support Uganda in achieving its climate change mitigation goals under the Paris Agreement through investment in infrastructure.

Impact

The project is expected to save almost 100 000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year and provide 575 000 people with electricity.

Case study - The EU Sustainable Energy Award for Eastern Partnership Countries

Context

³⁶<https://www.electrifi.eu/project/peg-africa/>

³⁷<https://climatefundmanagers.com/portfolio/ahh-uganda-run-of-river-hydro/>

The Commission has successfully collaborated with the EASME agency during EU Sustainable Energy Week in June 2019 to create a new award category, the EU Sustainable Energy Award for Eastern Partnership Countries, and opened the competition to the six Eastern Partner countries. The award recognises inspiring EU-supported energy efficient and renewable energy projects that directly help people and communities save energy or switch to sustainable sources.

Objectives

- Communicating the importance of sustainable energy issues.
- Highlighting individual opportunities to contribute to energy efficiency.
- Capitalising on the value of successful projects.

Impact

- Reception of more than 50 entries from 6 countries covering an impressive range of creative high-impact solutions for energy efficiency and renewable energy use for the benefit of communities and business.
- Six finalists: (i) Biomass Heating Solutions for Rural Development (Armenia), (ii) Development of Renewable Energy Sources in Novogrudok District (Belarus), (iii) Biomass and energy efficiency at Prichindel kindergarten in Busila (the Republic of Moldova), (iv) Georgian Vine and Wine Company LTD - Shilda Winery (Georgia), (v) Reducing Energy Consumption and CO₂ Emissions in Dolyna (Ukraine), and (vi) Higher Engineering Training for Environmentally Sustainable Industrial Development, (Ukraine).
- Finalists participated in an online public vote that was held over the course of two weeks.
- The public votes were combined with the votes of the jury to determine the winner that was announced at the Awards Ceremony in Brussels on 18 June.
- The winner of the first edition of the Award was the energy efficient Shilda winery from Georgia who are participants in the Caucasus Energy Efficient programme (Energocredit Georgia).
- The award ceremony gained wide coverage from Brussels and EU Member States' media with over 400 participants and the public voting campaign reached an audience of 185 911.

1.3.8. SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth

Introduction

In 2019, the EU-supported SDG 8 by implementing ongoing actions and adopting several new actions funded by various financing instruments.

The 'Sustainable investment climate and value chains programme II' (EUR 13.5 million) supports a number of global and European partnerships, platforms and programmes promoting key aspects of investment climate, trade and private sector development in the context of the 2030 Agenda, its SDGs and the EU's EIP third pillar.

The objectives of this programme are to promote global frameworks to measure and benchmark the impact of private sector investment on sustainable development, promote inclusive business models for the 'base of the pyramid' population, build capacity for a responsible mining sector, share knowledge on improving financial inclusion, structure dialogue with the African financial sector, enable trade and improve sustainability in value chains with an emphasis on decent work.

The EUR 19.265 million underpinning the programme 'Enhancing decent work, transparency and traceability for sustainable garment value chains' will help ensure compliance with international labour and environmental standards and improve transparency and traceability along the garment value chains as part of improving the due diligence process by private sector actors.

Several actions under 'responsible business conduct/corporate social responsibility' were also launched and carried out through the Partnership Instrument in Asia and Latin America.

Overview and trends

2019 consolidated the trend towards more demand-based technical assistance in support of the investment climate.

Two trust funds were created in cooperation with the World Bank Group addressing business friendly investment climates. A trust fund of EUR 12 million aims to assist countries and regional economic communities in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific (ACP) to adopt and implement investment-friendly, inclusive, and responsible national policies and legal frameworks in a joint intervention with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and the International Trade Centre that brings together the knowledge of key development partners. A trust fund of EUR 10 million aims to create a facility to support sub-Saharan Africa beneficiary countries in activities that attract sustainable private investments, enable economic diversification, sustainable management of resources and inclusive and decent job creation.

A contract of EUR 10 million was signed with the German Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH, as lead organisation, and the British Council and the French Agence Française d'Expertise Technique Internationale as partners to support ACP partner countries and regional institutions in their private sector structured dialogue process to create a more conducive business environment and wider investment climate. The contract will be co-financed by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the British Council.

In June 2019, the Commission published a call for proposals for ACP digital financial services to support the mainstreaming of digital solutions in development and promoting the use of digital technologies to achieve inclusive growth in ACP regions. The results from 2019 include setting-up and launching the call for proposals which focuses on an improved policy and regulatory environment for digital financial inclusion, and promoting innovative and scalable digital financial solutions.

A contract of EUR 10 million was signed with the United Nations Development Programme ensuring continuity of the ACP-EU development minerals programme, implemented between 2015 and 2019. Based on the lessons-learned from phase I of the programme and the consensus that emerged under the Mosi-oa-Tunya Declaration, the proposed phase II of the programme will continue to provide capacity development support to artisanal and small-scale mining enterprises, sector

associations, public institutions and the social stakeholders that operate along the development minerals value chain in ACP countries having an additional focus on improving gender equality in the development minerals sector.

A contract of EUR 1 million was signed with the Extractive Industries Transparency initiative (EITI) to promote transparency and better governance in extractive industries in EITI member countries. The objective is to provide technical assistance by the EITI secretariat, in particular through missions to EITI countries that are either considering implementing or are already implementing the new EITI standard requirements, in their efforts towards improving natural resources governance.

Under the Tradecom II programme, seven grant contracts were concluded in 2019 for a total of almost EUR 14 million. For two years, these projects will work towards strengthening the capacities of ACP beneficiary countries to integrate in regional trade and participate in the global economy. Beneficiary organisations are regional trade and economic organisations and academic institutions from all three ACP sub-regions that will conduct training and capacity-building activities, including through the establishment of trade-related virtual master courses, across the ACP area.

Four contracts, totalling almost EUR 20 million, were signed in 2019 to improve decent work, transparency and traceability for sustainable garment value chains: one with the UN Economic Commission for Europe, one with the International Trade Centre and two with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (Better Work – EUR 15 million). Their objectives are to (i) design a set of standards to track and trace sustainable textile and leather value chains from raw material production to retail, (ii) develop guidelines on standards, and (iii) develop principles and policy recommendations to guide policy makers in devising approaches to sustain and incentivise private sector efforts to track and trace the whole value chain and make it more transparent, including on social, environmental and health performance and impacts. Better work will contribute to improving the working conditions and complying with the labour rights of workers, in particular women workers, boosting the competitiveness of apparel businesses, and improving compliance on fundamental international labour and environmental standards mainly in Africa and South-East Asia.

Funding worth EUR 553 000 was awarded to the project Decent Leather and was implemented by a European civil society organisation, aims to reduce labour rights abuses and improve working conditions of workers in the leather-based garment, footwear and accessories value chain in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

A contract of EUR 1 million was signed with the International Development Law Organisation to provide demand-driven technical and advisory support for investment-related negotiations and dispute settlements to eligible beneficiaries such as governments, state-owned enterprises, and private sector entities in least developed countries (LDCs). The support will be multidisciplinary and aim to ensure that foreign direct investment generates maximum benefits for the LDCs, contributing to national development strategies and the SDGs. The programme will provide assistance to eligible beneficiaries through direct assistance to lawyers and other experts who will assist in dispute settlement, negotiations or other immediate investment-related needs, and by capacity development through complementary investment-related training.

A contract of EUR 0.535 million was signed with the International Finance Corporation creating a trust fund to increase the level and quality of women's engagement in the digital economy through online platforms by driving a step-change in best practice among global private sector leaders.

A EUR 5.5 million action was launched by the Partnership Instrument in 2019 through an EU-UN partnership to promote the agenda on business and human rights and ensure that it is taken up further by Asian governments and business. To this end, the EU and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will jointly promote the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in Asia through national action plans, policy discussions and awareness raising programmes on Human Rights Due Diligence in six Asian countries.

Related ongoing Partnership Instrument projects include 'Responsible Supply Chains in Asia,' a EUR 9.5 million joint initiative (EU-ILO-OECD) to improve compliance with human rights, labour and environmental standards by businesses with supply chains in Asia, aligning their practices to international standards in six Asian countries: (i) China, (ii) Japan, (iii) Myanmar, (iv) the Philippines, (v) Thailand and (vi) Vietnam. Another EUR 9.5 million project in Latin America and the Caribbean supports responsible business conduct in line with the UN, ILO and OECD instruments in nine countries: (i) Argentina, (ii) Brazil, (iii) Chile, (iv) Colombia, (v) Costa Rica, (vi) Ecuador, (vii) Mexico, (viii) Panama and (ix) Peru.

In addition, a EUR 5.7 million contract was signed at the end of 2019 in a new OECD-EU partnership to help shape business models for sustainable, inclusive, and fairer growth through the development of an international guide for legislation on 'Social and Solidarity Economy' and a methodology to measure the economic impact of social enterprises.

Case studies

Case study - Supporting employment through better vocational skills

Context

Unemployment rates in most Western Balkans economies are over twice those in the EU, so it is essential to improve the match between vocational skills and the needs of the labour market and extend education and training to the most disadvantaged social groups.

Objectives

In 2019, a large-scale sector reform contract for employment and skills in Albania (EUR 29 million) was completed that initiated institutional and structural changes in the financing and governance of the labour market and VET systems, developed and implemented the Albanian Qualification Framework, modernised the legislative framework for initial VET and adult training, and supported turning EU occupational health and safety directives into national law. Albania established a National Agency for Employment and Skills and three multifunctional training centres. The National Employment Service was modernised and 36 labour offices were reorganised improving compliance with international labour standards and providing a broader range of employment promotion services.

Impact

A significant impact on the Albanian labour market was made:

- Beneficiaries of employment promotion programmes increased by 3.83%.
- The number of trained VET teachers increased from 42 in 2016 to 467 in 2019 (95%).
- Enrolment rate of pre-university VET students went up from 17.6% in 2014 to 20.6% in 2018.
- Combined with other macroeconomic factors, the programme contributed to an increase in youth employment of 5.6%.

Case Study - Mayors for economic growth helps boost businesses in Gagauzia (Moldova)

Context



The Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia in Moldova relies on SMEs for economic growth and development. In 2017, 99% of all local enterprises in Gagauzia were SMEs. However, in the region there is limited available information for businesses, limited access to consulting services, and limited opportunities for businesses to improve their knowledge and skills. Distance from the

capital and the difficulties associated with the language barrier complicate the access of local entrepreneurs to the national programmes for SME support.

Objectives

- Establish an effective system of SME support services in ATU Gagauzia.
- Develop and pilot new types of business support services for the local context.

Impact

- A new Regional Business Information and Support Centre was created with three consulting offices in three districts.
- 53 new enterprises registered, and more than 100 jobs were created.
- 60 business plans from the region received grant funding for business development, of which 42 were from women entrepreneurs.
- 130 entrepreneurs benefited from business internships, of which 60 used outsourcing services for accounting and taxation.
- Two new local food and wine brands were developed, registered and taken to market.

1.3.9. SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Introduction

Connectivity plays a fundamental role in achieving the SDG targets. Digitalisation, a key part of connectivity, is essential in addressing inequalities and achieving sustainable development and is mentioned in four SDGs³⁸. However, digital transformation could impact the entire 2030 Agenda³⁹. Digital technologies can be leading contributors to positive societal value, but this will only become a reality if the focus of technological development and deployment is framed by a clear commitment to sustainable development. Connectivity also relies on quality and resilient cross-border infrastructure (See SDG 9).

³⁸ SDGs 4. Education, 5. Gender equality, 9. Industry innovation and infrastructures, and 8. Decent Work and Economic growth.

³⁹ Deloitte report: DIGITAL WITH A PURPOSE - DELIVERING A SMARTER 2030.

To boost the implementation of the transport-related parts of SDG 9, in 2019 the EU continued to support strategic multimodal corridor development that builds on economic, social and environmental sustainability.

SDG 9 aims to build resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation. The Partnership Instrument is well aligned with the aims of this SDG and has been contributing to it both in the EU and in a number of partner countries in a variety of different ways through all its objectives. While innovation is mainstreamed through a number of Partnership Instrument actions across sectors and across the globe, an interesting example of promoting sustainable industrialisation is the low carbon business actions in Brazil and Mexico. These actions have been running since 2015 and promote decoupling economic growth and CO₂ emissions, addressing global climate change and also improving market opportunities for leading EU businesses in the green-technology sector.

Overview and trends

Digital transformation is at the heart of the Commission's agenda. Aiming for digital leadership, the EU should leverage its regulatory power, strong economic and technological capabilities, research and industrial excellence, diplomatic strengths and external financial instruments to advance the European approach and shape global frameworks. In 2019, the Africa-Europe Alliance Digital Economy Task Force was created to deliver a report with policy recommendations to be implemented around four interconnected priority areas.

The task force is a high-level partnership of European and African stakeholders created to build consensus around policy recommendations on digital transformation and identify ways to boost relevant public and private investment at a pan-African level. The Digital Economy Task Force report was launched at the 2019 Digital Assembly in Bucharest on 13 June and presented to the development community during the European Development Days. This high-quality report was a source of inspiration for the recent Digital Transformation strategy for Africa (2020-2030) by the African Union.

Under the External Investment plan, the Commission established the European Fund for Sustainable Development to support investments in Africa and the Neighbourhood countries. A total of 28 guarantees have been endorsed, mobilising EUR 1.54 billion of the initial guarantee of the External Investment plan, with the expectation that this unlocks EUR 17.5 billion in total investments, covering several areas. The Commission has identified the digital sector as a target area for support under the External Investment plan, focusing on innovation that addresses local social needs, financial inclusion and job creation. Three guarantees have been approved under the digital window (EUR 220 million), aiming to (i) increase the use of digital technologies, (ii) widen rural access to broadband and (iii) boost investment in innovative start-ups using digital solutions.

To satisfy the infrastructure-related ambitions of SDG 9, the Transport Task Force was established during the first half of 2019. This involved communication and coordination with high-level representatives and numerous stakeholders and work on creating three thematic clusters on sustainable connectivity infrastructure, aviation and road safety. The Transport Task Force's main achievement is preparing the 'Towards an enhanced Africa-EU Cooperation on Transport and

Connectivity' report published in March 2020⁴⁰. This work was preceded by three meetings of the Task Force – Connectivity Cluster on 5 April and 25 July 2019 in Brussels, Belgium and on 22 May in Leipzig, Germany.

The increased importance of science, new technologies and innovation for inclusive and sustainable socioeconomic development in the ACP regions was recognised by the launching of a new EUR 60 million programme to strengthen innovation ecosystems and capabilities. The programme provides for an ACP Innovation Fund, which initiated a call for proposals in 2019 with programme finalisation in 2020. Eligible innovative activities receiving support through the new innovation fund should promote digital literacy and new technologies, link innovative skills with labour market demand, establish links with the private sector and integrate indigenous knowledge into the formal knowledge economy.

Case studies

Case study - Digital Energy Facility (DEF) to promote energy transition and energy access

Context

Mainstreaming the digital revolution throughout the energy industry will contribute to a more efficient energy sector and therefore to socioeconomic development and climate change mitigation. The overall objective of the Facility is to support energy sector modernisation and digitalisation, innovative business models and the long-term sustainability of energy systems. This can establish the necessary preconditions for increased access to energy and renewable energy development worldwide, with a specific focus on Africa. The Facility will be deployed under two contracts with EU contributions totalling EUR 23.5 million.

Objectives

- Improve performance of power utilities to reduce grid losses and enhance grid efficiency.
- Improve access to modern, affordable and sustainable energy services.
- Encourage more investment in decentralised energy solutions.

Impact

- 1 million people with new or improved access.
- 40 to 45 energy access companies supported.
- 1 000 jobs created.
- 100 000 tonnes of CO_{2eq} emissions saved per year.

⁴⁰<https://africa-eu-partnership.org/en/stay-informed/publications/report-task-force-transport-and-connectivity>

Case study - ACP digital financial services (Digital4Inclusion)

Context

Providing financial services to people living in poverty, particularly women, young people and informal businesses has traditionally been limited by the high cost of transactions and network access to those services, particularly in remote areas. However, over the last 10 years, digitalisation has brought about dramatic improvement in financial inclusion. Digitalisation allows a reduction in transaction costs through the removal of intermediaries, reduced paperwork and increased safety. To assist this trend, the Digital4Inclusion call for proposals has been launched.

Objectives

Digital4Inclusion aims to:

- Promote public/public and public/private partnerships and multi-stakeholder alliances to support ACP countries in their efforts for responsive financial inclusion policies, regulatory frameworks and financial infrastructure for digital financial inclusion such as access to digital financial services for financially excluded and underserved populations.
- Promote public/private partnerships and multi-stakeholder alliances to support ACP countries to scale digital financial solutions and advance their digital entrepreneurship ecosystems. Digital financial solutions can range from financial services to different economic sectors.

Impact

- Grant beneficiaries will have to specify the impact of each of their proposed actions in line with the general criteria of maximising the number of individual beneficiaries. They will also have to specify if the action can be replicated, what the regional relevance is and if the no-harm principle has been applied.

Case study - Economic development and innovation

Context

Western Balkan economies have significant potential to integrate with the EU. However, further efforts are needed to increase their competitiveness. Supporting innovation is one way to boost entrepreneurship and smart growth.

Objectives

EU support has been instrumental in promoting innovation and cooperation between the research community and private sector in Serbia. Serbia's Innovation Fund supports innovative activities and stimulates innovation. The EU is a key contributor with EUR 15.8 million allocated so far from the IPA. With national co-financing, the fund portfolio currently stands at EUR 20.8 million.

Impact

- Since inception, more than 1 000 applications have yielded 132 innovative projects ranging from software development and internet of things to biotechnology/bioengineering/food supplements, industrial machines/heating and cooling technologies/heat transfer and robotics.
- These projects have increased revenue of the funded companies by 225% in six years (from EUR 6 million to EUR 20 million), created of 480 high-end jobs, increased exports by EUR 8.4 million, and resulted in more than 33 national and 25 international patent applications.
- At regional level, the Joint Research Centre is developing smart specialisation strategies in the region. Montenegro is the first non-EU country to successfully launch its smart specialisation strategy with priority areas including sustainable agriculture, energy, health tourism and ICT. The strategy will also tie in closely with national industrial policy, education programmes and evolving labour market needs.
- The Western Balkans Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (EDIF) has also mobilised the innovative economic potential of Western Balkans. The EU has made a EUR 200 million contribution to the platform, which leveraged total investments of EUR 958 million in Western Balkans SMEs supporting around 4 700 companies, providing more than 2 800 loans, creating almost 80 000 jobs, and supporting 36 equity-type investments in the region.

1.3.10. SDG 10 Reduced inequalities

Introduction

SDG 10 calls for reducing inequalities within and between countries. The objective of addressing inequalities is also at the heart of EU development cooperation, as emphasised in the European Consensus on Development, and will help build more sustainable societies. SDG 10 also aims “to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.” In the past few years, the EU has increased efforts in ensuring that migration leads to inclusive growth and sustainable development, as set out in the Consensus document.

Overview and trends

Income inequality has increased in most developed countries and some middle-income countries, including China and India, since 1990. Countries where inequality has grown are home to over two thirds (71%) of the world population. At the same time, inequality has declined in most Latin American countries, and in several African and Asian countries over the last two decades.

During 2019, the EU continued to support its partner countries to address inequalities and their drivers as a cross-cutting objective of its development cooperation. In 2019, the Commission published a Staff Working Document on ‘Addressing inequality in partner countries’ and organised the European Development Days on this topic. The document takes stock of ongoing EU efforts to reduce inequalities in partner countries and identifies opportunities to address more systematically inequalities in EU development cooperation going forward. In November 2019, the Council adopted Conclusions on ‘Addressing inequality in partner countries,’ calling on the EU and Member States to accelerate efforts in this direction. Moreover, a new generation of inequalities is opening up,

primarily around digitalisation and climate change⁴¹ with divergence in ‘enhanced capabilities,’ despite convergence in ‘basic capabilities.’ These will determine people’s ability to seize opportunities in the 21st century, for example working and thriving in a knowledge economy and coping with the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

In 2019, the number of international migrants worldwide reached nearly 272 million, up from 221 million in 2010. The regional distribution of international migrants is changing, with migrant populations growing faster in Northern Africa and Western Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa, than in other regions. Global forced displacement figures remain high: almost 70.8 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide, and the global refugee population stands at 25.9 million. Most refugees continued to be hosted in developing regions.

The drivers of international migration are structural processes⁴² that are difficult to address through short-term approaches or by policy measures that only focus on migration. When supported by appropriate policies, migration can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development in origin, transit and destination countries, while also benefiting migrants and their families. Policies should include investment in economic opportunities, to ensure that mobility is a choice not a necessity, and that the integration of migrants in countries of transit and destination is sustainable. EU funding instruments have increasingly adopted this approach and established a more structured way to cooperate with partner countries on migration, through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF), the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey and the EU Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis.

The EUTF further consolidated its achievements in 2019 in partnership with EU Member States development cooperation agencies, UN organisations, NGOs and partner countries with the approval of an additional 36 programmes and 16 ‘top-ups’ across its three regions (Sahel and Lake Chad, Horn of Africa and North Africa) for a total of EUR 851 million. This brings the total number of approved programmes to 223 with a total budget of EUR 4.4 billion since 2015.

⁴¹ UNDP HDR 2019: <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf>

⁴² See JRC (2018) Report on International Migration Drivers <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/international-migration-drivers>

Case studies

Case study – Bridging the gap

Context

Bridging the gap is a joint initiative of the EU and several Member States to increase the inclusion of people with disabilities.

Objectives

- Support to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to develop tools such as indicators, guidelines and data, to promote the rights, participation and inclusion of people with disabilities in implementing the 2030 Agenda.
- Support to the governments and relevant organisations in five countries (Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Paraguay and Sudan) to implement and monitor disability-inclusive policies in areas such as education, health, employment and social protection.

Impact

- 892 people in Sudan (60% women) have increased their access to the job market and are now employed, self-employed or in technical and vocational education and training.
- Over 1 500 people with disabilities in different districts in Ethiopia have access to basic services and 115 have been granted small loans to sustain their incomes.
- Over EUR 500 000 in grants has supported 14 organisations helping people with disabilities across the five programme countries.
- Human rights indicators for the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities have been produced.

Case study – Resilience of displaced people

Context

The Development pillar of the regional development and protection programme in North Africa is funded under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. It focuses on Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt.

Objectives

The programme aims to strengthen the resilience of displaced populations and their host communities, by addressing socioeconomic concerns and promoting a culture of rights, dialogue and social cohesion.

Impact

Some results from the first two phases (the project is now in its third phase) include:

- Formulating national needs assessments, training of journalists, technical support to local civil society organisations and advocacy efforts such as contributing to the adoption of the anti-discrimination laws in Tunisia, approving national guidelines for emergency accommodation in Morocco and promoting dialogue with the Libyan Ministry of Labour to legalise migrants.
- Supporting sustainable livelihoods and access to services at national level, such as a regional project implemented by Save the Children focusing on life skills and personal resilience trainings, livelihoods training and delivering education training programmes for teachers of children and young people at-risk.

Case study - Assistance to migrants and refugees stranded in Libya

Context

In 2019, the North Africa part of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) has been able to respond quickly to the increasing humanitarian needs coming from Libya, in particular following the escalation of fighting in April 2019.

Objectives

EUR 408 million for projects in Libya, including:

- Around half (EUR 185.3 million) of the funding helps to protect and assist migrants, refugees and internally displaced people by providing protection services and direct emergency assistance (non-food items, medical consultations) to the most vulnerable.
- Around one third (EUR 135.8 million) helps to stabilise Libyan municipalities. EUTF's priority is to improve the living conditions of both host communities and migrants.
- Around one fifth (EUR 87.2 million) supports integrated border management. EUTF's priority is to save the lives of those making dangerous journeys by sea or land by strengthening the capacity of Libyan authorities through training on search and rescue and on human rights.

Impact

The funding has so far:

- Contributed to the voluntary return of over 50 000 migrants from Libya to their countries of origin while providing reintegration support and the evacuation of more than 5 500 refugees and asylum-seekers out of Libya.
- Improved access to basic services (hospitals, schools) for over 1.7 million people living in Libyan municipalities.
- Distributed over 185 000 non-food items and hygiene kits to refugees and vulnerable migrants as part of emergency direct assistance.
- Provided more than 60 000 medical consultations to vulnerable people as part of primary and specialised healthcare, psychosocial support and screenings.
- Provided nearly 70 000 Libyan and non-Libyan school-age children access to formal and informal education as well as to protection services, including psychosocial support and recreational activities.
- Assisted more than 2 500 young entrepreneurs with job training programmes to develop economic income-generating activities. Around 20 start-ups have received seed funding.

1.3.11. SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities

Introduction

Urbanisation and the role of cities in the economy are increasingly shaping development challenges and opportunities in developing countries, so much so that local authorities are increasingly recognised as key actors in achieving most of the SDGs.

Overview and trends

With cities globally contributing 80% of GDP, 70% of global energy consumption and 70% of global carbon emissions and nearly one billion people living in slums, achieving the SDG 11 targets represents a major challenge. African cities are typically overcrowded and have poor urban mobility, and air pollution in many megacities, particularly in Asia, has reached toxic levels. These challenges will become ever more pressing with a rapidly expanding urban population. In the next 30 years, the global urban population is projected to increase by two billion, 90% of which will occur in Africa and developing countries in Asia.

The renewed focus on cities is also reflected in the Sendai Framework and the New Urban Agenda (adopted in Quito in 2016). At the European level, the new European Consensus on Development reflects the central importance of urbanisation, not only in terms of demographics but also as a process underpinning multiple aspects of global development.

In 2018, the Commission published a Staff Working Document on cities and local authorities in development cooperation. The Council conclusions highlighted the importance of addressing the challenges of rapid urbanisation, as well as the opportunities presented by well-planned urbanisation.

The EU has put several instruments in place to support cities and sustainable urban development. In the context of the European External Investment plan, three guarantee programmes have been endorsed under the 'Sustainable cities' window. Work progressed on their implementation, with the first one, Resilient City Development programme (RECIDE), signed in January 2020.

Within local authority funding, a new approach to city-to-city partnership was launched in 2019, leading to the contracting of some 15 city partnership projects, fostering exchanges between actors in our partner countries and in the EU. The programme aims to support local authorities in strengthening urban governance combined with substantive contributions to sustainable urban development. A new call for proposals amounting to EUR 110 million has been launched in February 2020.

The three-year 'International urban cooperation' programme was adopted by the Commission as part of the 2015 Partnership Instrument Annual Action programme with a total budget of EUR 20.2 million. In 2018, the programme received an additional EUR 10 million and an extension to the end of 2020. The overall objective of the programme is to strengthen EU climate and urban diplomacy and leadership in the context of the New Urban Agenda and the Paris Agreement. In 2019, the Partnership Instrument approved an extension of the programme via two actions: (i) IURC (International Urban and Regional Cooperation) for EUR 12 million (over three years) and (ii) GCoM

(Global Covenant of Mayors) for EUR 13 million (over four years) with joint funding from the Commission departments. The procurement procedures will be launched in 2020.

A number of thematic facilities targeting specific urban issues are in place to support specific policy areas, to define project formulation and to bring projects to fruition. For example participatory slum upgrading, urban resilience, sustainable mobility and the covenant of mayors for Sub-Saharan Africa. Within national programmes, specific urban actions have been supported in several countries, for example water and sanitation, and solid waste management.

Case studies

Case study - Participatory Slum Upgrading programme (PSUP)

Context

One billion people all over the world face the challenges of being excluded from modern society. Numbers of slum dwellers continue to grow and challenges faced by informal settlements remains a critical factor for persisting poverty and exclusion in the world. The PSUP is a joint effort of the ACP countries, the Commission and UN-Habitat to address the informal settlements challenge. So far, the programme has reached out to 40 ACP countries and 160 cities.

Objectives

- Encouraging national and local governments to mobilise resources and contribute financially to address structural problems faced by slum dwellers.
- Guiding financially viable, large-scale programmes and projects to improve slums and climate compatible solutions.
- Focusing on the most vulnerable groups in slums: women, children, young people and the elderly in terms of their basic needs.
- Helping to build capacities, create job opportunities and improve the local economy to better people's livelihoods.
- Implementing a city-wide approach to integrate slum upgrading with the city's wider development strategies and plans.

Impact

- 5 million slum dwellers in 190 cities and 40 countries are engaged in PSUP.
- Over 800 000 slum dwellers have improved tenancy security.
- 50 national development frameworks.
- About 268 000 women and young people have been directly engaged through Community Managed Funds.
- 30 projects supported by Community Managed Funds have been implemented.
- Over 500 000 people have improved living conditions.

Case study - Local authorities: partnerships for sustainable cities

Context

Following a call for proposals 'Local authorities: partnerships for sustainable cities,' 16 partnerships between local authorities from EU Member States and partner countries for a total of EUR 53 million have been signed in 2019 to strengthen urban governance, ensure social inclusiveness, improve resilience and greening and foster prosperity and innovation in cities.

The partnerships cover all continents and reflect the importance of linking all urban actors including local authorities, civil society, academia and the private sector. Project partners range from city governments to research institutions and city networks to universities.

Examples include the cities of Dakar and Madrid working on metropolitan governance of the energy transition, São Paulo and the World Association of the Major Metropolises creating a City Lab for São Paulo as smart city, and Berlin and Jakarta aiming at smart change and the strengthening of urban governance, prosperity and innovation.

Objectives

The projects aim to share knowledge, best practice and innovative solutions, including peer-to-peer exchanges and deployment of public officials between local authorities in EU Member States and partner countries across a variety of issues.

Impact

Be it urban mobility, local climate resilience, participative local planning or water and waste management, the principle of partnership to promote sustainable and inclusive planning and management of today's and tomorrow's cities is at the heart of this programme.

Case study - The Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (PDP)

Context

PDP has contributed to improving the living and environmental conditions for the two million residents of nine urban informal areas in Cairo, Giza and Qalyubeya Governorates. It is an Egyptian-German-EU project supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) (EUR 8.75 million) and co-funded by the EU (EUR 39.2 million) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) (EUR 3.74million).

Objectives

The PDP has implemented 82 projects and resulted in the implementation of 104 social and physical infrastructure measures as well as 61 environmental measures covering health, education, recreation and youth, employability and income generation, transportation, mobility, housing, environment and climate change and solid waste management.

The programme has adopted a participatory and integrated multi-stakeholder, multi-levelled approach to urban development that has ensured the inclusion of relevant stakeholders at

national, regional and local levels.

Impact

Examples include:

- More than 2 200 residents and representatives of civil society organisations participated in local decision-making processes.
- More than 500 staff from local administrations and civil society organisations were trained on participatory development methods for the development of informal areas.
- More than 1.6 million residents have access to improved healthcare services, 56% of them women, through the improvement of 31 health facilities.
- More than 80 000 students received better quality education, 50% of them women.
- More than 8 000 residents were supported in coping with climate change impacts, 67% of them women.

1.3.12. SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production

Introduction

The EU is committed to pursuing its international cooperation on sustainable consumption and production and the circular economy as an essential contribution to SDG 12. The circular economy contribution to the 2030 Agenda is well recognised globally including at the UN Environment Assembly in March 2019.

Overview and trends

EU international cooperation on sustainable consumption and production and the circular economy focus mainly on developing policy and institutional frameworks in this area, promoting green business development in key value chains, and mobilising finance for the global circular economy transition. The EU has implemented circular economy initiatives at global level through policy dialogue (both bilaterally and in multilateral forums) and through Commission managed cooperation actions. Relevant indicative initiatives include engagement at multilateral level to encourage the use of standards and ensure a level-playing field for the private sector, financial and technical assistance and the circular economy missions to foster links between EU business and partner countries. The SWITCH to Green initiative is the EU's flagship initiative on sustainable consumption and production and circular economy practices.

Case studies

Case study - SWITCH Africa Green: green horticulture at Lake Naivasha Kenya (Goalan)

Context

Lake Naivasha is the largest freshwater lake in Kenya's Rift Valley: the hub of Kenya's cut flower industry. The micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) around the lake face a range of challenges including a dry climate, water shortages, limited access to markets and lack of entrepreneurial skills. To tackle these issues the EU contributed a EUR 1.38 million grant to the Goalan project consortium through the SWITCH Africa Green programme.

Objectives

The programme aims to promote sustainable consumption and production practices by training MSMEs, strengthening MSMEs institutional and entrepreneurial skills, enabling a shift towards sustainable consumption through creating awareness among bulk buyers, and increasing the MSMEs' net income and access to finance.

Impact

The following results have been achieved in the first year of the project:

- Six sustainable consumption and production training sessions organised.
- More than 200 farmers in Kenya's Naivasha basin now employ sustainable consumption and production practices.
- Train-the-trainer mechanism established to diversify products from horticultural produce.
- More than 200 agricultural producers have adopted the Kenyan Quality Standard 1758.
- Harvest losses and food waste reduced by improved post-harvest techniques, better storage and preservation.

Case study - E-waste Management in Ghana (E-MAGIN Ghana): From grave to cradle

Context

Accra hosts one of the largest dump sites for waste from electrical and electronic equipment. Environmental pollution and health impacts of improper e-waste recycling affect thousands of people. Following the recent adoption of e-waste management guidelines by Ghana's government, the EU has contributed with EUR 1.3 million to the E-MAGIN consortium through SWITCH Africa Green.

Objectives

The programme contributes to the effective implementation of e-waste legislation in Ghana, fosters formalisation of informal MSMEs and establishes a collection mechanism for e-waste.

Impact

These results have been achieved in the first year of the project:

- Closing the loop and increased added value by giving raw materials to industries for re-manufacturing.

- Policy dialogue initiated in 3 (of 8) regions to support the implementation of e-waste legislation.
- Discussions ongoing to establish 40 e-waste collection centres that contribute to the national integrated e-waste management programme.
- More than 1 000 students at vocational training institutes have increased their capacity to recycle e-waste.
- Value chain analysis completed that accelerates the formalisation of the informal sector.
- A train-the-trainer mechanism established to drive the formalisation of informal e-waste collectors into associations.

1.3.13. SDG 13 Climate action

Introduction

Climate change is one of the main priorities of the EU's external action and a central theme of the European Green Deal. The Green Deal emphasises the EU's major role as a global leader in tackling climate change and environmental challenges, and represents the EU's new Growth Strategy. It is about a systemic transformation of our economies and societies, also directly involving sectors such as industry, energy, transport and agriculture towards a sustainable path.

The EU is strongly committed to implementing the Paris Agreement. In the period 2014-2019, EU external climate action contributed to an approximate saving of 28.2 million tonnes CO₂ equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions.

Overview and trends

Recent reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reiterate the call for swift climate action, including on mitigating CO₂ emissions. Current nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement do not go far enough if the Agreement's targets⁴³ are to be achieved. To address this challenge, the EU in 2019 strengthened its approach to supporting its partners' in implementing their NDCs through existing programmes such as the Global Climate Change Alliance+⁴⁴ (GCCA+). In 2019, GCCA+ was helping to build climate resilience in partner countries, in particular in least developed countries and small island developing states. GCCA+ has funded over 80 national, regional and worldwide projects in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. So far, the results of these projects include significant contributions to more than 80 national climate change strategies, more than 40 awareness campaigns in over 60 countries, and more than 30 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change related strategies and programmes.

The intra-ACP part of the GCCA+ was almost completed in 2019. Nine out of ten regional programmes were up and running by the end of the year. Activities include training partner

⁴³ Limiting warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

⁴⁴ <https://www.gcca.eu/>

countries' international climate negotiators and building institutional capacity at regional level to support the implementation of the NDCs in a number of pilot countries.

The Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility (LoCAL)⁴⁵ finalised Phase I of its programme in 2019. LoCAL helps local governments to address climate change adaptation. In 2019, LoCAL deployed country-based mechanisms to integrate climate change adaptation into local governments' planning across 14 countries⁴⁶ and contributed to channelling climate finance to over 240 local governments representing 6 million people. Phase II was launched at the end 2019 with the aim of scaling up the initiative.

The EU also supports climate action through the EU Partnership Instrument, which promotes policy cooperation with countries of strategic interest to the EU. It aims to boost EU relations with countries that are no longer eligible for bilateral development aid. The 'Strategic Partnerships for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement' (SPIPA) project, funded by the Partnership Instrument (EUR 20 million) and the German government (EUR 5 million), encourages major economies to implement the Paris Agreement by facilitating the move from political commitment to meaningful action. In 2019, SPIPA produced 19 knowledge products, including several studies and mappings to provide insights on climate change governance and institutional architecture in climate policy in SPIPA partner countries. Further studies were conducted to assess NDCs, climate cooperation opportunities, private-public interactions and sectoral developments. In addition, SPIPA provided thematic papers on adaptation, Just Transition, long-term strategies, monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV), and sustainable finance. The current project will run until early 2022.

The 'EU4Climate' programme supports the development and implementation of climate-related policies by the Eastern Partnership countries, contributing to their low-emission and climate-resilient development and their commitment to the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Case Studies

Case Study - GCCA+ in Uganda – increasing climate resilience through farming field schools

Context

Uganda's central 'cattle corridor,' which runs across the country, is highly vulnerable to climate change, suffering frequent floods, prolonged droughts and unpredictable rainfall.

Objectives

As part of an EUR 11 million programme⁴⁷, GCCA+ has funded more than 300 field schools to help farmers become more resilient to climate change impacts

Impact

⁴⁵ <https://www.uncdf.org/local/homepage>

⁴⁶ Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Cambodia, The Gambia, Ghana, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Tanzania and Tuvalu.

⁴⁷ <https://www.gcca.eu/stories/uganda-sisters-are-doing-it-themselves-and-climate>

More than 4 000 farmers have attended the field schools and learnt about diversifying crops and other income-generating activities.

1.3.14. SDG 14 Life below water

Introduction

The ocean is a complex set of interconnected systems and part of the global commons (global resource domains). Rapidly declining ocean health threatens livelihoods and prosperity in coastal countries and worldwide. In 2019, the EU continued to work on capacity-building and spur local and regional actions on effective governance, and the protection and use of marine resources. However, global progress on addressing major threats, including pollution and eutrophication, overfishing and destruction of habitats, and the impacts of climate change, has been slow and most SDG 14 targets may not be reached by 2030.

Overview and trends

The role of EU external action in achieving SDG 14 is growing. This was highlighted in the progress report on the implementation of the EU's Joint Communication on International Ocean Governance, published in 2019 and by including oceans in the external dimension of the European Green Deal. The EU promoted an integrated approach to effectively address the drivers of ocean degradation while linking livelihoods with natural resources preservation. In partnership with ACP countries, the EU committed EUR 40 million to improve the productivity, competitiveness and inclusiveness of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture value chains, and EUR 12 million to improve their governance (FISHGOV 2). A new project, worth EUR 9 million, aims to protect biodiversity and increase the resilience of marine and coastal ecosystems in Western Africa. With EUR 25 million, the Go Blue Kenya programme approved in 2019 will promote participatory sea-land planning and create conditions for development of a sustainable blue economy. The programme to support the Regional Seas Conventions in ACP countries, worth EUR 9 million, aims to promote the integrated management of coastal zones, strengthen protected areas and address pollution of the marine environment, including plastic waste.

In the Mediterranean region, the programme GreenMed III (EUR 48 million) was approved in 2018 to promote resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production , notably through depolluting the Mediterranean Sea and reducing water stress.

Through the Partnership Instrument, the EU is supporting a dedicated project (EUR 9 million) to address marine litter in hotspot countries and rivers in east and south-east Asia. The EU will also provide EUR 17 million to help Pacific countries build waste management programmes and address issues relating to health and well-being, marine litter and biodiversity conservation. In 2019, the EU launched a new action to continue supporting the development of marine protected areas and to achieve 'good' ocean environmental status. Through this action, the EU will take forward established cooperation for specific identified marine protected areas and/or degraded coastal and marine ecosystems around two major ocean basins: (i) the South Asia Sea and (ii) the Atlantic Ocean. Two

new Partnership Instrument actions were also approved in 2019 to contribute to ocean data sharing and to better ocean management.

The EU strives to support the work of Regional Seas Conventions. For example, providing help to implement the ecosystem approach in the Mediterranean Sea has some important potential consequences for replication in other regions.

The EU is also very active in addressing marine litter, including participating in discussions on a future global action programme to protect the marine environment against land-based sources of pollution.

Case studies

Case study - Strengthening participatory governance in Oyster Lagoon National Natural Park, Haiti

Context

The lagoons and waterfalls of Oyster Lagoon park in Belle-Anse, Haiti, were designated a protected area in 2017. However, with 7 000 families living within the park and dependent on fishing and charcoal production, this project was set up to identify income-generating activities that would reduce pressure on the biodiversity hotspot's natural resources.

Objectives

Consolidate the capacities of all stakeholders for better governance of the protected area 'Natural National Park of the Oyster Lagoon.'

Impact

- 30% of the 2 000 fishermen now earn three times more than before thanks to providing training, motorboats and a cold storage facility.
- Mangrove cutting and lizard hunting have been largely eradicated thanks to increased public awareness of the endangered species.
- Mangrove cover increased and the number of flamingos more than tripled in just two years.
- The local authority has also defined new rules on coastal fishing, hunting, protection of water sources and the sale of charcoal.

Case study - Atlantic Ocean Tropical Tuna Tagging programme (AOTTP) – evidence-based approach for sustainable management of tuna resources in the Atlantic

Context

Tropical tuna fisheries are of major importance for coastal and island countries of the Atlantic Ocean. They contribute to their economies and food security through landings by local fishing fleets, provide employment in port services and facilities, and receive income from the fisheries agreements with the EU. The sustainability of tuna fisheries remains a priority for these countries.

AOTTP is catching at least 120 000 tuna, tagging them and releasing them alive across the tropical Atlantic Ocean. When a tagged fish is re-caught the resulting data on recapture size, location, date, real growth and migration improve the accuracy of stock assessments and scientific understanding of the biology and population dynamics of tropical tuna species, leading ultimately to more sustainable tropical tuna fisheries management.

Objectives

AOTTP aims at contributing to food security and economic growth of Atlantic coastal states by ensuring sustainable management of tropical tuna resources in the Atlantic Ocean.

Impact

- Improved accuracy of scientific advice for stock assessment.
- Increased technical and scientific capacities on issues related to fish tagging and fish stocks assessment in developing Atlantic coastal countries.
- Improved tuna stocks management.

1.3.15. SDG 15 Life on land

Introduction

Following its in-depth international review in 2018, SDG 15⁴⁸ received particular attention in 2019 ahead of 2020 designated as ‘Super year of nature’ with the Green Deal Communication of December placing biodiversity at the centre of EU international priorities. The UNCCD (desertification), CITES (wildlife trade), and UNFCCC (climate change) held conferences of the parties (COPs) with strong EU participation, showing the urgent need for more political involvement, policy coherence, transformative change and global EU leadership.

Overview and trends

Preparation for the new EU 2030 Biodiversity strategy and the 15th conference of the parties on the Convention on Biological Diversity were kick-started to reach an ambitious deal for nature and people in October 2020. The EU Communication on ‘Stepping up EU action to protect and restore

⁴⁸ “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”. SDG 15 targets.

the world's forests'⁴⁹ adopted in July 2019 offers an integrated framework to address deforestation and forest degradation. The EU gave its support to Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) processes in 24 countries to improve forest governance, policy reforms, transparency and multi-stakeholder participation in decision-making.

The EU also gave its active support to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Convention on Biological Diversity is the most comprehensive and politically important international agreement on biodiversity. Through the Partnership Instrument, the EU supports the 'Follow-up to the strategic plan for biodiversity (Convention on Biological Diversity)', developing effective EU environment diplomacy in biodiversity at global level. At the same time, the EU continues to protect biodiversity and contribute to a more sustainable agriculture and food sector globally, through its Partnership Instrument action on biodiversity and sustainability in the agriculture and food sector. This action is conducted in partnership with UNEP and based on an internationally agreed methodological framework, the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity, which serves as a key tool for measuring the economic value of ecosystems and biodiversity.

⁴⁹ COM(2019) 352 final of 23 July 2019.

Case studies

Case study - EU financing for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)

Context

The Commission signed a EUR 13 million convention with Agence Française du Développement to renew its funding of CEPF from 2020 onwards. CEPF is a multi-donor fund which has successfully positioned itself as the leading donor in CSO financing for key biodiversity areas around the globe. The Fund is efficiently linking conservation of hotspots providing multiple ecosystem services with empowering private sector stakeholders and vulnerable population groups, and providing sustainable livelihoods.

Objectives

- Consolidate work with CSOs and local actors in biodiversity hotspots and enable further action on drivers of biodiversity loss.
- Demonstrate how the sustainable use of natural resources contributes to SDGs and provides huge returns in investment with the right incentives and governance.

Impact since 2001

- USD 243 million in grants have been awarded (leveraging an additional USD 371 million).
- 2 363 beneficiaries in over 92 countries and territories.
- 46.5 million hectares of key biodiversity areas with strengthened management.
- 882 globally threatened species protected.

Case study - Budget support programme for the forestry sector in Honduras (PAPFOR)

Context

About 46% of Honduras is covered by forest forming an essential part of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. Honduras has lost about 12.5% of its forest area since 2015. Almost 80% of the forest area continues to face the challenges of illegal logging, land use changes by immigrants and impoverished families, and drug trafficking. Policy dialogue under the budget support programme was complemented by a dialogue on the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA FLEGT).

Objectives

To contribute to effectively implementing forest policy and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Impact

- Recognition of forest ownership rights for indigenous and Afro-Honduran people.
- Public investment to fight forest fires (35 forest fire observation towers constructed).
- Prevention of pest outbreaks (establishment of a Forest Health Unit).
- Designation of protected areas (about 30% of territory declared under different protection statuses).
- Availability of more accurate sector data.

- Strategic budgeting in the forest sector.
- Adoption of the Fiscal Responsibility Law.
- Negotiation of the Voluntarily Partnership Agreement helping indigenous people to assert their rights.

1.3.16. SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions

Introduction

In 2019, the EU confirmed its support to implement SDG 16 worldwide through a variety of actions funded under thematic and geographic EU external financing instruments, particularly focusing on promoting democracy and human rights.

Overview and trends

Democracy, human rights and good governance

The EU is a strong supporter of national human rights institutions which are central to the broader human rights architecture. In 2019, the EU launched a new EUR 3.75 million programme to further strengthen regional and international networks. On non-discrimination, the EU also launched a call for proposals on the protection of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and/or Intersex (LGBTI) human rights defenders worth EUR 8 million.

The EU also allocated almost EUR 64 million of its humanitarian aid budget to child protection activities globally, including a notable contribution to the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty.

The EU continued to promote the rule of law, access to justice and to strengthen justice institutions in several countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in the Neighbourhood countries, by providing funding or a project-based approach.

Projects were launched with civil society and partner organisations on corruption, the fight against illicit financial flows, accountability and transparency. Two global calls for proposals for projects were launched promoting scrutiny and accountability under the instruments for democracy (EIDHR) and civil society (CSO-LA). The EU co-financed capacity-building to strengthen international tax governance and helped developing country experts to participate in international tax forums such as the Global Forum on transparency and exchange of information and the inclusive Framework on BEPS. The EU also supported the UN's Committee of Experts on Taxation. In parallel, the EU continued reviewing tax jurisdictions worldwide to improve international tax governance and update the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions based on their actions to implement commitments on good tax governance standards.

Under the local authorities part of the civil society organisations and local authorities programme, 16 contracts were signed to strengthen local authorities as partners in improving governance mainly at municipal level, focusing on urban planning. In addition, four EU roadmaps for engagement with local authorities have been piloted to establish their involvement in the programming exercise at

local level, to develop the EU's support at regional level and to structure a dialogue with the national associations of local authorities and the local authorities in partner countries.

As far as inclusiveness, responsiveness and participation is concerned, the pilot programme 'INTER PARES' (EUR 5 million) started building capacity of partner country parliaments through peer-to-peer exchanges with EU Member State parliaments. Moreover, three projects were launched through a EUR 5 million global call for proposals on digital civic activism and participation.

Efforts were redoubled to improve the capacities of several African countries on civil registration and vital statistical systems.

The principles of good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights included under SDG 16 are key to the European Neighbourhood's policy objective of stabilisation. In 2019, new initiatives to implement reforms were launched in Neighbourhood countries, to improve governance and judicial independence, and deepen democracy and the respect for the rule of law, including in security reforms and border management.

In line with the 2018 Western Balkan strategy, measures were rolled out to enable judicial independence and efficiency, to empower institutions contributing to societal change and to encourage regional cooperation in the region. The Commission has also developed a revised enlargement methodology, which will put an even stronger focus on these fundamental reforms.

In addition, the Commission continued to improve links between public administration reform, inclusive and evidence-based law and policymaking processes at sector level. It supported the building of effective country systems for monitoring, reporting and evaluating public policy performance in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood regions. In particular, support continued to be given through the OECD support for improvement in governance and management (SIGMA).

The EU was at the forefront in the fight for freedom of expression and access to information (SDG 16.10). Actions were undertaken to address the growing challenges related to freedom of expression and media freedom. Several projects were funded to support the media under the thematic instrument, spurred by the technical assistance facility 'Media4Democracy.'

Preventing and countering violent extremism has become a key part of EU counterterrorism policy. Innovative projects implemented in partnership with local communities around the world contributed to increasing the understanding of local factors and drivers of violent extremism in targeted countries and regions and supported vulnerable individuals.

[Peace, fragility and resilience](#)

During 2019, the Commission continued to focus on development cooperation in preventing, managing and helping to resolve conflicts and crises, averting humanitarian needs and building lasting peace and good governance. In particular, the Commission conducted a strategic evaluation of conflict prevention and peacebuilding for 2013–2017, which will, in addition to providing an independent assessment of EU support, identify key lessons and produce recommendations on EU engagement in the field. The Commission also launched a thematic evaluation of mediation activities financed under the IcSP which concluded that IcSP actions were responsive to contextual realities

and beneficiary needs in addressed conflicts and had a catalytic impact in terms of opening space for other longer-term actions for political, economic and social development.

Security and stability

The implementation of the 2016 SSR strategic framework continued to make positive changes in the way EU institutions lend their support to the security sector in non-EU countries, with the overarching goal of better securing the EU, promoting peace and EU values worldwide and contributing directly to SDG 16 of the 2030 Agenda. In 2019 the EU, through the IcSP funded Security Sector Governance (SSG) facility, supported and underpinned national policy planning, implementation and dialogue on security sector reform. In particular, the SSG facility allowed the EU to develop strategic frameworks of engagement in the security sector in Mali, Nigeria, Maldives, the Democratic Republic of Congo and to support policy dialogue and programming on security in countries such as Georgia, Jamaica, The Gambia, Ethiopia and Benin.

The EU, under the IcSP, has also lent its support to peaceful political transitions, such as in Ethiopia and Sudan, and remains engaged on the most important crises worldwide, including in Afghanistan, Syria, Venezuela and Ukraine. Several activities in Afghanistan, Libya, Niger and Somalia directly complemented the work of common security and defence policy (CSDP) missions.

A number specific actions were also launched around the world under the strengthening resilience to violent extremism (STRIVE) programme. These actions aim to facilitate innovative preventing and countering violent extremism projects in collaboration with local communities and to strengthen conditions conducive to development and resilience towards violent extremism.

Nuclear safety

Commission departments provided the EU contribution to the G7 decision to render the Chernobyl nuclear site environmentally safe again. The radioactive hazard was entirely secured, making the site safe for the next 100 years. The facility was subsequently handed over to Ukraine in July 2019, 33 years after the Chernobyl accident in 1986. The handover also represented the completion of the largest ever example of international cooperation in nuclear safety, with the establishment in 1997 of the Chernobyl Shelter Fund. The Fund was managed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and funded by contributions from 45 countries, the Commission and the EBRD. The EU contributed EUR 431.6 million through its Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation, making it the largest donor after the EBRD.

Most nuclear safety projects are managed directly by Commission departments. The European Commission has contributed significantly to the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran.

Case studies

Case study - Cartooning for peace: using cartoons to advance human rights and democracy

Context

Willy Zekid, a Congolese cartoonist and refugee in France, has become a trainer on press cartooning thanks to the project 'Cartooning for Peace and Democracy,' funded by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

Objectives

Willy has been meeting avid press readers in schools, universities, informal urban settlements and prisons, to raise awareness on the importance of press cartoons in promoting and accepting pluralism, tolerance and freedom of expression. Willy illustrated some of his key points using the methodology elaborated by cartooning for peace, as well as key findings of the annual report on press cartooning worldwide and the cartoon repository developed by the project.

Impact

Thanks to the same project, Willy, and his colleague Lassane Zohoré have been able to consolidate the network of press cartoonists in the Ivory Coast, while meeting counterparts from other countries to share best practice and sharpen their skills. So far, the project has helped to widen the network to 203 press cartoonists from 67 countries and raised awareness of the 40+ press cartoonists, whose professional activity has put them in danger.



Case study - MediPIET - improving health security at Europe's borders

Context

Public health threats do not recognise borders. Emerging and re-emerging diseases, such as Ebola, highlight the need for well-trained professionals to detect, control and stop the spread of an outbreak.

The Mediterranean and the Black Sea regions are particularly exposed to health risks (epidemics, pandemics) and disasters (human-made or natural), which can have a serious impact on populations, resources and infrastructures and could undermine the regions' efforts in sustainable development.

Objectives

- To improve health security in the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions by supporting capacity-building to prevent and control biological, natural or human-made health threats through a sustainable training programme in intervention epidemiology.
- To create a regional network of field epidemiologists and trainers who collaborate to manage outbreaks.

Impact

- 37 fellows trained under the Field Epidemiology Training programme, now working for their national public health institutes.
- 13 'training the trainers' courses carried out.
- 50 outbreaks have been investigated at source in the last five years.
- 37 surveillance systems evaluated, and 10 new surveillance systems deployed.

1.3.17. SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals

Introduction

The European Commissioner for International Partnerships took office in December 2019, sending out a strong message on the importance of partnerships. Successful sustainable development requires partnerships, particularly with our partner governments, but also with the private sector, civil society, multilateral organisations and financial institutions.

Overview and trends

Partnerships

In 2019, the Commission remained the global leader in direct support for civil society organisations (CSOs) and strengthened its support to global and regional platforms and NGO networks. The EU lent its support to CSO capacity and development effectiveness and ensured their participation in policymaking and oversight on all levels. The Policy Forum on Development, a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue with civil society held two meetings in 2019: in Belgium (global) and in Nepal (Asia regional).

The EU continued to be actively engaged in UN processes such as the annual High-level Political Forum (HLPF), the Financing for Development (FFD) Forum, the special high-level meetings of the UN General Assembly such as the Climate Summit, the SDG Summit, the FFD High-level Dialogue and the Small Islands Developing States Summit. The EU continued to strongly support UN reforms and followed closely the UN Development System reform. The EU also lent its support to implementing the country-level reforms to achieve the 2030 Agenda, notably through active engagement with the UN Resident Coordinators.

In 2019 the Commission continued to play an influential role in major OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) policies, acts and events. The EU's views were reflected in decisions taken on a revised Peer Review Instrument and the adoption of several key OECD DAC recommendations.

A key feature was the further strengthening of the partnerships with international financial institutions, with high-level participation at the World Bank Group (WBG) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) spring and annual meetings and closer collaboration with Arab financial institutions such as the Islamic Development Bank.

The EU was actively engaged in the G20 and G7. The G20 leaders reaffirmed in Osaka their leading role in contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Support for the French G7 presidency on the finance and development tracks, helped make meaningful progress on several subjects.

To promote cooperation and alliance building on global issues of mutual interest, the EU has built strong cooperation with partner countries and middle-income countries in line with the aims of SDG 17. Actions cover policies such as the international dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy and boosting trade, investment and business opportunities for EU companies. This engagement also establishes partnerships on fighting climate change. For example, 'Support to the implementation of the Paris Agreement with major economies' encourages G20 partner countries to implement their climate change mitigation and adaptation policies successfully.

Finance

The EU and its Member States maintained their position as the biggest provider of official development assistance (ODA), accounting for about half of global ODA to developing countries (0.46% of gross national income (GNI) in 2019). Latest available figures also show an increase of ODA to least developed countries, reaching 0.125% in 2018⁵⁰.

EU support for domestic revenue mobilisation (DRM) in partner countries includes tax policy reform, support for tax administrations and enhancing international tax cooperation. The EU provides its support in collaboration with the IMF, the OECD and through bilateral cooperation with partner countries. The Commission is on course to double its technical development cooperation on DRM. It is the world's biggest grant provider of DRM support, with payments and commitments reaching over EUR 66 and EUR 100 million, respectively in 2019.

Recent highlights in this area include:

⁵⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_674https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_674

- DRM and tax good governance related indicators in bilateral EU budget support operations increased from 3% in 2014 to 19% in 2018.
- Over 79 tax administrations worldwide have been assessed using the internationally recognised tax administration diagnostic assessment tool methodology as a basis to kick-off tax reforms.
- 19 medium-term revenue strategies globally have been developed, providing a vision for the future tax system of a number of developing countries and support to the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Inclusive Framework.
- The Global Forum on Transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes has helped developing countries to set and implement good tax governance standards.

Additional tax revenues from exchanging information is estimated at EUR 24.4 billion. Since 2016, 21 EU twinning projects contributed to a) strengthening the administrative capacity of tax and customs administrations and b) further improving and harmonising tax and customs legislation with the EU standards and best practice. The Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument (TAIEX) was also used to conduct 164 events on similar topics in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood regions. In addition, the EU also helped fight Illicit financial flows through a flagship project with the African Union in cooperation with the African Tax Administration Forum.

The debt portfolio of developing countries is becoming more complex, with new risks related to currency, refinancing and interest rates. More than 40% of low-income countries are at high risk of, or are already in, debt distress. The Commission is supporting international efforts to improve debt management capacities, including recording and reporting debt data as well as developing medium-term debt management strategies to minimise the risks and the cost of financing. The Commission also supports the implementation of the G20 Operational Guidelines on Sustainable Financing to improve debt transparency of both creditors and debtors. In addition, it contributes to debt management capacity-building initiatives, notably with the World Bank and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

The EU has also helped partner countries to seek additional financial resources from multiple sources including private investment through the European External Investment plan.

The EU helped generate political momentum on integrated national financing frameworks (INFFs) to map the different financial sources available for sustainable development at country level and to support country-led financing strategies. The purpose of INFFs is to help countries have a better understanding of all the different financial resources at their disposal and to develop a financing strategy to reach the SDGs. 16 partner countries are engaging in an INFF.

Capacity building

In 2019, the Commission continued its work in the core group of the donor competence network 'learn4dev,' an international network of development organisations that shares best practice and promotes joint learning and knowledge management. The 2019 annual meeting, where 23 institutions gathered, focused on learning in different settings and contexts.

Representing Member States on the steering committee of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPECD), the Commission has driven a substantial change agenda by

making the partnership more effective in promoting positive change and sustained impact at country level. This change is fully reflected in the upcoming GPEDC work programme.

Systemic issues

On policy and institutional coherence, joint programming of development assistance from the EU and its Member States has been a major tool to address development effectiveness issues and work collectively on policy coherence, notably across the humanitarian-peace-development nexus.

Case studies

Case study - Domestic resource mobilisation in Uganda

Context

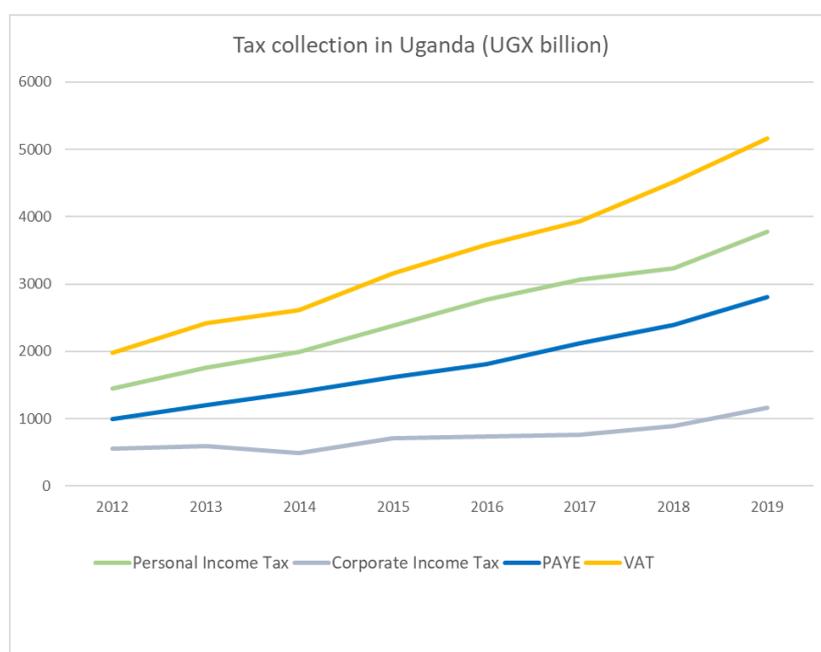
In Uganda, the tax to GDP ratio was only 11.6% in 2014.

Objectives

The EU and the IMF joined forces to support the government's Medium-Term Revenue strategy. Assessments of the tax administration in 2015 and 2019 also provided a basis for reform measures. The EU's budget support programme and technical assistance underpinned this process.

Impact

Tax revenues have increased steadily reaching 13.5% of GDP in 2017 (see figure below).



Case study - Integrated national financing framework (INFF) in Indonesia

Context

The EU has actively been supporting the Indonesian government who volunteered to be an INFF pioneer country. A joint EU-UNDP scoping mission took place to kick-start the INFF process.

Objectives

The objective is to help the government mobilise and channel funds for sustainable development, including through their new SDG financing hub, and to capitalise on the success of an innovative financial instrument targeting climate action, in particular the Green Bond and Green Sukuk initiative. As the success of an INFF greatly depends on the buy-in and collaboration of the ministries and actors responsible for the wide range of financing policy areas, the EU's engagement is instrumental in building agreement about the roles and responsibilities of the different actors involved in the INFF process.

Impact

- The Indonesian government can map and identify the full range of financing sources that are at its disposal.
- Additional resources identified can be used to achieve Indonesia's SDG 2019-2030 roadmap.
- The INFF enables the government to lay out a financing strategy to raise resources, manage risks and achieve sustainable development priorities.

2. Results reporting and alignment to SDGs

2.1. The EU International Cooperation and Development Results Framework and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Performance Framework

Since 2015, the Commission has published selected results achieved by EU-funded projects and programmes in over 100 partner countries in North and Sub-Saharan Africa, Central & South East Asia, Pacific, the Middle East and the Eastern Neighbourhood.

In 2018, the Commission also published results for the first time for the seven pre-accession candidates and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.

Reporting takes place using two corporate results frameworks: the EU international cooperation and development results framework (EU RF)⁵¹ and the Instrument for Pre-Accession performance framework (IPA PF).

Each consist of a set of indicators selected to monitor the policy priorities of Commission departments.

These two frameworks report on achievements in partner regions, thereby serving accountability and communication purposes. Results data is collected from progress or final reports by implementing partners, external monitoring reports or evaluations or national statistical systems for projects and programmes that started between January 2014 and August 2018 and with an EU-contribution of more than EUR 750 000. The results frameworks determine which of the results reported can be aggregated at corporate level. More than 1 000 projects and programmes contributed with results data to at least one of the indicators in the frameworks.

This report presents the aggregated values for the indicators in these frameworks and presents examples of project achievements to illustrate results that are not captured by the indicators in the framework.

Section 2.2 of this chapter presents results collected from the EU RF and section 2.3 reports on results collected from the IPA PF.

2.2. Results from the EU Results Framework

Following its revision in 2018, and for the second year in a row the EU RF reports latest results achieved from projects and programmes that are under implementation. This year's sample includes more than 2 700 projects and programmes implemented by the Commission with an EU contribution of around EUR 30 billion, a significant step towards the Commission's aim of further increasing data coverage and obtaining more timely information.

⁵¹ SWD(2018) 444 final of 11 October 2018

2.2.1. Coverage of the EU Results Framework

The EU RF is structured around three levels of results. The core of the EU RF is level 2, which reports outputs and outcomes achieved with support by EU-funded interventions.

Level 1 corresponds to development progress in partner countries; that is, the medium- and long-term development impact achieved in partnership and collaboration with others. Impacts reflect the operational context in which EU external assistance is provided. The indicators at this level are selected as far as possible from the SDG indicators.

Level 2 focuses on development outcomes and outputs to which EU-funded interventions contribute in collaboration with partner governments and other funding providers. In line with the principles of aid effectiveness and effective development cooperation that emphasise partnerships and country ownership, results at this level are presented on a contribution basis. That is, rather than results being based on the share of funding provided by the EU, they represent the combined efforts of a variety of partners, including the EU, Member States, partner country governments and public institutions, local communities, international finance agencies, CSOs, non-profit entities and private companies. Data collection is guided by specific methodological notes⁵².

Level 3 focuses on the mainstreaming of policy priorities, as measured by budgetary commitments directed at specific cross-cutting issues (e.g. human development, gender, nutrition), and focuses on organisational financial data.

To increase coherence with international and European policy frameworks, the EU RF is structured according to the SDGs and includes results statements that articulate the key EU international cooperation objectives, as reflected in the European consensus on development.

The following section presents Level 2 results. The Level 1 and Level 3 indicators are included in Chapter 6, which also provides more technical details and tables with results data for Level 2.

Data used for reporting

Level 2 reports results from a set of ongoing and completed EU-funded interventions that started between 1 January 2014 and 1 August 2018, with an EU contribution of EUR 750 000 or more.

This year, over 2 700 projects and programmes reported latest results information, out of which slightly over 1 000 projects and programmes contributed to at least one of the corporate indicators. The sample of ongoing interventions continues to expand over time.

Results data is drawn from the reports of EU implementation partners (i.e. partner countries, international organisations, Member States' development agencies, international financial institutions and NGOs). These organisations use data collected from a variety of sources, such as the management information system of partner countries, the individual project monitoring frameworks of implementation partners and representative surveys.

⁵² Methodological notes are available online <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/eu-rfi>

Overview of results for EU RF Level 2

Table 1 shows the latest aggregated results for EU RF Level 2 indicators.

Table 1: EU RF Level 2 – Latest aggregated results achieved with EU support, 2013–2019 ^(a)

No	EU RF indicator	2013–2017 ^(b)	2018/2019 ^(c)	2013–2019
2.1	Number of food-insecure people receiving EU assistance ^(d, e)	14 159 000	24 239 000	38 399 000
2.2	Number of women of reproductive age, adolescent girls and children under five reached by nutrition-related interventions supported by the EU ^(e)	11 976 000	7 705 000	19 682 000
	<i>Food-insecure people</i>	–	1 401 000	1 401 000
2.3	Number of smallholders reached with EU-supported interventions aimed to increase their sustainable production, access to markets and/or security of land ^(e, f)	3 841 000	10 132 000	13 973 000
	<i>Food-insecure people</i>	–	912 000	912 000
2.4	Agricultural and pastoral ecosystems where sustainable management practices have been introduced with EU support (ha)	3 675 000	2 331 000	6 006 000
2.5	Number of one-year-olds fully immunised with EU support	13 253 000	64 322 000	77 575 000
2.6	Number of women of reproductive age using modern contraception methods with EU support	–	18 015 000	18 015 000
2.7a	Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: a) primary education	47 763 000	25 210 000	70 608 000
2.7b	Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: b) secondary education	21 087 000	2 686 000	23 722 000
2.8	Number of individuals with access to improved drinking water source and/or sanitation facility with EU	–	5 650 000	5 650 000

No	EU RF indicator	2013–2017 ^(b)	2018/2019 ^(c)	2013–2019
	support			
2.9	Number of individuals accessing electricity with EU support through: a) new access, b) improved access ^(g)	–	–	20 230 000
2.10	Renewable energy generation capacity installed with EU support (MW)	–	–	13 000
2.11	Number of jobs supported/sustained by the EU	–	219 000	219 000
2.12	Number of countries supported by the EU to strengthen investment climate ^(h)	–	87	87
2.13a	Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support: a) firms	37 000	441 000	478 000
2.13b	Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support: b) individuals ^(h)	–	1 735 000	1 735 000
2.14	Number of quality schemes adopted by economic operators with EU support	1 500	30 400	32 000
2.15	Number of people who have benefited from institution- or workplace-based VET/skills development interventions supported by the EU	882 000	980 000	1 862 000
2.16	Total length of road supported by the EU through: a) construction, b) rehabilitation, c) maintenance (km) ^(h)	43 000	64 000	107 000
2.17	Number of migrants, forcibly displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or assisted with EU support	–	5 713 000	5 713 000
2.18a	Number of migration management or forced displacement strategies or policies: a) developed/revised with EU support	–	44	44

No	EU RF indicator	2013–2017 ^(b)	2018/2019 ^(c)	2013–2019
2.18b	Number of migration management or forced displacement strategies or policies: b) under implementation with EU support	–	19	19
2.19	Number of countries and cities with climate change and/or disaster risk reduction strategies: a) developed, b) under implementation with EU support	-	113	113
2.20	Number of micro, small and medium enterprises applying sustainable consumption and production practices with EU support	27 000	8 500	35 000
2.21	Greenhouse gas emissions avoided with EU support (tonnes CO ₂ e)	–	–	28 204 000
2.22a	Marine areas under: a) protection with EU support (km ²) ⁽ⁱ⁾	–	2 700	2 700
2.23a	Areas of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems under: a) protection with EU support (ha) ⁽ⁱ⁾	46 572 000	30 722 000	77 293 000
2.23b	Areas of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems under: b) sustainable management with EU support (ha)	–	66 707 000	66 707 000
2.24	Number of countries supported by the EU to conduct elections and/or improve their electoral process	–	28	28
2.25	Number of government policies developed or revised with civil society organisation participation through EU support	–	340	340
2.26	Number of victims of human rights violations directly benefiting from assistance funded by the EU	–	47 000	47 000
2.27	Number of people directly benefiting from legal aid interventions supported by the EU	1 682 000	1 070 000	2 752 000

No	EU RF indicator	2013–2017 ^(b)	2018/2019 ^(c)	2013–2019
2.28	Number of individuals directly benefiting from EU-supported interventions that specifically aim to support civilian post-conflict peacebuilding and/or conflict prevention	2 789 000	367 000	3 156 000
2.29	Number of state institutions and non-state actors supported on security, border management, countering violent extremism, conflict prevention, protection of civilian population and human rights	–	5 100	5 100
2.30	Number of countries supported by the EU to strengthen revenue mobilisation, public financial management and/or budget transparency	–	126	126

Notes for Table 1

^a Total figures, covering 2013 to 2019, may not equal the sum of results from 2013–2017 and 2018/2019. This is due to the avoidance of double counting, or the rounding of numbers, or both. Furthermore, please note that historical data for 2013-2017 are not available for EU RF indicators that were substantially revised or newly introduced. Besides reporting on interventions covered by the EU RF, three indicators - EU RF 2.15, 2.17 and 2.29 - also include figures reported through the EU Trust Fund for Africa.

^b Refers to data collected from EU-funded interventions that ended between July 2013 and June 2017.

^c Refers to data collected from ongoing or completed EU-funded interventions that started between January 2014 and August 2018. Figures are cumulated with the values reported last year, cleaned of double counting.

^e The number reported under indicator 2.1 may overlap with those for indicators 2.2 and/or 2.3. Indeed, food-insecure people may also be reached by nutrition-related interventions covered by indicator 2.2 and/or interventions aimed to increase smallholders' sustainable production, access to markets and/or security of land covered by EU RF 2.3. For indicators 2.2 and 2.3, the numbers of food-insecure people reached (based on the revised EU RF) are reported separately.

^f This indicator was introduced in the 2018 revision of the EU RF. It combines parts of the previous EU RF indicators 'Number of people receiving rural advisory services' and 'Number of people who

have secure tenure of land' (values for 2013–2017: 3 841 000 and 815 000, respectively). For the purpose of reporting across years, the current value was cumulated with the historical data for 'Number of people receiving rural advisory services'.

^g This indicator was newly introduced in the 2018 revision of the EU RF. The value reported represents inferred access to electricity for the overall reporting period 2013–19. It currently does not include the number of individuals with access to electricity with EU support through improved access, due to data limitations. Improved access will be reported in the forthcoming years. As a result, the number of people with access to electricity (new or improved) through EU support is expected to be significantly higher.

^h The 2018/2019 value corresponds to: a) 12 906 km constructed, b) 1 475 km rehabilitated and c) 49 353 km maintained.

ⁱ Note that there is no entry for the EU RF indicator 2.22 'Marine areas under b) sustainable management with EU support (km²)'. This indicator was introduced in the 2018 revision of the EU results framework and the methodology is still under development, closely following the ongoing work done by the UN on SDG indicator 'Proportion of national EEZs managed using ecosystem-based approaches'.

^j The value for 2013–2017 is from a related indicator in the previous EU RF: 'Number of hectares of protected areas managed with EU support'.

2.2.2. This year's highlighted topic: Gender equality and closing the gender data gap

This year's report focuses on the gender dimension of selected results, which are reported through the EU results framework. The elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls is a priority across all areas of EU external action, as stressed in the Council conclusions on the implementation of the gender action plan II. At the international level, it has been stressed that women are pivotal for reaching the SDGs, and progress has been made in the areas of education and female representation in parliaments. However, women remain underrepresented in politics, continue to face gender-based violence and still provide the majority of unpaid labour. A new gender action plan III will be launched in 2021, and a Strategic Evaluation of the EU's external action support of gender equality and women's empowerment will be published in 2020.

Against this background, this chapter focuses on gender equality and on the persisting gender data gap. Section 2.2.3 presents latest results achieved along the SDGs and highlights specific examples of projects that contributed to gender equality and women's empowerment. These examples also serve to complement the quantitative results from the EU Results Framework with qualitative results.

The availability of gender data is crucial to design appropriate policy solutions. While data makes realities visible, it also leaves whatever is not captured in the statistics invisible. This invisibility concerns various groups in society, and women are the largest such group to be affected by the lack of available data. Thus, the gender data gap describes the lack of information on the specific situation of women and girls. It can translate into policies or design solutions that inadvertently disadvantage women.

In the area of international development cooperation, continuous efforts are undergoing to strengthen disaggregated data collection. The need for more gender data is widely recognised, especially in the context of achieving the SDGs.

A recent book by Caroline Criado Perez⁵³ describes solutions from all walks of life that are designed for men more than for women as a result of a gap in data: women are more likely to be killed or injured in car accidents because car designs rely on the male body as a reference for developing and testing car safety. Apple’s phone assistance Siri is more reactive to lower male voices. In the health sector, pharmaceutical trials have often insufficiently included women and thus failed to consider differences like weight and hormonal balances. Furthermore, with the uptake of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the consequences of the gender data gap will be amplified: big data will feed AI, which will be used to automate decisions, hence the need to access and use data that reflects the reality for women.

All in all, there is widely shared understand that collecting disaggregated data is an effective means of combating the underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes that ultimately lead to decisions which disadvantage women.

2.2.3. Availability of gender disaggregated data in the EU Results Framework

This section considers the availability of sex disaggregated data in the EU Results Framework. The following table considers the indicators that are suitable for sex disaggregation and presents the share of results which are not assigned to either women/girls or men/boys.

Of all the data collected for the indicators reporting on individuals, 34% is not assigned to a gender. There are two possible reasons for the lack of sex disaggregated data: either it was not reported or it was not encoded. Both possibilities point to the need to pay more attention to gender data collection.

The share of the data that is not sex disaggregated varies from no disaggregation for the data on immunisation to almost full disaggregation for the data on enrolment in primary education. This illustrates the fact that much progress remains to be done, but that disaggregation is entirely possible. The hope here is that by shining a light on this issue, concerted efforts will be made to build sex disaggregation into the data collection process.

Table 2: Availability of gender disaggregated data in EU results framework indicators

EU Results Framework indicator	Total	Identified	% Identified
Number of food insecure people receiving EU assistance	24 239 000	21 521 000	89
Number of women of reproductive age, adolescent girls and children under five reached by nutrition related interventions supported by the EU	7 705 000	6 561 000	85
Number of smallholders reached with EU supported interventions aimed to increase their sustainable	10 132 000	699 000	7

⁵³ All examples come from a book by Caroline Criado Perez: *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*. See also here: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/techtank/2019/11/20/bridging-the-gender-data-gap/> and her recent article in <https://time.com/collection/davos-2020/5764698/gender-data-gap/>

production, access to markets and/or security of land			
Number of one-year olds fully immunised with EU support	64 322 000	-	0
Number of women of reproductive age using modern contraception methods with EU support	18 015 000	18 015 000	100 ⁵⁴
Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: a) primary education	25 210 000	23 847 000	95
Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: b) secondary education	2 686 000	2 184 000	81
Number of individuals with access to improved drinking water source and/or sanitation facility with EU support	5 650 000	93 000	2
Number of individuals with access to electricity with EU support through: a) new access	-	-	0 ⁵⁵
Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support: b) individuals	1 735 000	310 000	18
Number of people who have benefited from institution or workplace based VET/skills development interventions supported by the EU	980 000	643 000	66
Number of migrants, forcibly displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or assisted with EU support	5 713 000	289 000	5
Number of victims of human rights violations directly benefiting from assistance funded by the EU	47 000	6 800	14
Number of people directly benefitting from legal aid interventions supported by the EU	1 070 000	102 000	10
Number of individuals directly benefiting from EU supported interventions that specifically aim to support civilian post-conflict peacebuilding and/or conflict prevention	367 000	98 000	27

The highest levels of sex disaggregation are observed for the indicators measuring support provided in the areas related to health and lower levels of education: number of food insecure people receiving EU assistance (89%), number of women of reproductive age, adolescent girls and children under five reached by nutrition related interventions supported by the EU (85%), number of students enrolled in primary education with EU support (95%), with the stark exception of number of one-year olds fully immunised with EU support (0%), and not counting number of women of reproductive age using modern contraception methods with EU support for which the number is by definition 100%.

It is interesting to note that despite the proven capability of reporting sex disaggregation for the data on schooling, this information becomes scarcer as the stakes become higher. Indeed, the levels of sex disaggregation for enrolment in secondary education (81%) and especially for participation in VET/skills development (66%) are considerably lower than those for the enrolment in primary education (95%). Furthermore, we observe an additional drop in the levels of sex disaggregation once we consider the data on support provided to income generation (number of smallholders reached with EU supported interventions aimed to increase their sustainable production, access to

⁵⁴This data is sex-disaggregated by definition, as it counts the number of women.

⁵⁵This data cannot be sex-disaggregated because the values are generated by a model that does not provide this information.

markets and/or security of land: 7%) and access to credit (number of individuals with access to financial services with EU support: 18%).

The lowest levels of sex disaggregation can be found in the data measuring support provided to promote peace and end violence (SDG 16): number of migrants, forcibly displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or assisted with EU support (5%), number of victims of human rights violations directly benefiting from assistance funded by the EU (14%), number of people directly benefitting from legal aid interventions supported by the EU (10%) and number of individuals directly benefiting from EU supported interventions that specifically aim to support civilian post-conflict peacebuilding and/or conflict prevention (27%).

2.2.4. Selected examples of projects and programmes supporting a gender data dimension

The following examples illustrate how the EU is providing support to the development of statistical systems or the use of gender sensitive data at project level to close the gender data gap or improve project implementation.

In Ethiopia, the Multi Donor Trust Fund for Promoting Basic Services (PBS III) was a large programme run by the World Bank to expand access and improve the quality of basic services that are a key priority in Ethiopia, with over 60% of spending directed to the five sectors of agriculture, rural roads, education, health, water and sanitation.

With a dedicated component on managing for results, PBS III supported the development of sectoral management information systems in education, agriculture, water and sanitation, and roads.

The collection of sex-disaggregated data was supported in all 11 regions. For example, by the end of the support, 96% of health centres were implementing the new health management information system, more than 1 000 woredas (districts) had implemented the education information system, surpassing the target, and half of woredas had rolled out the WASH management information system.

National level data on service delivery aspects was collected by the Central Statistics Agency, a mini-Demographic Household Survey (DHS), a national household income survey, was carried out, and a country report on gender disaggregated development data was published.

A report by the World Bank⁵⁶ investigated if there had been a bias in the spending allocated to the five sectors in terms of results achieved. For agriculture, findings showed a bias towards men, with a higher probability for a field from male-headed households to use improved farming techniques. The reasons for this difference were not fully clear, but possible explanations included a bias or choice of different crops by women, or a different size or quality of land for women-headed households, or more support by extension agents to male-owned fields.

The Ethiopian Social Accountability Programme (ESAP) is a monitoring tool which complements programmes such as the PBS. With the help of CSOs, ESAP engages with citizens in a structured exchange for social accountability between the service providers (the state) and the communities receiving them. In this respect, it contributed to improving the situation of recipients of the

⁵⁶ World Bank, Implementation Completion and Results Report, 2019.

Productive Safety Net Programme, a food security programme that delivers cash or food transfers for six months every year to food insecure households engaging in public works. In two woredas, women were working more hours than men as they were asked to complete the same tasks. This was changed and the workload for women was reduced. Furthermore, pregnant and lactating workers could switch to temporary direct support after giving birth meaning that they are exempted from doing public works from the moment they know they are pregnant until the child is one year old while still receiving the transfer. In the Afar region, the ESAP monitoring mechanism was useful to spot inequalities in the salary distribution methods: husbands engaged in public works were not distributing their share to the rest of the family, a potential factor for female invisible poverty⁵⁷. This was solved by providing each household member with a client card and an accompanying awareness raising campaign.

In **Tunisia**, the *Programme de promotion de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes en Tunisie*, a large programme to promote gender equality, supports institutional capacities, women's participation in the labour market and in public functions, and implements activities to combat gender based violence. The programme recognises the need for gender statistics and supports the Ministry of Women, Family, Children and Seniors as well as the Statistical Institute. The programme promotes the production of gender statistics by ministries, institutions as well as non-state actors, with the objective of assessing the socio-economic situation, working conditions of men and women and the prevalence of violence against women. Amongst other things, it developed an approach for improving data collection for the employment bulletin and for the national gender report. It also accompanied the set-up of budgeting processes that integrate a gender perspective.

2.3. Results achieved with EU support per SDG

This section presents results achieved by projects and programmes financed by EU development cooperation and partnership instruments. Under each SDG, it mentions the respective result statement(s) from the new European consensus on development and the latest figures for EU RF indicators. In addition, each SDG section is complemented by an example from an EU-funded intervention in the field of gender and women empowerment. Two SDGs - namely SDG 1 No Poverty and SDG 5 Gender equality - have no specific indicator in the EU results framework and results that are relevant for gender and women empowerment.

2.3.1. SDG 1 No poverty

While extreme poverty has eased considerably since 1990, pockets of the worst forms of poverty persist. Ending poverty requires universal social protection systems aimed at safeguarding all individuals – women and men, boys and girls – throughout the life cycle. It also requires targeted measures to reduce vulnerability to disasters and to address underserved geographic areas within each country⁵⁸.

Eradicate poverty, leave no one behind

⁵⁷ See also SDG Academy "The Gendered Experience of Poverty", <https://sdgacademylibrary.mediaspace.kaltura.com>

⁵⁸ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg1>

More women than men live in poverty, especially during their peak childbearing years. Women and girls around the world are 4% more likely than men and boys to live in extreme poverty, and the risk rises to 25% for women aged between 25 and 34⁵⁹.

2.3.2. SDG 2 Zero hunger

In nearly two-thirds of countries, women are more likely than men to report food insecurity. The world's worst food insecurity is in sub-Saharan Africa, affecting half the population. Globally, almost one-third of employed women work in agriculture, not accounting for self-employed and unpaid family workers. Yet *women* account for *only* 13% of *agricultural landholders in the world*. In some parts of the world, such as South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, more than 60% of all working women are working in agriculture, concentrated in informal and poorly paid jobs with little or no social protection. Not having equal access to land or credit, technology and markets leaves many on the margins of subsistence agriculture⁶⁰.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Pursue an end to hunger and undernutrition and systematically integrate resilience in all actions**
- **Support sustainable agriculture and fisheries, especially for smallholders**

24 239 000 food-insecure people received EU assistance

7 705 000 women of reproductive age, adolescent girls and children under five were reached by nutrition-related interventions supported by the EU – among whom 1 401 000 were food-insecure

10 132 000 smallholders – 1 401 000 of whom were food-insecure – were reached with EU-supported interventions aimed at increasing their sustainable production, access to markets and/or security of land

2 331 000 ha of agricultural and pastoral ecosystems were managed by sustainable land management practices with EU support

In the fishing sector, men and women frequently take up distinct tasks. Women in artisanal fishing communities will often manage smaller boats or be responsible for time-consuming onshore tasks such as mending nets, servicing boats or processing and marketing catches⁶¹.

In Mali, the *Projet d'appui à la filière halieutique* (PAFHA) works to improve the incomes of fisheries communities by supporting the development of the fisheries sector. It is a component of the EU's *Programme de renforcement de la sécurité alimentaire* (PRORESA) programme, which responds to the challenges of food insecurity and the peace and reconciliation agreement. PAFHA helped establish 32 new committees in charge of managing waterbodies where fish farming is supported by

⁵⁹ UN Women, The Gender Snapshot 2019, <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/progress-on-the-sdgs-the-gender-snapshot-2019-single-pages-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5813>

⁶⁰ UN Women <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs>

⁶¹ FAO, *Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in fisheries and aquaculture* <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6623e.pdf>

sustainable practices. The National Fisheries Directorate provided training on the functioning of these committees, emphasising female participation in order to improve their representation in the sector. Thanks to 32 training sessions that reached 160 people during 2019, one quarter of these management committees are made up of women.

Furthermore, through key interventions of the PRORESA programme, 143 786 women of child-bearing age and 58 467 children under five benefitted from awareness raising campaigns on nutrition and regular screenings to assess various forms of malnutrition.

EU RF indicators disaggregated by sex

EU Results Framework indicators	Total	women/girls	men/boys	Not identified
2.1 Number of food-insecure people receiving EU assistance	24 239 000	10 072 000	11 449 000	2 718 000
2.2 Number of women of reproductive age, adolescent girls and children under five reached by nutrition-related interventions supported by the EU	7 705 000	3 633 000	2 928 000	1 145 000
2.3 Number of smallholders reached with EU-supported interventions aimed to increase their sustainable production, access to markets and/or security of land	10 132 000	211 000	489 000	9 433 000

2.3.3. SDG 3 Good health and well-being

Many more people are living healthier lives in 2018 than in 2008. Nevertheless, people are still suffering needlessly from preventable diseases, and too many are dying prematurely. Overcoming disease and ill health will require concerted and sustained efforts, focusing on population groups and regions that have been neglected⁶².

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Build strong, good-quality and resilient health systems, providing equitable access to health services and universal healthcare (UHC)**
- **Universal access to quality and affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services, including access to family planning**

64 322 000 one-year-olds were fully immunised with EU support

18 015 000 women of reproductive age were using modern contraception methods with EU support

⁶² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3>.

Promotion of gender equity and equality embraces all social, cultural and economic dimensions of our societies. In particular, knowledge of and access to sexual and reproductive health rights is fundamental for women and girls to live their lives in dignity and freedom.

In rural Zambia, the project Socio-economic empowerment of women, especially in the rural areas of Zambia for gender equity and equality helped vulnerable women and girls by lifting their living standards at household and community level. Through coordinated advocacy, capacity development of local organisations and linkages with government, the intervention tackled several dimensions of gender inequalities. These included sexual and reproductive health rights for women and the youth to embrace their ability to know and make decisions regarding childbearing, parenting, sexual relations and overall health. A campaign to end child marriage was successful in retrieving 1 200 children (1 198 girls and 2 boys) from marriages since 2016. Young mothers who dropped out of school had the chance to re-enter education, and over 4 000 women were supported in livelihood skills. The project also promoted awareness raising of existing legal and policy provisions on women’s rights as well as advocacy for the appointment of the Gender Commission as prescribed in the National Constitution and the Gender Equity and Equality Act of 2015.

EU RF indicators disaggregated by sex

EU Results Framework indicator	Total	women/girls	men/boys	Not identified
2.5 Number of one-year-olds fully immunised with EU support	64 322 000	-	-	64 322 000
2.6 Number of women of reproductive age using modern contraception methods with EU support	18 015 000	18 015 000	-	-

2.3.4. SDG 4 Quality education

Over 50% of children and adolescents worldwide are not meeting minimum proficiency standards in reading and mathematics. Refocused efforts are needed to improve the quality of education. Disparities in education along the lines of gender, urban–rural location and other dimensions still run deep, and more investment is required in education infrastructure, particularly in least developed countries⁶³.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

➤ **Support inclusive lifelong learning and equitable quality education**

25 210 000 students enrolled in primary education with EU support

2 686 000 students enrolled in secondary education with EU support

⁶³ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>.

Globally 89% of girls complete primary education, but only 77% pursue lower secondary education. In low income countries, the numbers drop to below two-thirds for primary education, and only one-third for lower secondary school⁶⁴.

According to the World Bank, depriving girls of education is not only a missed opportunity to have a better life, but is also a cost for our societies to pay. Certainly, the positive impacts of education apply to both boys and girls. But especially for girls, low education attainment is associated with child marriage and early childbearing, higher risks for worse health and nutrition outcomes for mothers and their children, a lack of agency and decision-making ability within the household, and in society more generally. Besides, the drop-out and its negative impact is even higher for girls and boys with disabilities who face additional barriers to access education.

In Egypt, the EU implements the five-year intervention Expanding Access to Education and Protection for at Risk Children in Egypt with UNICEF to scale up the community schools model and improve access of out of school children to primary education. Great attention is dedicated to children with disabilities, to develop a school environment and learning tools adapted to their needs and sensitise the community to a positive and inclusive attitude towards disabilities. So far, 1 500 girls with mild disabilities could access an improved learning environment.

EU RF indicators disaggregated by sex

EU Results Framework indicator	Total	women/girls	men/boys	Not identified
2.7 a) Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: a) primary education	25 210 000	11 402 000	12 444 000	1 364 000
2.7 b) Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: b) secondary education	2 686 000	1 000 000	1 184 000	502 000

2.3.5. SDG 5 Gender equality

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are fundamental human rights and an essential precondition for equitable and inclusive sustainable development. While some forms of discrimination against women and girls are in decline, gender inequality continues to hold women back and deprives them of basic rights and opportunities. The level of gender equality achieved is uneven across regions and within countries. Worldwide, girls and women continue to be systematically left behind and discriminated against, and persistent violations of their rights occur on a daily basis.

Empowering women requires addressing structural issues such as unfair social norms and attitudes as well as developing progressive legal frameworks that promote equality between women and

⁶⁴ World Bank report: *Missed Opportunities: The High Cost of Not Educating Girls*.
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/publication/missed-opportunities-the-high-cost-of-not-educating-girls>

men. The EU is firmly committed to supporting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls worldwide. It works towards removal of obstacles related to legislation, social norms and gender stereotypes to ensure voice and participation for girls and women to increase their agency in social, economic, political and civil life.

Special attention is given to mainstreaming gender equality across all policies and programmes as a key contribution to the successful achievement of the SDGs⁶⁵. Since 2014, there has been a steady increase in gender streamlining: a respective EU RF indicator at level 3 reports an increase from 31% in 2014 to 68% in 2018 of EU-funded cooperation and development initiatives promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.⁶⁶

Due to the cross-cutting nature of women's and girls' rights, the current EU RF does not contain a specific indicator to report on gender equality, though sex-disaggregated data are collected where available.

Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) manifests in many forms including domestic violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and widespread practice of female genital mutilation. In Somaliland, violence against women and girls remains part of daily life in many urban areas, that are often overcrowded and insecure, as well as in rural areas, where impunity of perpetrators is the norm due to distance from police and justice services. SGBV victims and survivors are often isolated, shamed, and forced to marry their attacker.

The programme STOP - Somaliland Terminating Oppression of women and girls offered safe spaces to victims of SGBV to get medical and psychosocial care, and legal services. Shelter homes help women and girls to recover but also provide education and vocational skills training for income generation. Local grassroots organisations engaged with traditional leaders, police, lawyers and other civil society organisations to mainstream SGBV and integrate appropriate prevention, risk mitigation, and response strategies in their daily work. The programme also contributed to build coalitions of civil society actors across the country through the national SGBV Network and to collect data to improve the SGBV referral system. The aim is to bring government institutions, police, justice service and civil society together not only to deliver quality and safe services for SGBV victims but to become accountable actors capable of breaking the circle of violence and culture of impunity.

2.3.6. SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation

In 2017, 785 million people lived without basic drinking water services. A majority (400 million) lived in sub-Saharan Africa, where more than half relied on water collected directly from rivers, lakes and ponds. Where running water is unavailable at home, women and girls are the primary procurers of water for household needs, often travelling long distances to get it⁶⁷.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

⁶⁵ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:42017Y0630\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:42017Y0630(01)&from=EN)

⁶⁶ EU RF level 3 indicator Proportion of EU-funded cooperation and development initiatives promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. See the Results annex in chapter 5 for annual figures.

⁶⁷ UN Women, The Gender Snapshot 2019, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2019>

➤ **Improved access to water, sanitation and hygiene**

5 650 000 individuals had access to improved drinking water source and/or sanitation facility with EU support

The project Fostering Smallholder Agriculture in Sierra Leone addresses the food insecurity of rural populations through two different but complementary approaches: improving cash crop production to improve the monetisation of rural markets; and strengthening the value chains of these cash crops (cashew, robusta coffee and cocoa) from production to market, including certification. An important component of the project aims to provide safe access to water and sanitation to the smallholder farming communities. At the beginning of the project, one-third of the population in the targeted villages was using river and swamp water as drinking water throughout the year. Only a small proportion of the households had a hand-washing facility. With the support of the project, water points were constructed and rehabilitated, providing safe access to water to all inhabitants, reaching 20 948 individuals in 110 villages. Wells constructed in the villages significantly reduced the distance to the water point. Furthermore, latrines were newly built or upgraded, and total sanitation has been achieved in all villages. Female participants in group sessions on “linking, agriculture, natural resources and nutrition” reported an increase in using better sanitation from 38% in 2017 to 82% in 2019.

EU RF indicator disaggregated by sex

EU Results Framework indicator	Total	women/girls	men/boys	Not identified
2.8 Number of individuals with access to improved drinking water source and/or sanitation facility with EU support	5 650 000	48 000	45 000	5 557 000

2.3.7. SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy

Affordable, clean energy fuels sustainable development, such as by providing the light that allows a child to do her homework or the power that a woman uses to run sewing machines for her business. Worldwide, 1.1 billion people still have no electricity. Three billion burn solid fuels such as wood and animal dung for cooking and heating, filling their homes with dangerous pollutants. The lack of modern energy sources has other consequences for women and girls, who are often the primary household energy managers. They may spend hours each day collecting fuel and carrying heavy loads. In households that cook with solid fuels, girls spend 18 hours a week, on average, gathering fuel. Women are largely side-lined in the industries that produce modern sources of renewable energy, however, comprising only 20% of the workforce⁶⁸.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

⁶⁸ UN Women, In Focus Women and the SDGs, online, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-7-affordable-clean-energy>

➤ **Improved access to energy for all and increased energy efficiency and renewable energy generation**

20 230 000 individuals accessing electricity with EU support through new or improved access

13 000 megawatts of renewable energy generation capacity installed with EU support

The Women and Sustainable Energy initiative in developing countries combines these two priorities. Based on the potential of increasing access to sustainable energy, this initiative builds upon past and current efforts that address gender imbalances women face in accessing resources, including energy. Under this initiative, a call for proposals was launched in 2017 to foster women’s entrepreneurship by facilitating their access to finance, to sustainable energy, to technical and business skills, and to vocational training in order to encourage women to engage in the sustainable energy sector.

One of the projects launched under the Women and Sustainable Energy initiative is “DESFERS - Economic and Social Development of Women through Renewable Energy in the Sahel”, a project that intends to facilitate access to women entrepreneurship in the sustainable energy sector in Senegal, Mali and Niger. It provides financial support and training to women, allowing them to launch micro to small sustainable energy businesses. The project is still at its early stages and is expected to be completed by 2023. Thus far, for example, the project has set up cooperation with training centres and has developed training modules to train women’s groups in the three countries in technical competencies and financial management to enable them to further operate and evolve in the renewable energy sector.

2.3.8. SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth

Globally, labour productivity has increased and the unemployment rate has decreased. However, more progress is needed to:

- increase employment opportunities (especially for young people);
- reduce informal employment and labour market inequality (particularly in terms of the gender pay gap);
- promote safe and secure working environments;
- improve access to financial services to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth⁶⁹.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Promote an economic transformation that creates decent jobs and increases productive capacity**
- **Improved economic governance, business environments, contribute to scaling up private and public investments, including addressing the MSME financing gap**
- **Promote trade and regional integration**

⁶⁹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg8>.

➤ **Meet the specific needs of youth, particularly young women and girls, by increasing quality employment and entrepreneurship opportunities**

219 000 jobs were supported or sustained by the EU
87 countries were supported by the EU to strengthen investment climate
441 000 firms had access to financial services with EU support
1 735 000 individuals had access to financial services with EU support
30 400 quality schemes were adopted by economic operators with EU support
980 000 people have benefited from institution- or workplace-based VET/skills development interventions supported by the EU

In Papua New Guinea, the Rural Economic Development Programme Phase 2 aims at accelerating income generation from agricultural produce in the Highlands region. Gender equality is not the principal reason for undertaking the programme, but it is mainstreamed in the programme (Gender policy marker 1). The main beneficiaries of the programme are smallholder farmers and emerging small-scale producer groups requiring support to enhance income generating activities. Within these groups, women's groups are targeted as well as the most vulnerable subgroups.

One of the results achieved so far by the programme is the provision of access to financial services to 744 446 individuals from both urban and rural highlands regions, among whom there are 544 446 men and 200 000 women. In terms of women's financial inclusion, a number of financial services primarily benefitted women such as the rural solar energy loans and the so-called Mama Bank access points. Other services like the health and life insurance products benefitted men more than women (although for these products, women are usually the beneficiaries in case of death). One of the reasons is that men and women may require different financial services: female-headed common interest groups form more frequently and are more stable than men's, hence they are likely to gain access to more gender-tailored financial products; while men are more individualistic and require small-scale individual loans.

EU RF indicators disaggregated by sex

EU Results Framework indicator	Total	women/girls	men/boys	Not identified
2.13b Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support: b) individuals	1 735 000	123 000	187 000	1 425 000
2.15 Number of people who have benefited from institution- or workplace-based VET/skills development interventions supported by the EU	980 000	343 000	300 000	337 000

2.3.9. SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Steady progress has been made in the manufacturing industry. To achieve inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, competitive economic forces need to be unleashed to generate employment and income, facilitate international trade and enable the efficient use of resources⁷⁰.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Support the development of sustainable, low-emission, interconnected, safe and secure mobility and transport networks**

64 000 km of road was supported by the EU through construction, rehabilitation and maintenance

In the West Bank, Area C represents more than 60% of the land and is home to more than 250 Palestinian communities. Nonetheless, since 1967, Israel retained full building and planning authority, which results in heavy limitations for the Palestinians living there. With the assistance from the international community and particularly the EU, the Palestinian Authority aims to both maintain Palestinian presence in Area C and improve social and economic conditions of Palestinian people living in this area.

The Area C Development Programme in the West Bank - Package II used a participatory approach to start urban planning and enable local residents to identify their private and public priority build-up areas for the next years. Later, the EU intervention supported the neediest communities in Area C with basic social and public infrastructure such as roads, schools, public parks, and public buildings.

A gender-sensitive participatory approach has been adopted. Several events have been organised to generate dialogue between the local government authorities and the residents. Women views and concerns were addressed as a priority when deciding on the social infrastructures to be funded such as health facilities, community centres, schools and kindergartens. It allowed the active inclusion of the voices of women and girls to highlight their specific needs, but also empowered them to contribute shaping the space and the community they live in.

2.3.10. SDG 10 Reduced inequalities

Efforts have been made in some countries to reduce income inequality, to increase zero-tariff access for exports from least developed countries and developing countries and to provide additional assistance to least developed countries and small island developing states. However, progress will need to accelerate to address growing disparities within and between countries⁷¹. For women and girls, gender inequalities have consequences for income as well as other basics of well-being, such as health and education. Intersections with other types of discrimination, such as those related to age, disability, ethnicity, migration, economic status and so on, multiply the burden of inequalities many times over⁷².

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

⁷⁰ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg9>.

⁷¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg10>.

⁷² UN Women, In Focus Women and the SDGs, online, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-10-reduced-inequalities>

- **Reduce inequality of outcomes and promote equal opportunities for all**
- **Step up efforts to mitigate the impact of forced displacement and to promote the better management of migration in partner countries in all its aspects**

5 713 000 migrants, forcibly displaced people or individuals from host communities were protected or assisted with EU support – including 100 000 supported through EU Trust Fund for Africa projects

44 migration management or forced displacement strategies or policies were developed or revised with EU support

19 migration management or forced displacement strategies or policies were under implementation with EU support

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), international labour migration in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) region has increased over the past decades with almost half of the 10 million migrants being women. Women migrant workers make a great social and economic contribution to the countries of origin and destination. However, they still face the risk of violence and trafficking, and discrimination that limits their access to fair recruitment and decent work.

The initiative Safe and Fair: Realising women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region is part of the EU support provided through the global EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls.

Safe and Fair is implemented through a partnership between ILO and UN Women with the overriding objective of ensuring that labour migration is safe and fair for all women in the ASEAN region, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Among the results achieved so far over one million people have been reached through public campaigns on safe and fair migration. This is contributing to change the narrative around women migrant workers in the ASEAN region shifting negative perceptions and challenging deep-rooted gender stereotypes. Over 5 000 women migrant workers and their families received information on ending violence against women and safe migration. 700 people were trained on gender-based violence, labour rights and safe migration. This included specialised training for more than 250 front-line service providers in Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand on how to handle women's protection/trafficking issues in a coordinated manner. In the ASEAN region, two innovative task forces linking violence against women, migration and trafficking were established to identify innovative solutions to tackle gender-based violence in the context of labour migration.

EU RF indicator disaggregated by sex

EU Results Framework indicator	Total	women/girls	men/boys	Not identified
2.17 Number of migrants, forcibly displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or assisted with EU support	5 713 000	139 000	150 000	5 423 000

2.3.11. SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities

Many cities around the world are facing acute challenges in managing rapid urbanisation. These include ensuring adequate housing and infrastructure to support growing populations, confronting the environmental impact of urban sprawl and reducing vulnerability to disasters⁷³.

By 2030, a historic 60% of people worldwide will probably live in cities. For women and girls, urban residency can open doors to more income, better work and increased independence. Yet many, particularly lower-income women, are far from experiencing their equal rights to all the benefits and opportunities that urban areas can offer. Urban spaces are not always safe for them, constraining their right to move about freely. SDG 11 aims at providing universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities. It targets access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably expanding public transport with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons. It also sets out to substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and resilience to disasters.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Build cities' resilience to shocks and harness opportunities for low-emission and climate-resilient economies**

113 countries and cities developed/implemented climate change and/or disaster risk reduction strategies with EU support
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In the Belarusian city of Polotsk, the project PubLiCity implements an energy efficient modernisation of public lighting. As part of a wider programme supporting Eastern Partnership cities in the implementation of Sustainable Energy Action Plans, PubLiCity overhauls a part of the public lighting system, re-lamping streets with energy efficient models, and thereby reducing energy consumption and CO₂ emissions from public lighting. While the action is still ongoing, it is expected to result in an improved quality of life for Polotsk citizens, who will benefit from better-lit and more secure streets, more attractive public spaces, improved road safety, less crimes and accidents, as well as cleaner air. Another expected change is an improved code of conduct by the local population in terms of energy efficiency, with citizens changing their energy saving habits and reducing energy consumption.

The Greater Dhaka area in Bangladesh is one of the most congested and polluted cities in the world. With around 18 million inhabitants in 2016, it lacks a developed connected bus network or rapid transit system. Traffic conditions are causing increasing delays and worsening air pollution. This situation compromises the ability of the transport sector to serve and sustain economic growth and provide an acceptable quality of life. Supporting the Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority, the EU

⁷³ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg11>.

funded the Dhaka Urban Transport project for better planning of transport infrastructure, managing traffic and coordinating stakeholders as well as modes of transport. The goal is a better governance of urban mobility and contributing to strengthening economic growth, mitigating climate change and improving living standards especially for women who are disadvantaged by unreliable and unsafe modes of public transport.

2.3.12. SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production

Decoupling economic growth from resource use is one of the most critical and complex challenges facing humanity today. Doing so effectively will require policies that create a conducive environment for such change, appropriate social and physical infrastructure and markets, and a profound transformation of business practices along global value chains⁷⁴.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

➤ Promote resource efficiency and sustainable consumption practices

8 500 micro, small and medium-sized enterprises applied sustainable consumption practices with EU support

The Maghreb countries⁷⁵ share a large number of challenges to their environment. Common issues include water scarcity, rapid population growth with an associated even faster urbanisation process in coastal areas, growing waste generation, climate change and large-scale mass tourism.

In this context, the first phase of the SwitchMed programme (2014-2018) aimed to facilitate the shift toward Sustainable Consumption and Production in eight countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine⁷⁶ and Tunisia). It supported industry, emerging green entrepreneurs, civil society and policy makers through policy development, demonstration activities and networking. In particular, the project addressed the limited opportunities for women to create businesses in the target countries: overall in the region, only 13% of firms are owned by women. It also recognised the role of female entrepreneurs as agents of change for the adoption of more sustainable consumption practices. The programme has trained entrepreneurs to develop their green business models, including 842 women. In Jordan, women made up around 40% of participants in a waste management training programme, and the project saw increasing demand for more training specifically tailored to their needs. Through support for Tunisian ecotourism, SwitchMed contributed directly to an increase of women's activities and incomes at the local level. The project facilitated the creation of 11 green jobs, eight for women and three for men.

2.3.13. SDG 13 Climate action

With global average surface temperature at 1.1°C above the pre-industrial period, 2017 was one of the three warmest years on record. 20% of the Earth's land area was degraded between 2000 and 2015, impacting the lives of one billion people. Women with little access to productive assets have

⁷⁴ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg12>.

⁷⁵ Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia

⁷⁶ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

been disproportionately affected⁷⁷. Further urgent and accelerated action is needed as countries implement their commitments to the Paris Agreement on climate change⁷⁸.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Implement the 2030 Agenda and the Paris climate change Agreement through coordinated and coherent actions that promote resilience, reduce climate risk and contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions**

28 204 000 tonnes of CO ₂ e greenhouse gas emissions avoided with EU support
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The Comoros is an archipelago island in the Indian Ocean heavily affected by the impact of climate change from cyclones, floods, droughts and coastal erosion that destroy the natural habitat, harvests and infrastructure. Women are the chief victims of climate change in their role as farmers, seashore fishers, mothers or students.

The *Programme d'appui à l'Union des Comores* pour le renforcement de la résilience au changement climatique has supported the population, particularly women, by promoting awareness of how climate change manifests on a daily basis, how our actions contribute to it, and what citizens can do to help reduce the impact on communities.

In terms of awareness, seven stories from the daily life of a Comorian family were broadcast as video clips on television and in the form of a comic strip. They highlighted active and decisive women, promoting women's empowerment and emancipation: the female mayor who fights against waste in the coastline of her village, the young student who supports the maintenance of protected areas, the farming grandmother who introduces her grandson to traditional ecological farming practices, or the aunt who is a stay-at-home mum and appreciates the advantages of a cooking stove that is low in wood consumption.

To better reach children, the future generation of Comorian citizens, training was offered to teachers and theatre plays produced in which women play a key role for change.

Furthermore, there were also initiatives in support of rural communities, notably groups of women farmers who, thanks to small irrigation projects, have been able to cultivate plots. This has allowed them to stop collecting sand from the beaches for construction work - a practice that aggravates coastal erosion. Female octopus fishers were supported to use marine resources sustainably, respecting periods of egg-laying. They trained in drying and smoking octopus, which adds value to their catch, and received financial support during the breaks in fishing.

2.3.14. SDG 14 Life below water

Advancing the sustainable use and conservation of the oceans continues to require effective strategies and management to combat the adverse effects of overfishing, growing ocean acidification and worsening coastal eutrophication. Expansion of protected areas for marine

⁷⁷ UN Women, The Gender Snapshot 2019, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2019>

⁷⁸ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg13>.

biodiversity, intensification of research capacity and increases in ocean science funding remain critically important to the preservation of marine resources⁷⁹.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Promote the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems and the sustainable management of ocean resources**

2 700 km² marine areas were under protection with EU support

Today, women account for only 30% of the world's researchers, and even lower percentages at higher decision-making levels. In marine science and ocean research, women appear to be particularly rare to pursue such career paths. Last year for the World Oceans Day, UNESCO decided to celebrate all women whose scientific work is enhancing the conservation of the 49 marine sites inscribed on the World Heritage List.

In the framework of an EU budget support action to **Guyana** for integrated coastal zone management, attention was drawn to the role that women can play in research and protection of marine resources. The Ministry of Public Infrastructure revised the composition of Sea Defence to ensure gender equality in its board. The intervention also promoted an awareness campaign to encourage women to undertake studies in science, engineering and technology. As a reference to specific activities, women from coastal communities were trained to take care of mangrove nurseries. While enhancing the role of women in small communities, these activities also show a way to protect the environment while producing economic returns.

2.3.15. SDG 15 Life on land

Protection of forest and terrestrial ecosystems is on the rise and forest loss has slowed. That said, other facets of terrestrial conservation continue to demand accelerated action to protect biodiversity, land productivity and genetic resources and to curtail the loss of species⁸⁰. Women and men have different relationships to the environment, such as their access to land and natural resources and their engagement in environmental management. They also tend to differ in their vulnerability to environmental challenges⁸¹.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Support the conservation and sustainable management and use of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems**

30 722 000 ha of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems were under protection with EU support

66 707 000 ha of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems were under sustainable management with EU support

⁷⁹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg14>.

⁸⁰ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg15>.

⁸¹ UN Women, The Gender Snapshot 2019, <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/progress-on-the-sdgs-the-gender-snapshot-2019-single-pages-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5813>

The EU supported the Kilombero and Lower Rufiji Wetlands Ecosystem and Management Project (KILORWEMP) in Tanzania, which contributed to a sustainable management of the wetlands ecosystems and worked to conserve the ecological balance, improve local communities' livelihoods, and sustain economic development. It assisted the Tanzanian government and stakeholders to strengthen environmental management systems in a flagship agricultural landscape and catchment area. This landscape is a wetland of international importance; it has been changing radically over the last 20 years, due to strong agriculture, settlements and infrastructure growth.

The project supported the implementation of the existing policy framework of decentralised natural resources management around the key concept of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). It was designed to further consolidate such processes in the three target districts of Kilombero, Ulanga and Rufiji, while at the same time addressing key issues of policy environment such as stakeholder coordination and monitoring of policy implementation. The project focused on: wildlife management areas, community based forestry, beach management units, village land use planning and water users associations.

Women's participation in committees and forums dealing with natural resource management at village level is increasingly included in policies and guidelines and is appreciated and practised in many areas. The KILORWEMP female participation was around 30%.

2.3.16. SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions

Many regions of the world continue to suffer untold horrors as a result of armed conflict or other forms of violence that occur within societies and at the domestic level. Advances in promoting the rule of law and access to justice are uneven. However, progress is being made in terms of regulations to promote public access to information, albeit slowly, and in strengthening institutions upholding human rights at the national level⁸². Where conflict strikes, men are more likely to die on battlefields, but a disproportionate share of women will be targeted for sexual violence, among other violations, and homicide rates among women typically rise. Even though the gender dimensions of conflict are increasingly well documented, along with women's wide-ranging contributions to peace processes, women remain poorly represented in formal mechanisms for negotiating and sustaining peace⁸³.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Support accountable and transparent institutions, inclusive, transparent and credible elections and a pluralist democratic system**
- **Continued promotion of the universal values of human rights for all, including support for enabling space for civil society**
- **Support provision of fair justice, including access to legal assistance**

⁸² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16>.

⁸³ UN Women, In Focus Women and the SDGs, online, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-10-reduced-inequalities>

➤ **Improved human security and democratic governance of the security sector, paying special attention to countries in situation of fragility or affected by conflict**

28 countries were supported by the EU to conduct elections and/or improve their electoral process

340 government policies were developed or revised with CSO participation through EU support

47 000 victims of human rights violations directly benefited from assistance funded by the EU

1 070 000 people directly benefited from legal aid interventions supported by the EU

367 000 individuals directly benefited from EU-supported interventions that specifically aim to support civilian post-conflict peacebuilding and/or conflict prevention

5 100 state institutions and non-state actors were supported on security, border management, countering violent extremism, conflict prevention, protection of civilian population and human rights – including 710 supported through EU Trust Fund for Africa projects

The United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 recognises that women are invaluable agents of peace and are of central importance in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, negotiations and peacebuilding, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction. The resolution calls for women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Over the years, women have been excluded and under-represented in formal peace processes and negotiations. Their direct experience in conflicts and in post-conflict crisis would be highly beneficial in developing policy and practice for sustainable peace and security.

In most parts of Northern Nigerian states, women and girls have limited opportunities and choices to gain education, financial independence and aspiration for leadership and political appointments due to institutionalised cultural and religious beliefs.

The EU-funded programme Promoting Women's Engagement in Peace and Security in Northern Nigeria seek to integrate women in all aspects of peace and security by supporting the country efforts to strengthen women's leadership, advance gender equality and improve protection for women and children in conflict settings.

Recorded success through efforts of the programme include the gender and equal opportunities law which had been passed since 2015 being gazetted by the Plateau state government in June 2018; the development of the 2nd edition of national action plan on UNSCR 1325, and the development of four local action plans in the target states.

Gender-sensitive and human rights centred peace committees were established in each of the target states. More women mentors alongside men have been appointed as members of their traditional councils which is a major achievement in a conservative society where such positions are usually reserved for men.

EU RF indicators disaggregated by sex

EU Results Framework indicator	Total	women /girls	men/boys	Not identified
2.26 Number of victims of human rights violations directly benefiting from assistance funded by the EU	47 000	5 000	1 800	41 000
2.27 Number of people directly benefiting from legal aid interventions supported by the EU	1 070 000	46 000	57 000	968 000
2.28 Number of individuals directly benefiting from EU-supported interventions that specifically aim to support civilian post-conflict peacebuilding and/or conflict prevention	367 000	53 000	45 000	269 000

2.3.17. SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals

Goal 17 seeks to strengthen global partnerships to support and achieve the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda, bringing together national governments, the international community, civil society, the private sector and other actors. Despite advances in certain areas, more needs to be done to accelerate progress. All stakeholders will have to refocus and intensify their efforts in areas where progress has been slow⁸⁴.

EU contributions to development progress in partner countries

- **Strengthened domestic and other revenue mobilisation, public expenditure management and increased efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditure in partner countries**

126 countries were supported by the EU to strengthen revenue mobilisation, public financial management and/or budget transparency

The Women 2030 programme aims to build the capacity of women and gender civil society organisations to advance gender-responsive sustainable development policies, through participation in monitoring and policy development, mobilising citizen's support and demonstrating best practices.

The programme worked in 52 countries supporting gender civil society organisations to better advocate for and mainstream a gender-sensitive approach in policy planning and financing at national and local level. Part of the gender-sensitive approach in policy analysis and development is gender budgeting as a strategy to achieve equality between women and men by focusing on how public resources are collected and spent. In Kyrgyzstan, the 6th national report to the Convention on Biological Diversity has incorporated perspectives and recommendations from rural women, including new research on the role of women in cultural heritage preservation and women's access to land, forests and pastures.

⁸⁴ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg17>.

So far, the intervention succeeded in integrating gender-sensitive approaches in national development plans in 13 target countries.

2.4. The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) Performance Framework

EU aid to the Western Balkans and Turkey (WBT) region⁸⁵ is mainly channelled via the Instrument for Pre-accession, in accordance with the enlargement policy framework defined by the European Council. EU pre-accession assistance, planned by the Commission in conjunction with accession candidates and potential candidates authorities, aims at supporting candidates in their progressive alignment with the standards and policies of the EU, including where appropriate the EU *acquis*, with a view to EU membership.

Assistance under IPA II, provided in the period 2014-2020, is mainly focused on a selected number of policy areas that would help the beneficiaries strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law, reform the judiciary and public administration, respect fundamental rights and promote gender equality, tolerance, social inclusion and non-discrimination.

In view of the specific nature of the assistance provided in this region, a separate results framework, the IPA PF, was developed, partially modelled on the EU RF.

2.4.1. Aim and coverage of the IPA PF

The IPA PF is aligned to IPA II strategic objectives and that of the Communication 'A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans'⁸⁶.

It aims to report on accession candidates and potential candidates' results supported by the EU at an aggregated level. It also aims to improve decision-making and promote learning.

The results from the IPA PF are presented on a contribution basis, which means that they represent the combined efforts of a variety of partners including the EU.

Performance data were collected from a set of interventions (funded by the EU through IPA I and IPA II with a contribution above EUR 750 000) and matched to the IPA PF indicators. The interventions are ongoing and completed interventions that started since January 2014 and were under implementation for at least 12 months at the time of project selection (June 2019). This is consistent with the Commission's aim of further increasing data coverage and obtaining more timely information.

2.4.2. Overview of key results reported against the IPA PF

The total EU allocation of the interventions that were able to report against the IPA PF indicators was EUR 321.4 million. Of this amount: 66% was allocated in the area of public administration reform (Public sector policy and administrative management, government & civil society-general, public finance management and decentralisation and support to subnational government areas); 12.5% was allocated to rule of law and fundamental rights (legal and judicial development, democratic participation and civil society, security system management and reform, human rights,

⁸⁵ The WBT region covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey

⁸⁶ COM(2018) 65 final of 6 February 2018.

legal and judicial development and anti-corruption organisations and institutions areas) and 10% in the competitiveness area (business policy and administration, small and medium-sized enterprises development and trade facilitation). Table 3 contains the key results reported for 2019.

Table 3. IPA II PF – Aggregated results achieved with EU support

2.01	Number of electoral recommendations (of the international election observation missions done by the OSCE/ODIHR or the EU EOM (case of Kosovo)) followed up and/or implemented with EU Support	119
2.03	Number of legal/administrative acts/measures (incl. at constitutional level) (i) adopted and/or (ii) implemented with EU support with the objective of increasing independence and impartiality, and/or accountability, and/or professionalism and/or competence, and/or efficiency of the national justice system.	9
2.04	Number of a) judges, b) prosecutors, c) lawyers and d) court staff trained with EU support on European standards and EU acquis. Out of which at least:	1 213
2.04a	<i>a) judges</i>	236
2.04b	<i>b) prosecutors</i>	12
2.04c	<i>c) lawyers</i>	929
2.06	Number of preventive/repressive anticorruption measures (i) adopted and/or (ii) implemented with EU support	2
2.06a	<i>(i) adopted with EU support</i>	1
2.06b	<i>(ii) implemented with EU support</i>	1
2.09	Number of countries having (i) adopted and/or (ii) implemented the legal framework for the protection, promotion and/or enforcement of human/fundamental rights (including freedom of expression and Media, freedom of assembly and freedom of association and non-discrimination and rights of minorities) with EU support	6
2.10	Number of initiatives led by civil society and supported by the EU	25
2.11	Number of public policies developed and/or revised with internal and external consultations with EU support	98
2.12	Number of EU funded assistance interventions (Twinning, TA, SBS) producing consistent results with ongoing horizontal PAR efforts with EU support	5
2.13	The number of strategies or policies on migration management or forced displacement a) developed/revised, or b) under implementation with EU support	8

2.13a	<i>Number of migration management and/or forced displacement public policies a) developed/revised, with EU support</i>	7
2.13b	<i>Number of migration management and/or forced displacement public policies b) under implementation with EU support</i>	1
2.14	Number of EU funded assistance interventions reporting improvement of compliance of border and security systems with EU /Schengen Acquis	4
2.15	Number of EU funded assistance interventions reporting improvement of state institutions capacities - a) law enforcement, b) judiciary and c) administration - involved in the prevention and fight against organised crime with EU support	3
2.15a	<i>Number of EU funded assistance interventions reporting improvement of state institutions capacities (a) law enforcement, involved in the prevention and fight against organised crime through EU support</i>	2
2.15b	<i>Number of EU funded assistance interventions reporting improvement of state institutions capacities b) judiciary involved in the prevention and fight against organised crime through EU support</i>	1
2.16a	Number of public policies to strengthen revenue mobilisation, public financial management and/or budget transparency a) developed with EU support	11
2.17a	Number of public policies to strengthen investment climate a) developed/ revised with EU support	5
2.18	Number of quality schemes adopted by economic operators with EU support	59
2.19	Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support	
2.19a	<i>a) firms</i>	186
2.19b	<i>b) individuals</i>	764
2.21	Number of direct jobs supported/sustained by the EU	2 706
2.22a	Number of public policies promoting social inclusion a) developed/revised with EU support	3
2.25a	Number of Inland waterways and/or maritime ports supported by the EU through a) rehabilitation and modernisation	2
2.30	Agricultural and pastoral ecosystems where sustainable management practices have been introduced with EU support (ha)	28 000
2.32	Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions avoided with EU support (tonnes CO _{2eq})	798 693
2.33a	Number of public policies for the implementation of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement a) developed/revised with EU support	2

3. Implementation: Geographical overview

3.1. Sub-Saharan Africa

3.1.1. Western and Eastern Africa

3.1.1.1. Introduction (Policy Developments)

West Africa witnessed a sharply deteriorating security and humanitarian situation, particularly in the Sahel region and in Nigeria. In Burkina Faso, more than 700 people lost their lives in attacks perpetrated by armed groups and over 600 000 people were forced into internal displacement. Nigeria similarly witnessed a sharp deterioration of the humanitarian and security situation in the north.

The Foreign Affairs Council on 14 May 2019 reaffirmed the strategic importance of the Sahel region for the EU, and reaffirmed its determination to step up efforts to combat jihadist and other terrorists groups and to address the increase in intercommunal violence to restore stability, including through further work to operationalise the G5 Sahel Joint Force. The need for states' presence to be reinforced throughout the Sahel's territory was also highlighted, as well as the importance of addressing human rights violations. During the fifth annual EU-G5 Sahel Ministerial meeting in Ouagadougou in July, both sides noted the need for increased ownership by the G5 Sahel and for a definition of an integrated framework for action in the area of security and development, and the identification of priority zones of action. The deteriorated security situation in the Sahel, in particular in Burkina Faso, had spill-over effects in the wider West Africa region, which has resulted in a reinforced engagement of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on regional security issues. An Extraordinary ECOWAS Summit on Terrorism on 14 September 2019 followed by a Priority Action Plan amounting to USD 2.3 billion, adopted in December 2019, demonstrated this reinforced engagement. The EU has supported several priorities of the Plan, notably in the field of exchange of information and intelligence. Support to individual countries neighbouring the Sahel (Ghana, Togo, Benin) in counter-terrorism and prevention of radicalisation was mobilised at their request.

In Mauritania, the June 2019 presidential election saw a transition of power to Mohamed Cheikh Ould Ghazouani, who begun to take steps towards improving the country's governance, health, educational and gender profile. Chad continued to be confronted with multiple security threats (Libya, Sudan, Sahel, Lake Chad), with the perspective of elections being postponed again. The EU also continued to accompany Guinea Bissau in its political transition, notably by supporting the presidential electoral process that led to a stalemate. Within the P5 Group (AU, ECOWAS, UN, CPLP⁸⁷, EU), the EU supports the ECOWAS-led efforts aiming at the appointment of a consensual, constitutional government. Throughout 2019, political tension, including violently subdued demonstrations, continued in Guinea in the context of the constitutional review, which would reset presidential term limits, allowing the current president to run for a third term. In Benin, formerly a beacon of multiparty democracy, political reforms have progressively closed the political space and

⁸⁷ *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* - Community of Portuguese Language Countries

saw opposition parties excluded from taking part in the April parliamentary elections. In November, Benin withdrew the agreement and requested the departure of the EU Head of Delegation. This led to the reciprocal declaration of *persona non grata* of Beninese Ambassador to the EU. Further contacts between EU and Benin authorities allowed for dialogue and progressive reengagement.

In East Africa and the Horn of Africa, 2019 has been characterised by the sweeping changes, new alliances and largely positive developments taking place in 2018. In Ethiopia, the ambitious reform agenda of the new government was pursued despite increasing political and economic challenges. The Prime Minister's efforts on the regional scene was recognised by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize. Trilateral relations Ethiopia – Eritrea – Somalia also continued although with few tangible results. In Somalia, relations between the Federal Government and the Federal Member States remained strained, delaying necessary consensus and decision-making on key political reforms and preparations of general elections planned for 2020. Also the security situation remains tense, with al-Shabaab demonstrating a shift towards more asymmetric warfare. Important tactical security operations led by Somalia and actioned jointly with the international community including the EU were launched. Kenya pursued its development agenda accompanied by the fight against endemic corruption. Kenya's international relations was marked by efforts to enhance its role in the region and on the global scene. Sudan has experienced tectonic political changes throughout 2019 with the ousting of former President Omar al-Bashir, who was in power for 30 years, after months of sustained popular protests advocating regime change and a civilian rule. A power-sharing agreement between the military and the civilian side was reached on 17 August. Sudan embarked on a three-year political transition with challenges from the deteriorating economy, the internal peace process, to the vested interest of the military. In November, Prime Minister Hamdok visited Brussels. The "pre-transition phase" in South Sudan, as per the revitalised peace agreement of 2018, was extended twice, with little progress on the political front. While the ceasefire has more or less held since September 2018, the humanitarian situation remains dire. Finally, in both Tanzania and Uganda, authoritarian drifts - despite efforts notably in Tanzania to bend corruption - have resulted in the gradual erosion of civil liberties, crack-down on opposition MPs, journalists and media outlets, seriously restricting the freedom of speech.

3.1.1.2. Working Towards the SDGs

The EU subscribes to the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs. Its external and development policies are essential to support progress towards achieving them. Efforts continue to boost sustainable and inclusive growth in and with its partner countries, and to contribute to prosperous, peaceful, inclusive and environmentally sustainable societies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Identifying priorities under the framework of the SDGs is a key exercise in order to develop partnerships directed to both the countries' and the EU's interests across the region.

In West Africa, the EU has been proactive in achieving progress with regards to economic growth (SDG 8) and strategies to achieve it (regional integration, support to the private sector and infrastructure development). This is key in a region limited by poor economic diversification and productivity, an incomplete infrastructure network and low intra-regional trade. Improving climate change resilience with a focus on food security (SDGs 2, 13), natural resources management and

biodiversity protection (SDG 15), and combatting security threats to achieve peace and stability (SDG 16) have also been part of the EU's efforts in the region.

For the Eastern Africa/Horn of Africa region and Southern Africa, the EU has maintained its efforts in achieving economic growth through regional economic integration with a particular focus on infrastructure building (SDGs 8, 9), green investments (SDG 12), and quality employment (SDG8). In addition, actions have also been implemented in relation to peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16). Natural resources management with a focus on transboundary water, sustainable fisheries and wildlife conservation (SDGs 14, 15) also remain key challenges where the EU's added value has been instrumental as are hunger eradication (SDG 2) and education access (SDG 4).

Through the Partnership Instrument, action has been taken since 2016 to enable the EU to deliver on the economic/trade/investment dimension of its strategic partnership with South Africa. The purpose is to ensure successful cooperation and resolution of differences in the context of the negotiations, conclusion and implementation of all major trade and economics-related negotiations both at national (South Africa) and regional (via the South African Development Community (SADC) or wider) policy processes. The main focus is on implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the European Union and SADC, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Paris Agreement), and WTO matters.

3.1.1.3. Implementation

Bilateral cooperation including budget support

The implementation of the national indicative programmes in the West and Eastern Africa regions progressed as planned despite the very difficult security situation in several countries. The 2019 annual action programmes (AAPs) were launched and adopted in several countries. The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF), in both regions, continued to respond successfully to its objectives of addressing instability, forced displacement, root causes of irregular migration, and improved migration management.

Programmes adopted were developed to support the EU's strategic priorities in Africa, including specific areas of the Africa-Europe Alliance for sustainable investment and jobs and the Joint Valletta action plan. Given the deteriorating or very fragile security context in several countries of both regions, and the fact that development and security challenges are interconnected, we also brought particular attention to link between security and development. Drivers of migration were addressed through mid- to long-term development actions to improve people's livelihood and promote job creation and inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development. Furthermore, the EU continued to be at the forefront of the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees. To date, over EUR 391 million has been invested through the EUTF in activities related to forced displacement. These achievements were showcased at the first Global Refugee Forum in December 2019.

Dialogue with partner countries was overall satisfactory but uneven. Some innovative setups, such as the Horn of Africa initiative platform, were used to strengthen our dialogue and positioning in the region.

In West Africa, in the framework of national and regional indicative programmes, EUR 592 million has been committed in 2019, EUR 905 million has been contracted and EUR 1.666 billion has been disbursed, a sign of the strong EU commitment in the region.

In Eastern Africa, in the framework of national and regional indicative programmes, around EUR 801 million has been committed, EUR 856 million has been contracted and EUR 516 million has been disbursed.

In terms of budget support in West Africa, new commitments in 2019 totalled EUR 152.2 million. These concern three new programmes (Burkina Faso EUR 55 million; Togo State Resilience and Building Contract III EUR 33 million, and The Gambia State Resilience and Building Contract III EUR 50 million) as well as two top-ups to existing contracts (Ghana Sustainable Development Goal Contract EUR 5.2 million and Guinea Sector Reform and Performance Contract II EUR 9 million).

The EU now provides budget support to six countries in East Africa: Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Somalia, and Kenya. Indeed, budget support resumed in Kenya in 2019 for the first time in ten years. In these operations, a greater focus has been put on domestic revenue mobilisation, both in the policy dialogue and through performance indicators. The recent State-Building and Resilience Contract in Somalia, a budget support operation to incentivise reforms, has been instrumental in supporting the country's progress towards the decision point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, which is expected to be reached in 2020.

In both regions, the foreseen regular budget support review and dialogue meetings with authorities in all countries with existing budget support operations were conducted. In the framework of the formulation of new operations, as well as substantial top-ups for existing contracts, additional meetings were organised to discuss targeted sector policies and related performance benchmarks.

Regional cooperation (Southern Africa)

Progress was achieved in regional economic integration through the West Africa Regional Indicative Programme, where 98.6% of the EUR 1.075 billion has now been committed. In 2019, as part of that programme, Commissioner Mimica signed a EUR 5 million contribution to the new phase of the IMF AFRITAC West centre to support macroeconomic stability through capacity building for partner countries.

Under the West Africa Trade Facilitation programme (TFWA), implemented by the World Bank Group (WBG) and the German agency for international cooperation (GIZ), 6 regional priority trade corridors were selected through an inclusive process following consultation and discussion with the implementing partners, donors (The Netherlands, Germany, USAID and the European Commission), beneficiary countries and both West African regional organisations (ECOWAS and UEMOA). Corridors selected include: Dakar- Bamako; Ouagadougou-Abidjan; Ouagadougou-Tema; Ouagadougou-Lomé; Cotonou-Niamey; Lagos-Kano-Niamey, detailed assessments for each of them were launched to identify the key bottlenecks and help define the future support measures.

The region has advanced in the implementation of the infrastructure projects funded through blending. The works along the Bamako - San Pedro corridor road, which is considered key to provide coastal access to landlocked areas, is almost finalised. Also in 2019, the EU supported new infrastructure projects which include the modernisation of the Ports of Maio and Palmeiras in Cabo

Verde, being the first blending operation in the country and meaning that now, all 17 countries in West Africa are using the blending instrument to improve key energy and transport infrastructures.

Since 2014 the West Africa region has invested a total amount of EUR 918 million through the African Investment Platform, that leveraged an overall investment of EUR 4.917 billion.

In eastern and southern Africa, impetus has been given to economic integration by supporting the implementation of the EU-Southern African Development Community 'Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)' programmes. In Botswana, this was done by enhancing the capacity of Botswana's public and private sectors to reap the benefits of the EPA and contribute to export-led economic growth with higher employment levels (EUR 6 million). In Namibia, the support enhanced Namibia's access to export markets by improving the government capacity to manage international trade agreements (EUR 6 million). The EU also supported the infrastructure sector by improving both physical and digital interconnectivity (EUR 14 million), contributing to the development of the air transport sector (EUR 8 million) and the Information and Communication Technology sector in the countries of the Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean region (EUR 8 million).

Although the implementation of last years' historic peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea has been slow, it prompted positive regional economic cooperation. In order to seize this opportunity, the EU, together with the World Bank and the African Development Bank, spearheaded the 'Horn of Africa Initiative for Regional Integration and Economic Development' together with Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

[Cross-Border Cooperation overview](#)

[Working Better Together, Development effectiveness, and donor coordination](#)

Dynamic and stable countries such as Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo boosted action on investment and job creation in line with the Africa –EU Alliance for sustainable investment and jobs.

In Ghana and Togo, the EU, jointly with the Ghanaian and Togolese governments, organised business forums aimed at linking entrepreneurs and financing institutions to boost, with innovative financing solutions, the creation of sustainable jobs.

The EU Trust Fund for Africa has remained a key implementing instrument for addressing the main challenges of the Horn of Africa, North Africa and Sahel and Lake Chad regions. It complements traditional EU development instruments, humanitarian aid and existing political dialogues. Through its governance structure, the EUTF has continued to offer a framework for dialogue, collaboration and coordination among contributors and partner countries.

[Lessons learnt](#)

2019 was a year to take stock of the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities offered by the EU Trust Fund for Africa, which reached its fourth year of implementation. Indeed, the EU Trust Fund's implementation across 26 countries, its hundreds of programmes and dedicated staff offers a unique opportunity for learning in a major priority area for the new Commission.

The exercise, compiled in a report on lessons learnt identified the EUTF as having been a game changer and highly innovative, helping to attract attention, and other donors, to the issues at stake,

give weight to the EU's advocacy and encourage new approaches. The report makes a number of substantive recommendations, identifies good practices and reflects on dos and don'ts in this area with specific sections on forced displacement, evacuations transit and resettlements, return and reintegration, border management, counter-trafficking and migration governance. As such, it is a contribution to wider reflections on EU external action in the field of migration and forced displacement.

Some findings include that, through the EU Trust Fund, the EU and partners managed to build, and operationally anchor, better, longer-term strategies with regards to forced displacement and migration management including on voluntary return and reintegration (e.g. with IOM and UNHCR). The positive progress on transparency and evidence-building was particularly noted, as was the calibre of EU Trust Fund personnel. The cross regional aspect of the fund also allowed for a comprehensive approach on protection and migration, with actions in all three regions. The Fund has helped to make important advances on the humanitarian – development nexus and development – security nexus.

However, it was also found that the relatively broad scope created a difficult balance between emergency actions and addressing root causes. In some areas, there was a perceived lack of strategy where a “hurried start” left an imprint. The high visibility and broad/mixed ambitions led to misconceptions about its mandate and goals with increased scrutiny and (sometimes unfounded) criticism. It has lacked a united proactive communication strategy.

In terms of budget support, the instrument remains key to engaging with Governments on issues of public policy, macroeconomic stability, public financial management reform and budgetary transparency. It also provides support on specific nationally driven reform efforts to advance development and poverty reduction. However, the rate of reform momentum may decrease when countries are faced with particularly challenging situations, such as an increased security threat or political transition. The budget support instrument remains credible but as the situation of a country evolves, the approach may need to be restructured to adequately address pressing challenges without putting too much stress on Government resources.

3.1.1.4. Humanitarian and Civil protection – responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

Burundian crisis

Due to political tension, along with epidemics such as Ebola, and the largest malaria outbreak suffered in the country, the humanitarian situation in Burundi continued to deteriorate, with 1.77 million people in dire need of assistance. In response to this situation, Commission departments focused assistance in Tanzania and the Rwanda Burundian refugee camps to meet their basic needs, as well as on humanitarian coordination, Ebola/epidemics preparedness and protection of the most vulnerable in Burundi.

Ethiopia

The main concern for the humanitarian community in Ethiopia was related to inter-ethnic violence, with over two million people internally displaced. Despite safety and security conditions not being met for displaced people, the authorities tried to return them to their place of origin, violating the

principles of voluntary and safe returns. Around 350 000 Ethiopians were deported from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whilst there were over 700 000 refugees from South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea. In 2019, the EU provided EUR 51.5 million in humanitarian assistance to respond to the needs of crisis affected people in Ethiopia. Working through partners, the EU assisted refugees from South Sudan and Eritrea with food, shelter, essential household items, malnutrition treatment, water and sanitation. The largest share of funding was, however, dedicated to internally displaced people who flee persistent violence and destruction of their homes and livelihoods.

Kenya

Kenya hosts almost 490 000 refugees and people awaiting registration. The Kenyan government encampment policy makes refugees fully dependent on international assistance having halted registration of Somalian refugees / asylum seekers and creating a limbo situation for about 50 000 people. In the second quarter of 2019, Kenya faced drought, which led to food insecurity for about 2.6 million people, displacement of populations, and an elevated risk of conflict over scarce pasture and water resources.

Humanitarian funding for Kenya in 2019 amounted to EUR 15.95 million, including EUR 11.5 million for the refugees camps, EUR 1.3 million for Disaster Preparedness in three counties prone to sudden onset disasters, and EUR 3.15 million in emergency response to the drought and floods outside the camps.

Somalia

In 2019, humanitarian needs remained high due to continued erratic weather patterns and armed conflict. Timely and substantial scale-up of the humanitarian response since 2017 prevented the deterioration of the situation to famine status (IPC: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification). However, a new drought contributed to the deterioration of the humanitarian situation throughout 2019, while the end of the year was marked by an above average rainy season in the South of the country compounding severe river floods. The latter affected over 500 000 people, displacing 370 000, and destroyed crops. As a result, it undermined the population's coping capacities and delayed the recovery phase. In response, the Commission allocated over EUR 63 million to Somalia in 2019 through successive allocations to respond to the crisis situation.

Uganda

Uganda has been hosting over 1.41 million refugees, of whom 91% come from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It has also been prone to a wide range of epidemics. Since August 2018, Uganda has been at high risk of Ebola virus transmission from neighbouring DRC, which was experiencing its largest ever Ebola outbreak. The EU allocated EUR 33 million to deliver protection, food assistance, healthcare, access to safe water and sanitation services and education assistance to refugees and their host communities. In 2019, the EU responded to the flood and drought crises, as well as supporting Ebola preparedness, monitoring and response in Uganda. Moreover, the EU worked towards increasing the resilience and self-sufficiency of the most vulnerable people to reduce their dependency on aid in the long-term.

South Sudan

In 2019, around 7.5 million South Sudanese were in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, many of whom faced severe food shortages with undernutrition at critical levels. There are over two million South Sudanese refugees in neighbouring countries. The EU is a long-standing donor of humanitarian aid in the country and continues to support humanitarian projects helping South Sudanese refugees in the region. In 2019, the EU allocated EUR 51.6 million in support of humanitarian action in South Sudan, including funding given to help communities hit by the heavy rains and floods in late 2019. With emergency levels of food insecurity and malnutrition across the country, the EU provides food assistance and nutrition interventions, including in hard-to-reach areas. EU-funded projects also provide protective support to displaced people and people who are carrying the scars of war, trauma and violence, including children. Protection of children and women is a priority for the EU given the extreme levels of violence and the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war.

Sudan

Whilst political changes in Sudan could potentially usher a better future for its citizens, the country still suffered from the effects of decades of conflict and a poor state of basic essential services in 2019. On top of this, an unprecedented economic crisis has increased the price of food and resulted in high levels of severe food insecurity (25% of the population). In 2019, the bulk of EU humanitarian aid (EUR 55.7 million) in Sudan went to food assistance and nutritional care. It supports the most vulnerable households, mostly internally displaced and refugee families, that are struggling to get enough food to meet their needs. The EU also contributed to the nutritional treatment and care of children under five years of age, and pregnant or breastfeeding mothers across Sudan. In refugee hosting areas, EU funds support registration, reception and basic services. They also help with screening for malnutrition, diseases and possible protection needs, together with the subsequent referral of people in need of special help. In order to increase people's access to long-term social protection in Sudan, the EU is complementing humanitarian funding with development assistance that helps communities build resilience.

3.1.1.5 Crisis response and preparedness

With over 21 new crisis response programmes launched in sub-Saharan Africa in 2019, the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) contributes to the EU's response to the numerous crises in the region.

In Central African Republic, the IcSP continues to support the peace process as well as the promotion of conditions for development through the deployment of a senior adviser to the president and government to build their negotiation team's mediation and negotiation capacities and support the design of the process. Three new crisis response initiatives are working with different actors engaged in the peace negotiations. With four IcSP actions, including two through CBSD initiatives, the IcSP also provided considerable support to the security sector, notably for the gradual deployment of the national armed forces and the internal security services beyond the capital and for strengthening trust and collaboration between communities and security forces. In addition,

other IcSP actions focused on supporting stabilisation of communities most at risk and the investigations of the Special Criminal Court.

The IcSP has contributed to strengthen the engagement of civil society in the security sector to better take into account and address people's security needs and concerns, including a gender perspective.

In the field of natural resources IcSP has contributed to strengthen the governance of the diamond and gold mining sector through increased transparency and traceability, helping to curb the use of minerals to fuel conflicts.

In Sahel and Lake Chad regions, the IcSP is supporting security and stabilisation efforts as well as confidence building and the operationalisation of the police component of the G5 Sahel Joint Force. This includes direct support to the *Comité de Suivi de l'Accord* in Mali, programmes to strengthen the capacities of security actors in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Nigeria to improve law enforcement and better anticipate and manage crises and protect civilians, and initiatives on the demobilisation, judicial treatment and reintegration of former Boko Haram combatants and associates in Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria. In Mali, a CBSD action will improve security of the airport in Mopti and support the provision of basic services with a view to restoring the presence of the state in central Mali.

In coastal West Africa, the IcSP continued to be deployed to support national cohesion, security, conflict resolution and to strengthen stability. Programmes, adopted in 2017, started to tackle the growing risk of radicalisation and support the authorities to better anticipate and respond to security risks in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea. The IcSP is also engaged in initiatives to tackle conflicts and insecurity stemming from the exploitation of minerals and trafficking, including in relation to the Kimberley Process in the Mano River region (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire), as well the gold mining in fragile areas of Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. IcSP has also promoted a regional programme supporting civil society capacities to anticipate and prevent electoral violence.

In response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis and the deteriorating security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, new IcSP actions were launched in 2019 to provide support to enhance the security situation in North Kivu and Ituri and increase the effectiveness of the Ebola response by supporting mediation efforts to allow medical and humanitarian workers access to Ebola affected areas.

In Kenya, the IcSP-supported the 'Ms President' reality TV show that provided a significant boost to the involvement of women in political life in Kenya. The programme which was aired on national TV to an audience of millions, received significant attention, including by the President of Kenya.

In Ethiopia, the IcSP adopted a multi-faceted package of activities to address the risk of electoral violence in connection with the 2020 elections, including support to the dialogue process, local mediation and peacebuilding as well as work with the authorities, including capacity building for police on how to manage policing of elections in a democratic and human rights compliant manner. However, a project to support youth dialogue in Eritrea had to be abandoned after the partner organisation lost access to the country.

In Mozambique, the IcSP was able to support the new peace agreement. This was done by supporting communities in conflict affected parts of the country that had been devastated by

cyclones Kenneth and Idai, increasing the risk of renewed conflict, as well as through support to the important disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process. The IcSP was also engaged in Zimbabwe to promote democratic dialogue and conflict mitigation by supporting existing conflict transformation structures at community level, most often faith-based organisations.

In Somalia, the IcSP continues to support consolidation of the Somali security architecture and was instrumental in enabling EU support for the Somali Transition Plan, approved by the Somali Partnership Forum in December 2017, specifically targeting capacity building of the security sector and stabilisation activities. A first CBSD action will enhance the joint operational capacity of the Ministry of Defence and the Somali National Army to secure their headquarters in Mogadishu and to provide them with equipment, capacity building and training.

The IcSP was also used to support the transition process in Sudan through a flexible initiative that will support the various actors in the transition process to make the process transparent and inclusive. The instrument also provided significant support to mediation and dialogue activities in South Sudan.

3.1.2. Central and Southern Africa

3.1.2.1 Introduction (Policy Developments)

2019 has seen important developments in Central Africa. The first peaceful political transition took place in the Democratic Republic of Congo (with Félix Tshisekedi succeeding Joseph Kabila), opening a window of opportunity for the people's expectations to be heard, for increased regional cooperation and stability in the Great Lakes region, as well as for improving EU-DRC relations. In the Central African Republic, the signature of a Political Peace and Reconciliation Agreement between the Government and Armed Groups paved the way for a possible further stabilisation of the country, however the population remain particularly affected by the overall fragility of the situation. In Cameroun, despite a National Dialogue organised by the authorities, the crisis in the North-West and South-West regions worsened, with serious human rights violations reported and significant humanitarian and economic consequences.

Southern African countries, and in particular the regional body SADC, also closely followed the developments in the Great Lakes, with Zambia, Tanzania and Angola in particular having dealt over several decades with major refugee influxes from DRC. Climate change continues to have a significant impact on the Southern Africa region bringing water shortages and related hydroelectric power supply load shedding to many countries, with a significant economic impact which could develop into a political risk factor in the medium term. The main security issues in the region were the insurgency in Northern Mozambique, human trafficking, illicit flows linked to wildlife and minerals, and the international drugs trade (heroin from the east across the Indian Ocean, and cocaine from the west across the Atlantic). The most positive development was the signature in August of a historic peace agreement between the Government of Mozambique and RENAMO: the EU will play a leading role in supporting the implementation of this agreement which includes significant disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) and decentralisation elements. The EU also supported the national dialogue process in Lesotho, which has experienced a prolonged political crisis, and expressed concerns about the situation for human rights in Comoros. After a

successful Summit in late-2018, the EU pursued a number of policy dialogues with South Africa. The EU reiterated its openness to review its policies towards Zimbabwe in the event of demonstrable progress in human rights and the Rule of Law.

3.1.2.2. Working towards the SDGs

In view of the progress achieved, the EU remains committed to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and continues to play an active role to implement it. As a front-runner, it keeps working together with partner countries to end all forms of poverty, fighting inequalities and tackling climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

In Central Africa, EU's support focused on contributing to improved peace, security and stability in the region and strengthening democratic processes (SDG 16). In addition, the EU's efforts were directed towards fighting poverty by supporting inclusive growth and regional economic integration and trade (SDGs 1, 8); and supporting improved governance of natural resources and protected areas with a view to contribute to a green economy, including the fight against climate change (SDGs 13, 15).

For the Southern Africa region, the EU has maintained its efforts in achieving economic growth through regional economic integration with a particular focus on infrastructure building (SDGs 8, 9). In addition, Peace, Security and Regional Stability (SDG 16) actions have also been implemented. Natural resources management with a focus on transboundary water, sustainable fisheries and wildlife conservation (SDGs 14, 15) also remain key challenges where the EU's added value was instrumental.

3.1.2.3 Implementation

Bilateral cooperation including budget support

All programmes in the Central and Southern Africa/Indian Ocean (CSA-IO) region contribute to the realisation of the SDGs. The Central African Republic, despite its fragilities, presented a beacon of hope when in February 2019 a peace agreement was signed. This opened the door for EU supported interventions in previously unreachable areas and for new programmes to strengthen a culture of citizenship, aiming to increase the participation of civil society organisations (SDG 16). In addition, the EU Trust Fund 'Bêkou' Board approved its extension until the end of 2020 and the EU provided a new top up of EUR 60 million to continue to support the health system, rural development, economic recovery and social cohesion and reconciliation (SDGs 3, 8, 9, 16).

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the first peaceful transfer of power in the country's history meant a window of opportunity for stability and inclusive development in the country and the region as a whole. The EU expressed its readiness to support inclusive reform programmes and a new programme on Civil Society was adopted to promote dialogue and restore confidence between citizens and public authorities (SDG 16). Furthermore, an additional EUR 50 million was made available to tackle the Ebola epidemic and food security crisis affecting Eastern regions in DRC (SDG 2, 3). These additional funds helped strengthen the health system and provide access to free and quality healthcare for all the population, allowing for early detection of Ebola cases with a significant decrease in mortality and lethality.

In Southern Africa, the success of the Joint Way Forward ministerial meeting with Angola demonstrated the country's renewed commitment to partner with the EU in order to boost jobs, attract investment and diversify the economy (SDG 8, 10). In Mozambique, the EU mobilised an additional EUR 100 million to respond to the Cyclone Idai crisis, hence mitigating its impact.

Regarding budget support programmes, their implementation in the region was satisfactory, considering the countries' capacities and weak macro-economic framework.

Regional cooperation (including continental Africa)

The objective for the region is the implementation of the shared 2030 Agenda by optimising all EU instruments in a coherent manner. In 2019, the EU increased its engagement with the jobs and growth agenda, in line with the Africa-Europe Alliance, and pursued the fight against climate change (SDG 13) as well as the protection of biodiversity (SDG 15). Crosscutting themes such as inequality (SDG 10), gender (SDG 5) and resilience building have been mainstreamed throughout.

More specifically, in Central Africa, there was continued support to the reform process of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which was approved by the heads of state at the end of the year. Furthermore, following allegations of violation of human rights by eco-guards in some of the conservation areas in the region, the Commission strengthened the monitoring of the situation as well as the dialogue with different stakeholders on the results of the investigations and the corrective measures to be adopted.

In Southern Africa, regional cooperation focused on creating conditions to generate jobs and growth and support its efforts in implementing economic partnership agreements (EPAs) (SDG 8). The EU provided funding, technical support and increased the level of dialogue regarding EPAs. EPAs can create opportunities and incentives, but they can only positively influence the economic and social conditions in a country if their implementation is supported by a broader dynamic in line with the national development strategy to foster economic diversification and local value added.

As previously mentioned (3.1.1.3), in Southern Africa, impetus has been given to economic integration by supporting the implementation of the EU-SADC EPA programmes, for example, in Botswana (enhancing the capacity of Botswana's public and private sectors to reap the benefits of the EPA and contribute to export-led economic growth with higher employment levels – EUR 6 million) and Namibia (enhancing Namibia's access to export markets by improving the government capacity to manage international trade agreements – EUR 6 million). The EU also supports the infrastructure sector by improving both physical and digital interconnectivity (EUR 14 million), contributing to the development of the air transport sector (EUR 8 million) and the ICT sector in the countries of the Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and Indian Ocean (EA-SA-IO) region (EUR 8 million).

The Erasmus+ programme provides for academic mobility, including traineeships for students, and capacity-building projects, in the field of higher education across the African continent. The regional cooperation allocations for Sub-Saharan Africa and South Africa resulted in 2019 in 4 300 mobilities of higher education students and staff from the Sub-Sahara Africa to Europe (and over 2 500 from Europe to the Sub-Sahara Africa) and 12 capacity-building projects allocated. In addition, 60 scholarships for studying Erasmus Mundus joint masters degrees in Europe were given in 2019, with Ethiopia and Nigerian students receiving the biggest number of scholarships in the region.

Cross Border Cooperation overview

In December a new programme started, implemented by Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and jointly financed by Germany and the EU, to support ECCAS and its member states on border management as part of the regional programme in Central Africa for peace and security (SDG 16). It has three objectives: demarcation, border cooperation, and developing a strategy for border management.

In the Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean region the EUR 30 million 'Cross-regional wildlife conservation' programme supports anti-trafficking efforts by enforcing wildlife law and cross border cooperation in selected transboundary ecosystems (SDG 15, 16). The EU is also supporting the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa's (COMESA) 'Regional enterprise competitiveness and access to markets' programme (EUR 10 million) and its 'Trade facilitation' programmes (EUR 63 million), with a focus on small-scale cross-border trade (SDGs 8, 9, 10).

The EUR 74 million programme 'Support to job creation and the investment climate' in Eastern and Southern Africa, aims to achieve full and productive employment and decent work in the overall region by upgrading value chains and improving SME access to finance from capital markets and business enabling environmental and climate investment. In 2019, the EU also enhanced maritime and port security and safety of navigation in the Southern Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region, with a specific focus on five coastal countries (Eritrea, Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia and Yemen) and on Ethiopia (EUR 20 million).

Working Better Together, Development effectiveness, and donor coordination

In 2019, the joint programming process advanced most in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Comoros. There were also steps to take the joint programming process forward in Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville and DRC. In addition, there is a strong possibility of joint programming documents being signed as part of the next financing period in Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia.

In the context of the Africa–Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs, country-tailored jobs and growth compacts, developed to translate EU key priorities into action on the ground, have also been discussed among Member States, governments, private sector and international financial institutions to ensure coherence in the preparation of future programmes.

The EU Trust Fund for Bêkou is another example of close partner coordination; its strategic board comprises EU Member States, members of the European Parliament and other partner representatives, who together define the strategic orientation of the trust fund in cooperation with the Central African authorities.

Lastly, the EU is an active participant in the Cooperating Partner's Group for Peace and Security of the African Union Commission, where national and regional policies and actions are discussed.

Lessons learnt

2019 was a year with many challenges, and many lessons learnt. The humanitarian nexus, representing the synergy between the work of complementary Commission departments in fragile

contexts, was tested numerous times through the year. For example: the Ebola crisis in DRC, Cyclone Idai in South-east Africa, and droughts in Zimbabwe. In these crises, the humanitarian nexus provided benefit through the rapid channelling of funds and technical assistance via existing programmes along with effective work with external partners on the ground. Furthermore, although EU regional support was aligned with regional and national agendas, the capacity of partner organisations and national authorities to deliver objectives in line with EU standards was at times overestimated.

3.1.2.4 Humanitarian and Civil protection – responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

Central Africa

Due to the deteriorating regional crisis in the Central African Republic, EUR 22.36 million of humanitarian aid was allocated. The funds were used for food assistance and livelihood support, agricultural support, health, shelter, water, sanitation, education and protection of civilians. Support was also used to reinforce humanitarian coordination, security and logistics. Similarly, the Lake Chad Basin Crisis, now in its tenth year, received EUR 64 million for equivalent services and providing treatment for severe acute malnutrition (SAM).

Both the Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo were still affected by constant conflict and by an on-going Ebola outbreak. The Commission allocated around EUR 72 million to the Great Lakes region, the majority in response to the crisis in DRC, including Ebola, complemented by EUR 7 million linked to humanitarian aid flight operations.

Sahel – complex crisis

In 2019 the EU covered emergency humanitarian needs in seven countries that were involved in the Sahel crisis: Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Mali, Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon. The EU allocated over EUR 187 million (including more than EUR 141 million to the most vulnerable population in the G5 countries) to support interventions.

The emergency response in conflict areas included support to rapid reaction mechanisms (a three-month multi sectorial emergency aid package) and to existing national structures to maintain access to basic services. Moreover, EU aid helped to protect the needs of the population affected by armed conflicts; it supported access to hard to reach areas through humanitarian air services, humanitarian civil-military coordination and security management.

In addition, and as a response to the food and nutrition crisis, the EU provided food during the lean season and nutrition treatment for children who were suffering from severe acute malnutrition and in need of life-saving treatment. While addressing immediate humanitarian needs, the EU worked actively on implementing the humanitarian-development nexus in order to build the resilience of the affected population, reduce humanitarian needs and to address the root causes of food insecurity and acute undernutrition.

Southern Africa

Extreme weather events are a regular occurrence in the Southern Africa region, and are becoming more frequent and intense due to climate change. In 2019, the EU allocated over EUR 66 million to

the Southern African and Indian Ocean region for emergency humanitarian assistance and disaster preparedness. The EU also focused on strengthening the capacity of communities and disaster management authorities to be able to deal with recurrent natural disasters.

In 2019, the region was hit by two powerful cyclones, which affected over three million people in Mozambique, Zimbabwe Malawi and Comoros. The EU responded immediately with humanitarian assistance to the affected countries. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UPCM) was used in Mozambique. Moreover, a severe drought affected large parts of Southern Africa. The EU provided EUR 6 million to enable humanitarian partners to respond to acute needs in terms of food security.

The humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe significantly deteriorated. With worsening economic situation, the country was also hit by shocks, such as cyclone Idai. At least 7.7 million people in Zimbabwe were identified as being severely food insecure (IPC crisis and emergency, representing more than 50% of the population, with most households unable to obtain enough food to meet their basic needs. In 2019, Commission departments allocated EUR 31.6 million to provide support following the impact of cyclone Idai and for humanitarian food assistance and disaster preparedness.

3.2. Latin America and the Caribbean

3.2.1. Latin America

3.2.1.1. Introduction (Policy Developments)

In April 2019, the European Commission and the High Representative adopted a new strategy towards Latin America and the Caribbean entitled 'EU-LAC – Joining forces for a common future'. The strategy was confirmed by the European Council of Ministers in May. It provides an overarching framework for the EU's engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), calling for targeted and strategic external action with the region, based on four partnerships: prosperity, democracy, resilience and effective global governance. It proposes to concentrate partnering efforts on those regional groups and countries willing to step up engagement on shared goals, while making full and coherent use of the EU's political, trade and cooperation tools.

Substantive progress was achieved towards the implementation of EU partnerships in Latin America and the Caribbean through political and trade agreements. Agreement in principle was reached in July on the trade part of the EU-Mercosur association agreement (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay), and only a handful of issues remained to be resolved in the rest of the agreement.

Negotiations with Mexico for a modernised Global Agreement were completed except for the list of public procurement entities at sub-central level (agreed with Mexico in April 2020) rules and significant headway was made on negotiating a modernised association agreement with Chile.

The Trade Agreement between the EU and Colombia, Peru and Ecuador has had a positive impact on bilateral trade relations, despite the difficult sanitary situation. Progress continues in the consultations with civil society. The Association Agreement between the EU and Central America continued to provide a solid platform of dialogue on trade matters with positive outcomes on bilateral trade flows and commitments to improve customs, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and intellectual property rights rules and practises.

PI actions included a project to strengthen protection of intellectual property in the region, in line with WTO and relevant EU Free Trade Agreements. A EUR 9.5 million project supports responsible business practices in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Peru.

After nearly two decades of relative political stability and development progress, in 2019 Latin America experienced political crises in addition to those already existing in Venezuela and Nicaragua, with increasing challenges of political polarisation, a reduction of support for democracy and meagre economic growth. Social unrest erupted from Colombia via Ecuador to as far as Chile, fuelled by anger over persisting inequality and a political class discredited by corruption. Frustrated expectations from an expanded middle class also played an important role. Growing anti-establishment sentiment was already being felt the year before, as shown by election results in Mexico and Brazil.

2019 was also an election year in several countries in Latin America with changes of political ideology and government, including Argentina where Alberto Fernandez won the presidential elections and in Uruguay where Luis Alberto Pou Lacalle of the National Party ended 15 years of rule by Frente Amplio. In Bolivia, irregularities in the electoral process led to the resignation of the government of President Evo Morales, and his departure from the country, and to the installation of a caretaker government under interim President Jeanine Anez, with a view to preparing for new presidential and parliamentary elections in May 2020.

Venezuela remained a case apart with a deepening and protracted political and humanitarian crisis with substantial impact on the region, in particular due to unprecedented migration flows reaching some five million people by the end of 2019. To promote a peaceful democratic solution to the crisis in Venezuela, the EU and its Member States set up the International Contact Group in early 2019. The EU High Representative appointed Enrique Iglesias as special adviser for Venezuela, while also increasing pressure on the regime via carefully designed restrictive measures. At the same time, the EU multiplied its assistance to address the most urgent needs of the population and of Venezuelan migrants fleeing the country. In October, the EU co-hosted in Brussels, together with the UNHCR and International Organisation for Migration (IOM), an International Solidarity Conference on the Venezuelan Refugee and Migrant crisis.

The EU continued to provide substantial political and financial support to the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia, including with the EU special envoy Eamon Gilmore and the Colombia Trust Fund. The EU also continued to work with Brazil to enhance the strategic partnership in areas of mutual interest.

In Central America, the political crisis including repression of opponents and human rights defenders continued in Nicaragua. The EU adopted a sanctions framework in October 2019 and reiterated calls for a democratic and peaceful way out of the crisis based on a dialogue between government and opposition, including on consensual electoral reforms. In Honduras and Guatemala, the fight against corruption has suffered a setback as the mandates of both the UN Commission Against Corruption and Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) and the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH) were not renewed. In both countries, the executive vowed to continue the fight against corruption using national mechanisms. Progress has been made in the

national registry and in strengthening the existing electoral bodies in Honduras. In his first year, the new President of Mexico had embarked on an ambitious reform programme but so far with mixed results. Negotiations on the modernised EU-Mexico global agreement have reached a final stage.

The EU pursued its support of integration efforts at the regional level in Latin America and the Caribbean. While there was a stalemate in the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States' (CELAC) activities at the political level, cooperation continued at the technical level, with the holding of various seminars, including on citizen security, migration and drugs. At the same time, the EU strengthened its relations with the Pacific Alliance by signing a joint declaration in September 2019. The declaration provides a framework to strengthen cooperation and dialogue between the EU and the Pacific Alliance identifying areas of common interest where there is clear potential to deepen cooperation, including regional economic and financial integration, digital strategies, combating climate change and promoting green growth, facilitating the movement of persons and in innovation, science and technology.

3.2.1.2. Working towards the SDGs

The Commission continued to assist countries and regional organisations in working towards the SDGs through its bilateral and regional cooperation programmes. Dialogue was stepped-up at all levels, bilateral, regional and sub-regional, as well as at the technical level of the Partnership between the EU and CELAC.

EU programmes in Latin America contributed to achieving results in the areas of gender, decent jobs and the green economy, reducing inequalities, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable energy and energy efficiency, peace and security, and capacity development in the public sector, especially in public financial management. In Paraguay, a programme was put in place specifically aimed at supporting the implementation of the SDGs, and complementing existing programmes focussing on SDGs, such as education and social security.

The Partnership Instrument supported the EU in its external projection of priorities that contribute to the SDGs: energy transition and climate change, justice and fundamental rights, being a strong global actor, jobs, growth and investment, a digital single market, and migration.

3.2.1.3. Implementation

Bilateral cooperation including budget support

The EU delivered on its engagement with the region with new financial commitments in many countries and different sectors: in Bolivia to support the justice system and for basic sanitation as well as the improvement of cities' resilience to water shortage; in Ecuador for the economic reactivation of areas affected by the earthquake and the comprehensive development of the northern border of the country with Colombia; for Paraguay, support to the social security system and the transformation of the education system. Budget support constitutes an important channel to implement the above programmes. In Guatemala, the EU is engaged in programmes in the food security sector, adopting a multisector approach tackling the problem from health, education and governance angles. Honduras saw the adoption of a new programme to support food security policy and the country's reform of the civil registry. In Peru, an action against gender violence was approved. For Colombia, which is heavily affected by the Venezuelan migrant crisis, a EUR 10 million

blending project, the Latin American Investment Facility (LAIF), combining a EUR 135 million International Development Bank (IDB) loan was approved in support of local governments affected by the Venezuelan refugees and migrant crisis.

The political, social, economic and security crisis in Venezuela is generating one of the largest external displacement crisis worldwide, threatening the stability of the Latin American region. Since 2018, the Commission mobilised EUR +186 million for emergency relief and development assistance, both inside Venezuela and in the region. Development actions in response to the Venezuelan crisis have focused on the reduction of social tensions and violence, protection of people displaced by the crisis in the most affected regions, food security and nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene within the country, as well as socio-economic inclusion of migrants and refugees in host countries.

The year 2019 continued to be a challenging year for the EU's cooperation efforts in Nicaragua due to the ongoing socio-political crisis affecting the country. Nevertheless, despite these constraints, the EU was able to continue to have an impact on the ground and support vulnerable populations.

Regional cooperation

Environment and climate change continue to be the main focal sector for regional cooperation with Latin America. Activities are divided between blending operations under the Latin American Investment Facility and the EUROCLIMA+ flagship programme. EUROCLIMA+ enabled the swift mobilisation of support to help Latin American governments increase their climate change ambitions. 60 projects in six different sectors were either selected or launched in 2019. The programme provided financial and logistical support to Costa Rica to organise pre-COP activities, but also to Chile's COP25 presidency⁸⁸, and, for the first time, hosted a pavilion at the COP25 conference⁸⁹ in Madrid in December. EUROCLIMA+'s 2019 activities and its presence at COP25 set the stage for a strengthened bi-regional climate partnership, and generated political and popular momentum in Europe, Latin America and beyond, to increase climate ambition in line with the objectives of the European Green Deal.

With regard to the security-development nexus, the Commission continued to foster intra-Latin American cooperation in the area of integrated border management with EUROFRONT. The programme 'EL PACCTO – (*Europa-Latinoamérica Programa de asistencia contra el crimen transnacional organizado*)' represents a substantive EU response to support dialogue on Citizen Security within the region and with EU Member States, in line with Chapter 10 of the EU-CELAC action plan.

The regional programme on drugs policies, COPOLAD II, continued its implementation and constitutes a unique platform for dialogue between 31 countries and institutions from the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Social inclusion and the fight against inequalities are addressed through the EU flagship programme EUROsociAL+. 2019 has been an intense and highly productive year for the Regional Facility for

⁸⁸ <https://www.cop25.cl/>

⁸⁹ <http://euroclimaplus.org/en/news-and-events/en-news/619-euroclima-home-of-latin-america-at-cop25>

International Cooperation and Partnership (ADELANTE). This programme participated during the High-level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40), that took place in Buenos Aires in March, and presented the results of a joint exercise with the OECD during the International Meeting on Triangular Cooperation in Lisbon in October. The 'Regional Facility for Development in Transition', implemented jointly and co-financed with OECD and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), aims to effectively respond to the development challenges arising for countries transiting to higher levels of income. The publication of the Latin-American Economic Outlook 2019 - Development in Transition by the OECD has been a highlight of the year. This has allowed the opening of a dialogue with the region on the role of international cooperation and the potential for enhanced partnerships with the EU. New thematic lines of work have been launched (gender equality, social stratification, digital transformation in agriculture, transparency and regional cohesion) and new partners are coming on board (Secretaría General Iberoamericana (SEGIB), the government of Chile, Oxfam and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC)).

Supporting regional sectors such as environment/climate change and inclusive growth, blending operations have continued to feature high on the Commission's agenda through a policy of engagement with financial institutions and partner countries. This resulted in the approval of eight operations in 2019 for EUR 76.6 million from the Latin America Investment Facility (LAIF) that leveraged a total investment amount of EUR 1.8 billion.

The flagship Erasmus+ programme provides for academic mobility, professional traineeships and cooperation projects for the modernisation and internationalisation of universities in Latin America. Also within Erasmus+, the Jean Monnet activities promote EU values, policies and integration at academic and policy level. It is a programme with a strong policy dimension; by helping to improve the quality of higher education and the recognition of study periods and diplomas, Erasmus+ represents an important catalyst in the reform of higher education systems. In 2019, Brazil and Mexico were among the countries with most students selected for Erasmus Mundus scholarships to study joint master's degrees in Europe. In 2019, 4 764 students, staff and teachers participated in academic mobilities from and to Latin America.

An average of 14 capacity building projects for higher education are selected every year in Latin America. These projects have the specific requirement to partner universities from different countries.

Erasmus+ also supports the field of informal education. In 2019, 32 capacity building projects started working to mobilise young people and youth organisations, particularly on topics like human rights, environmental education, digital training and skills for employability.

Working better together, Development effectiveness, and donor coordination

Under the 'working better together' approach, the EU continues to formulate and implement cooperation jointly with partner countries and in line with the respective national development plan. This approach, with joint programming at its core, is being tailored to the local context of Latin America, where a strategic engagement process takes into account a shrinking dependence on

development financing. Four partner countries have a joint programming document: Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Paraguay.

The Partnership Instrument (PI) promotes cooperation in areas of mutual interest to the EU and the region by promoting strategic partnerships around priority topics at country, regional and sub-regional level. In the Americas, the PI supports policy dialogues at bilateral level in Canada, Mexico and Brazil, and a specific facility for the LAC region is being prepared together with the EEAS. The PI works with in close cooperation with several Commission departments for actions in Latin America including on climate change and energy via the SPIPA Programme (Strategic Partnerships for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement) and the instrument is also very active on circular economy and ocean governance issues. The PI also is supporting both the negotiation and implementation of free trade agreements (FTA) in the region, including the protection of intellectual property rights, the last one through the programme IP Key, the first of its kind in Latin America. Through the International Urban Cooperation, the Partnership Instrument supports pairings between 20 European and American cities to work together in the context of the New Urban Agenda adopted in Quito in 2016. It also supports the implementation of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and Smart Innovation Strategies at regional level. Economic diplomacy promotes dialogue and European investment in raw materials, improving European investment in this sector (but including concepts of social and environmental responsibility) and supports the low carbon economy and to raise awareness and promote EU space programmes such as Galileo and Copernicus. The Aviation Partnership project in Latin America supports regulatory convergence, safety standards and market access for EU industry. Commission departments with the close involvement of specialised EU Agencies, are working on anti-microbial resistance with the UN tripartite (World Health Organisation, Food Agriculture Organisation and World Organisation for Animal Health) in some Latin American countries to improve national 'one health' action plans and surveillance systems following the EU One Health approach. The Partnership Instrument also supports development of other areas of action such as the Jean Monnet actions under the Erasmus+ programme and the expansion of TAIEX to all non-EU countries worldwide, including in Latin America.

Lessons Learnt

Cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean is evolving towards a partnership centred around common and shared interests. The traditional North-South, donor-recipient, developed-developing divides that had become increasingly artificial over the last decades are no longer central to our cooperation. This reflects the paradigm change that development and international cooperation is undergoing in the context of the 2030 Agenda with its SDGs which are universal and shared between the EU and its partner countries. EU cooperation with these countries is based on three main delivery channels: blending and innovative financial instruments; technical assistance, scientific cooperation and exchange of knowledge and expertise; and triangular cooperation.

3.2.1.4. Humanitarian aid and civil protection: Responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

Venezuela

In 2019 the humanitarian crisis generated by the socio-economic collapse of Venezuela triggered the biggest population movement in the Americas' recent history. According to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), there are at least seven million people in need of humanitarian assistance inside the country, mainly due to the lack of access to health, education, food and nutrition (especially for under-five children and pregnant women), clean water and protection services. People's hardship has been exacerbated by widespread violence and by extensive power cuts.

The number of Venezuelan migrants and refugees had reached 3.9 million in December 2019 and is expected to rise up to five million by the end of February 2020. A total of EUR 55 million was allocated mainly for the provision of health and nutrition, water and sanitation, protection, education in emergencies, as well as support to host communities. In order to ensure close follow up to operations, Commission departments established a dedicated office in Caracas in May 2019. Increased efforts in humanitarian advocacy contributed to opening the humanitarian space in the country. Commission departments were also on the frontline in the organisation of the Venezuela Solidarity Conference in Brussels in October 2019.

Colombia

The humanitarian situation in Colombia deteriorated sharply in 2019 as a consequence of the escalating internal conflict, compounded by the impact of the 1.6 million Venezuelan refugees in the country. Around 140 000 people were displaced and more than 350 000 suffered mobility restrictions which implied a lack of access to livelihoods and basic services. By the end of 2019, there were an estimated 350 000 Colombian refugees in neighbouring countries such as Ecuador.

Colombia is also highly prone to natural disasters and conflict-affected municipalities are particularly at risk. A total of EUR 11 million was allocated to help conflict-affected people in Colombia and in the region, as well as people affected by natural disasters inside Colombia. Aid sectors included protection, healthcare, water and sanitation for the most vulnerable groups, education in emergency, as well as disaster preparedness.

Central America

The Central American region endured successive climate shocks over the last five years, exacerbated by El Niño, causing average crop losses exceeding 75% in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Drought and the coffee rust plague heavily affected an already vulnerable population: as a result, nearly four million people faced an acute food crisis in the northern triangle of Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) in 2019, corresponding to 19% of the total population. High levels of acute and chronic malnutrition among children were of particular concern. Furthermore, pervasive organised violence in the northern triangle and Mexico increased in intensity, volume and geographical spread during 2019 with these countries suffering the highest homicides rates per capita in the world, and triggering a massive protection and displacement crisis across the region, with humanitarian effects made more acute by recent changes in US migration

policy. In 2019, around 386 480 refugees and asylum-seekers from the northern triangle were reported. Commission departments allocated EUR 8.5 million in 2019 to address food and protection needs in the most affected countries of Central America.

3.2.1.5. Crisis response and preparedness

The IcSP remained engaged in Colombia throughout 2019 in support of the implementation of the Colombia Peace Agreement, notably Chapter 5 that focuses on the victims of the conflict (truth, justice, reparations and non-recurrence). In addition to existing support to two of the three institutions included in Chapter 5 of the peace agreement (the Search Unit and the Chief Prosecutor's Office's Special Investigation Unit) the IcSP provides support to the third institution: the Truth Commission. The support is deemed necessary for successful implementation of the peace agreement. In addition to support to the institutions, IcSP support also reaches local civil society organisations such as associations of families of the victims of the conflict, many of whom were welcomed in 2019 during a study and advocacy visit to Europe.

The IcSP also contributed to the EU response to the political, economic, humanitarian and human rights crisis in Venezuela and the consequent unprecedented migration from that country in 2019. The IcSP has been mobilised to support local authorities and community organisations in northern Ecuador to better respond to the additional demands on communities and institutions in the region. The region is already significantly affected by the changing dynamics on the Colombian side of the border following the 2016 Colombia peace agreement and was not prepared to respond to the rapid increase in Venezuelan migrants transiting through or seeking refuge in Ecuador.

In light of the still increasing number of Venezuelans leaving their country, additional support has been identified. Reflecting the regional consequences of the crisis in Venezuela the new response from IcSP is also regional providing support for activities in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. It focuses on improving protection for refugees and migrants and on reducing the risk of conflict between migrants/refugees and host communities.

As the crisis in Nicaragua persists, the IcSP supports neighbouring Costa Rica to provide protection to asylum seekers. This is done by reinforcing civil society organisations' capacity to provide information and legal support to refugees, strengthening the network of shelters and safe houses for persons with specific protection needs, reinforcing the fight against human trafficking through heightened monitoring of irregular border crossing points, and the promotion of economic integration opportunities for the most vulnerable persons of concern.

In Mexico the IcSP will support the capacities of relevant public services in communities along the Northern border to support asylum seekers and refugees by improving access to public services and integration, through access to formal employment and social protection structures, thus promoting peaceful coexistence between migrants and host communities. The support is in line with the priorities defined by State and municipal administrations in the area and will directly contribute to reducing the pressure on host communities.

3.2.2. The Caribbean

3.2.2.1. Introduction (policy developments)

In 2019, negotiations of the regional protocol in the Post Cotonou agreement continued. Good progress was achieved in the negotiations on the basis of the agreement. In the second half of the year, the focus shifted to negotiations of the three regional protocols for Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific. The goal is to have the new agreement in place before end of 2020.

Implementation of the political dialogue and cooperation agreement with Cuba continued, with a growing number of political and sectoral dialogues in different areas, including human rights. The second EU–Cuba Joint Council, co-chaired by High Representative Vice President (HRVP) Mogherini, took place in Havana in September 2019.

The year was also marked by the EU response to the devastating effects of hurricane Dorian, which hit the Bahamas, notably the island of Abaco, in the beginning of September 2019. As an immediate first response, the EU mobilised an initial EUR 500 000 in emergency funding. Through the EU civil protection mechanism, The Netherlands provided two ships to transport food and water and Luxembourg dispatched a team with a mobile satellite-based telecommunications platform. The European Union's 24/7 Emergency Response Coordination Centre was in close contact with the authorities to monitor the situation and channel further EU assistance.

As the only least developed country remaining in the Caribbean, Haiti is the largest recipient of EU assistance in the region receiving EUR 420 million from the 11th EDF over the period 2014-2020 and EUR 20 million from regional and thematic programmes.

Haiti's serious economic problems have been compounded by political instability, weak institutions and vulnerability to natural disasters. The EU's main objective has been fighting extreme poverty, improving living standards for the population and helping to build stronger democratic institutions.

The root causes of political instability remain unchanged, and significant structural reforms (electoral system, constitution and judiciary), together with reinforcing the fight against corruption, remain necessary and urgent. The lack of a functional government and the institutional paralysis of the country in 2019 had a negative impact on the delivery of the EU cooperation. One-third of the 11th EDF funding, amounting to almost EUR 140 million, is still to be committed in 2020.

In 2019, cooperation on tax good governance and on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) remained high on the agenda. In February 2019, the Commission adopted a new list of high-risk countries based on a new methodology. This list was however rejected by the Council. The previous list, mentioning only Trinidad and Tobago within the Caribbean, therefore remained in place.

3.2.2.2. Working towards the SDGs

The Caribbean is characterised by small island states with limited resources and capacity. Caribbean countries have registered progress towards reaching the SDGs, but a number of SDGs remain far from target (notably SDG 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 12 – responsible consumption and production, and SDG 16 – peace, justice and strong institutions). The lack of

progress in the latter can be attributed to the intrinsic challenges related to insularity in the Caribbean (geographical fragmentation and weak regional connectivity).

The sub-region is one of the most vulnerable worldwide when it comes to the impact of climate change and is exposed to recurrent natural disasters. Commission departments, through the bilateral and regional programmes, contributed to achieving results in partner countries in areas focusing on green economy, climate change, sustainable energy, and the strengthening of the region's resilience.

Examples of actions that have contributed to this are the budget support provided for renewable energy in Belize and Saba, and the funds leveraged via the Caribbean Investment Facility (CIF) in Barbados building a green public transportation system.

Efforts continue after the devastation wrought by hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 to improve resilience from different perspectives (infrastructure, health systems, and disaster preparedness). The 'Build Back Better' approach is at the core of the EU cooperation in the region. Efforts for recovery have been further consolidated and disaster preparedness is more widespread. The regional (CRIP) and thematic programmes (global public goods and challenges) are contributing to this objective.

The Spotlight Initiative in the Caribbean tackles femicide, combats domestic violence and aims for a change in mentality especially among youth.

3.2.2.3. Implementation

Bilateral cooperation including budget support

In 2019, commitments were made amounting to EUR 81.42 million. In Haiti, these pertain to urban development and infrastructure, environment and climate change, and civil society; in Trinidad and Tobago for an innovation programme on SME development; and in Jamaica on citizen security. Various actions were initiated in Cuba (support to economic modernisation), Dominican Republic (prevention of gender violence and public administration reform), and Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (non-state actors).

For the Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), the regional programme on resilience (ReSEMBid) was implemented with the identification of joint actions on resilience, sustainable energy and marine biodiversity in 12 OCTs. Funds were committed for Aruba (sustainable island solutions in science, technology, energy and mathematics), Bonaire (budget support for youth), and for Sint Maarten and the British Virgin Islands to cope with hurricane damage.

Regional cooperation

At the regional level, the commitment of the Caribbean Regional Integration Programme (CRIP) under the 11th EDF has been completed. The package, totalling EUR 54 million, includes programmes on strengthening climate resilient health systems, advancing wider Caribbean cooperation, strengthening law enforcement and border security and additional funds for the Caribbean Investment Facility.

Regional programmes were also activated in response to the devastating hurricane Dorian, which struck the Bahamas in September 2019. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), supported under the 10th and 11th EDF, was at the forefront of coordinating the emergency response, and the Commission funded Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) triggered a pay-out within days of the disaster.

Working Better Together, Development effectiveness, and donor coordination

Strong regional coordination is taking place in particular in the area of renewable energy, climate change and disaster risk management, including through the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREE), the Caribbean Community Centre for Climate Change (CCCCC), the Organisation for Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA).

The specific conditions of small islands development states (SIDS), the limited presence of EU Member States in the Caribbean region, and their rather limited cooperation portfolio has made it difficult to promote joint programming. However, EU delegations engage closely with partners, including Member States, in the programming, identification, formulation and implementation of cooperation.

Lessons learnt

Regional integrated approaches aim to overcome some of the challenges the Caribbean countries are facing like insularity and geographic fragmentation. Connectivity and legal harmonisations are crucial and require strong ownership from the countries.

3.2.2.4. Humanitarian aid and civil protection: Responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

In 2019, the Commission supported four new disaster preparedness projects in the Caribbean, for a total of EUR 5 million. Actions included prepositioning of stocks, health preparedness, strengthening emergency supply chains, and urban preparedness. In 2019, Commission departments also mobilised EUR 500 000 to address most urgent needs in the Bahamas following hurricane Dorian; contributed EUR 80 000 to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Disaster Relief Fund to respond to a Dengue outbreak in the Dominican Republic; and allocated EUR 300 000 to support families following the tornado in Cuba.

Haiti

Political turmoil, increased violence and economic downturn caused a sharp deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Haiti during 2019. The currency suffered a 50% devaluation and high inflation eroded the already weak purchasing power of the most vulnerable households. Political violence reached its peak from September 2019 onwards with a blockade of all major transit roads, shutting down transport, trade and services with a heavy toll on an extremely impoverished population. Import restrictions, notably on food, combined with a failed harvest caused by drought and mobility restrictions plunged the country's population into an acute food crisis. The number of people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance rose steadily during the year, with 3.7 million people in acute food crisis at the end of 2019, of which one million were in a food emergency

situation. The food situation of the most vulnerable households was particularly worrying in the Nord-West, Artibonite and Grand'Anse Departments as well as in very poor districts of Cité Soleil, in urban areas. Prevalence of acute malnutrition among children under five was above WHO emergency levels in several locations. In 2019, Commission departments provided EUR 14 million to respond to acute food insecurity and to increase coordination across humanitarian operations. Furthermore, EUR 3 million were invested in disaster preparedness initiatives including water, sanitation and hygiene preparedness, rapid response capacities, disaster-resistant shelter building techniques and drought preparedness.

3.2.2.5. Crisis response and preparedness

In the Caribbean, the IcSP remains engaged in reducing the tensions at the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

3.3. Asia, Central Asia, Middle East/Gulf and Pacific

3.3.1. Asia

3.3.1.1. Introduction (Policy developments)

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) foreign ministers' meeting, chaired by HRVP Borrell, was held on 15-16 December in Madrid, where the foreign ministers from Europe and Asia adopted a chair's statement focusing on shared values and common challenges, especially rules-based effective multilateralism.

India and the EU agreed to upgrade their strategic partnership and to start work on a future EU-India roadmap 2025. With Nepal, it was agreed to upgrading the joint commission from biennial to annual meetings. The new EU-Pakistan strategic engagement plan was adopted and the April Foreign Affairs Council adopted conclusions on Afghanistan's peace process.

In January, at the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)-EU ministerial meeting both sides agreed to upgrade relations to a strategic partnership subject to confirmation of details and timing. The High Representative of the Union attended the ASEAN-EU Post-Ministerial Conference with ASEAN foreign ministers, as well as the 25th ASEAN Regional Forum.

On 29 April, the Council prolonged the restrictive measures in place on Myanmar/Burma for one year, including targeted restrictive measures on 14 individuals for serious human rights violations.

In February, the European Parliament approved three important agreements with Singapore: the partnership and cooperation agreement, the free trade agreement, and the investment protection agreement. In June, the Council of the EU signed a free trade agreement and investment protection agreement with Vietnam and the framework participation agreement in October.

On 14 October, the Foreign Affairs Council reiterated the EU's willingness to broaden its engagement with Thailand by preparing for the timely signature of the partnership and cooperation agreement.

The 21st EU-China summit took place in Brussels on 9 April.

From 1 February, the EU-Japan economic partnership agreement entered into force and the EU-Japan strategic partnership agreement started to be provisionally applied. The EU-Japan summit took place in Brussels on 25 April. On 27 September, the EU and Japan signed the Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure.

The EU-Australia framework agreement and the EU-New Zealand Partnership Agreement for Relations and Cooperation continued to be provisionally applied.

Cooperation between the EU and the Republic of Korea was based on a framework agreement, a free trade agreement, and a framework participation agreement.

In 2019, the Partnership Instrument has continued to contribute to EU external actions by articulating and implementing the external dimension of internal policies, interconnecting between different policy areas. Actions in Asia support work towards SDG 17, both at bilateral and regional level and cover challenges of global concern like climate change, energy transition and environmental protection; the international dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive jobs and growth; improving access to markets and boosting trade, investment and business opportunities for EU companies (with particular emphasis on SMEs); and public diplomacy.

Examples of projects and contributions to the achievement of other SDGs are:

- SDG 5: 'Economic empowerment of Women' in Japan strengthens the role of women and their access to business opportunities and leadership within the private sector (through capacity building, expertise and knowledge sharing between the EU and Asia to advance an enabling business environment for Women Economic Empowerment (WEE)).
- SDG 7: The PI has continued to support a dynamic energy dialogue focussed on energy transition and market access with the continent's largest countries through the EU-China Energy Cooperation Platform and the EU-India Climate Energy and Climate Partnership. The later partnership is deepening the ongoing, broad energy cooperation on clean energy and energy efficiency and strengthening dialogue on climate action between the EU and India.
- SDG 9: 'EU Business Avenues', in south east Asia (Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, Philippines and Thailand), Japan, Korea, and China promote market access for EU SMEs in targeted sectors in south east Asian countries.
- SDG 11: 'International Urban Cooperation: Sustainable and Innovative Cities and Regions in Asia', with China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea and Vietnam supports Asian cities to improve urban policies and engage in sustainable urban planning, including through the Global Covenant of Mayors for climate and energy.
- SDG 12: 'Responsible supply chains in Asia', in China, Japan, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam promotes smart, sustainable and inclusive growth by supporting corporate social responsibility and responsible business conduct (CSR/RBC) practices in global supply chains in Asia in line with international instruments in this area.
- SDG 13: 'Strategic Partnerships for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement (SPIPA) with major economies' implemented, amongst others, in Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan

and Korea supports and encourages G20 partner countries to successfully executing their climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. The aim is to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to the effects of climate change, and ultimately contribute to the long-term targets laid out in the Paris Agreement through their NDCs.

3.3.1.2. Working towards the SDGs

The SDGs continued to be at the heart of the European Union's initiatives in the region.

In the Communication on Migration adopted by the Commission in June 2016⁹⁰, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iraq and Pakistan were identified as priority countries. EU development cooperation in these countries includes a strategic focus on sectors that provide a balanced approach, targeting poverty and inclusive growth, thereby addressing root causes of fragility and drivers of migration. Examples are job creation through private sector development, income generation, community development projects, service delivery, social protection, and programmes on education and TVET.

The Commission further contributed to GAP II, effectively mainstreaming gender equality in 2018 for the Asia–Pacific region, following up on the Spotlight Initiative and systematically addressing gender equality in the framework of its growing budget support portfolio.

The Agenda 2030 also provides the main reference for our engagement with middle-income countries, such as China and India, as well as for our support for regional integration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The 2019 EU-China summit included a reference that “both sides will increase their exchanges on international development cooperation and explore cooperation with other partner countries in a joint effort to work for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development”. Several exchanges with the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) and other Chinese institutions took place throughout 2019 in Brussels, Beijing and third countries. For India, progress was made also in agreeing to work together in third countries with an agreement expected to be endorsed in 2020. The partnership with ASEAN towards SDGs also remained strong, supported through the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) policy dialogue facility, which enabled an in-depth expert dialogue across a range of policy area and preparing for the 2nd ASEAN-EU high-level dialogue on sustainable development scheduled for early 2020.

3.3.1.3. Implementation

In South Asia, a number of new projects related to nutrition, education, justice reform, parliamentary reform, public financial management, sustainable livelihoods and rural development were adopted, all aligned with national priorities.

Bilateral cooperation including budget support

For Afghanistan, the Commission provided the first disbursement of the EUR 300 million state and resilience building contract, signed at the Ministerial Conference of November 2018, which builds on the previous state building Contract. This budget support enables sustainable and predictable implementation of reforms by the Afghan government and enhanced policy dialogue with the EU.

⁹⁰ COM(2016) 385 final of 7 June 2016.

Programmes funded for a total of EUR 59 million were also adopted in the fields of trade, agribusiness and community-oriented service delivery, with a clear focus on economic growth and job creation, and also fostering the peace agenda.

New programmes in favour of Bangladesh were adopted worth EUR 20 million to foster equity, rights and empowerment among the most marginalised adolescents and children with disabilities.

The EU and Pakistan signed their strategic engagement plan in June 2019, paving the way for a further reinforcement of their relations. For Pakistan, four actions amounting to EUR 91 million were adopted in the fields of governance (one programme on the Rule of Law and one on Public Financial Management), education and water management. At the same time, implementation started on a project to support government efforts for the promotion of human rights. In addition, a project on small business development and a budget support operation on education started in 2019.

In Nepal, a new EUR 32.35 million programme was adopted to support the government of Nepal in the transformation of the country into a federal state.

Regarding migration, the Commission has developed a major operation to address migration and displacement in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran and Iraq since 2016 with total funding close to EUR 300 million. In 2019 most projects reached substantial annual targets and results, while the remaining commitments were achieved. In addition, 2019 saw the successful implementation of the EUR 15 million project adopted and signed with UNICEF in 2018, in support of Rohingya refugees and their host communities in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, as well as the design of a second EUR 20 million development programme in response to the Rohingya situation, expected to be adopted in early 2020.

A specific programme for EU assistance to address the protracted refugee situation of Myanmar nationals living in camps in Thailand and their potential repatriation to Myanmar was developed during 2019, complemented by a regional approach to labour migration in south east Asia.

In Myanmar, the implementation of the first sector reform contract started, in the education sector, funded for EUR 142 million. Two new programmes were adopted: a sector reform contract (EUR 112 million) to support the national agriculture development strategy and its contribution to the multi-sectoral national plan of action for nutrition, and a programme to support access to justice (EUR 20 million). In the Philippines, preparation of new cooperation programmes was resumed after a long standstill period, resulting in the adoption of two new programmes in support of peace and development in Mindanao, and the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region Muslim Mindanao. In Lao PDR a new sector reform contract (EUR 50 million) was adopted to support Lao PDR's national nutrition strategy, while in Cambodia implementation started of a new sector reform contract (EUR 87 million) for sustainable and inclusive growth in the fisheries sector.

Regional cooperation

Agenda 2030 provides the basis for our support for regional integration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The partnership with ASEAN towards SDGs is supported through the E-READI policy dialogue facility.

Cross Border Cooperation Overview

The Asia investment facility contributes to the realisation of projects aiming to improve connectivity, reduce unemployment and poverty and to help partner economies advance in sustainable and resilient ways. The overall objective is promotion of SDG-related investments through the leverage of funds from public and private investors. In 2019 15 projects (EUR 216 million) covering Bangladesh, China, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Indonesia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and one regional project were approved for grant financing with the Agence Française de Développement, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau and Asian Development Bank acting as implementing partners.

Working Better Together, Development effectiveness, and donor coordination

The Commission has made considerable contributions to the drafting of the EU's strategy to better connect Europe and Asia, promoting a European concept of sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based connectivity that contributes to prosperity, safety and resilience of people and societies in Europe and Asia. The strategy covers transport, energy, digital and people-to-people dimensions, and it outlines an implementation approach that aims to improve networks, strengthen partnerships and sustain financing for investment.

In the ASEAN region, the E-READI facility has already played an important role in enhancing the coherence and impact of EU policy engagement with ASEAN in several priority areas.

In countries that no longer received bilateral development assistance, Commission departments have continued to develop new and stronger partnerships in order to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to pursue other shared interests in particular related to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. These include activities based on triangular cooperation and collaboration through the Partnerships and Policy Dialogue Facility.

The joint communication 'EU-China – A strategic outlook' (adopted in March 2019) and the 'Joint Statement of the 21st EU-China Summit' (April 2019) have reaffirmed the policy framework for seeking increased exchanges with China in the area of international cooperation and development. To deliver on this, Commission departments have intensified engagement with the main Chinese development actors, in particular CIDCA. The EU and China stressed the importance of showing resolve on the clean energy transition and of assuming greater leadership on the global environmental agenda to implement the Paris Agreement and the Montreal Protocol. They signed in the margins of the summit a Joint Statement on the Implementation of the EU-China Cooperation on Energy that will provide a framework for deepening and intensifying EU-China energy cooperation. Cooperation will cover the expansion of renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, the development of energy markets and systems, as well as greater involvement for companies in the energy sector based on equal exchange and reciprocal business opportunities. Building on the 4th meeting of the EU-China Connectivity Platform held in the margins of the summit, the EU and China looked at ways to create synergies between the EU's approach to connectivity, including the Trans-European Transport Network, and China's Belt and Road Initiative. During the 4th EU-China Innovation Cooperation Dialogue (ICD) intention to renew the EU-China Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was mentioned, and a process leading to the development of a joint EU/China science and technology roadmap was launched.

In India, the groundwork has been laid to pursue an international partnership for development cooperation in third countries in support of the Agenda 2030 following a Commission visit to Delhi in January 2019.

Throughout Asia, budget support continued to be the preferred aid channel in 2019. Budget support enables intensified policy dialogue accompanied by capacity-building support, while being fully in line with aid effectiveness principles that promote country ownership and the use of domestic systems. The EU works with other partners to coherently engage with governments in the region.

In 2019, the European Commission also strongly increased investments through blending and other measures (such as capacity building and policy dialogue). These efforts continue to position the Commission as a catalyst for investments in the field of climate change and the environment, SME development and social infrastructure.

Lessons learnt

Strong economic development in the region has led to remarkable progress in reducing poverty, but has also brought new challenges. A number of countries no longer receive bilateral EU development assistance as a result. This created a challenge to seek for new forms of partnerships, so that the EU remains fully engaged through other means of cooperation. The EU also had to reposition itself in the region, as new emerging donors/players (Russia, China, India, etc.) appeared and seek to enhance their influence in the region.

From an operational perspective, difficulties experienced in assessing and processing budget support payments have led to an improvement in the formulation of new programmes, with simpler and clearly verifiable measurable objectives.

3.3.1.4. Humanitarian aid and civil protection – responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

The Afghan crisis (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran)

Afghanistan witnesses one of the deadliest conflicts worldwide, the world's third largest food crisis and generates the world's second largest displaced and refugee population. 17 million people (50% of the country's population) live in areas highly affected by conflict, 3.4 million are internally displaced. Afghans are among the largest refugee population, with some 10 million refugees worldwide, both documented and undocumented. Iran and Pakistan are the main recipients of Afghan refugees, hosting and assisting almost three and four million of Afghans, respectively. In both countries, the gap between needs and resources available to meet them has significantly widened. Struggling to cope, Afghans sought refuge elsewhere and in 2019, they were the largest group among new arrivals in Europe. In Iran, the increased pressure of US sanctions has affected the civilian population and limited access to basic services, such as medical healthcare, for both Iranians and Afghans. Pakistan suffers a food insecurity and malnutrition crisis, well beyond emergency levels. In addition, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran are also among the world's most natural disaster-prone countries.

In Afghanistan, EUR 61 million was allocated in 2019, to provide life-saving humanitarian aid, with a focus on emergency response and trauma care. In Iran and Pakistan, EU humanitarian aid continued

to assist Afghan refugees as well as the most vulnerable local populations with a total of approx. EUR 18 million. The EU supported education for Afghan children in Iran, which also entailed a form of registration of their families. Other sectors of EU assistance in both Iran and Pakistan were water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), food security and livelihoods, shelter and winterisation, protection and health.

Rohingya Crisis (Myanmar, Bangladesh)

The Rohingya population of Myanmar has been exposed to systematic discrimination and targeted violence in Rakhine State for decades. Following the massive displacement of 2017, at the end of 2019 there were 855 000 Rohingya refugees registered by UNHCR residing in the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh, most of them living in an extremely congested mega-camp. Refugees in Bangladesh have been fully reliant on humanitarian aid due to lack of freedom of movement, livelihood opportunities and access to social services. At the same time, the area is extremely prone to natural disasters. In 2019, the conditions for a voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return to Myanmar were not present. In addition, about 600 000 Rohingya still lived in Rakhine State in Myanmar in dire conditions, some of them in confinement camps where they have been fully dependant on humanitarian assistance.

In 2019, the EU has provided EUR 36 million in humanitarian assistance for the Rohingya crisis, both in Bangladesh and Myanmar, in the form of basic healthcare, water, sanitation, shelter, nutrition, education, protection, psychosocial support and disaster risk reduction.

Philippines

Mindanao has been enduring long-standing internal conflicts between the government armed forces and different non-state armed groups, including Muslim separatists. Despite the signature of the Bangsamoro Organic Law in December 2018 giving certain autonomy to Muslim Mindanao, conflict-related violence continued to increase in 2019, with about 400 000 people in need of humanitarian assistance in Mindanao (including IDPs and returnees). In addition, the Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world and frequently affected by typhoons, volcano eruptions, monsoon rains, landslides, drought and earthquakes. In 2019, Commission departments allocated a total of EUR 6.7 million to the Philippines, for providing humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected people in Mindanao (including emergency shelters, WASH services, health, food and non-food items, and education), as well as emergency response to natural disasters and disaster preparedness actions.

3.3.1.5. Crisis response and preparedness

In Afghanistan, the new Afghanistan Peace Mechanism was initiated in 2019 to follow-up on EU commitments to help make the peace process more inclusive. The mechanism supports formal and informal talks with emphasis on the process remaining Afghan-led and Afghan-owned while making efforts to ensure the involvement of local, regional and international stakeholders to create broad consensus on peace. In line with the EU offer to help make the process inclusive, the Mechanism puts particular emphasis on engagement with Afghan civil society throughout the country at local or regional level. This includes specific attention to women's rights groups and associations to ensure women's active participation in framing and defining a future peace agreement.

During 2019, the IcSP focused on addressing hate-speech and preventing violent extremism. In Myanmar, this has a focus on addressing inter-communal tensions, while in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, a regional action supports these four countries in establishing early-warning systems and the capacities to counter violent extremism while promoting tolerance and respect for diversity. In the wake of the 2019 Easter bombings in Sri Lanka, the IcSP was quickly mobilised to strengthen response capabilities for counterterrorism and the prevention of violent extremism in both Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

In addition, in 2019 the IcSP continued to support the counter-terrorism capacities of Pakistan in the Sindh province. The instrument also continued to support sustainable peace by strengthening Pakistani women and young people's capacity in prevention and transformation of conflicts through internal community mechanisms and inclusion of women in security, peace and post conflict planning and policies.

3.3.2. Central Asia

3.3.2.1. Introduction (Policy developments)

In 2019, positive dynamics in the relations between the EU and Central Asia continued. On 17 June, the Council adopted a new EU Strategy on Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership. The strategy was particularly well received in the Central Asian countries with a high level of commitment regarding joint implementation of its objectives.

The annual EU-Central Asia High-Level Political and Security Dialogue was organised in Brussels in May, with Afghanistan taking part as well. The annual EU-Central Asia ministerial meeting took place in Kyrgyzstan in July, chaired by the HRVP. Regionally led strengthening of cooperation also continued, with the second consultative summit of Central Asian leaders held in Uzbekistan in November.

During 2019, the EU opened a fully-fledged delegation in Turkmenistan. The negotiations of a new-generation enhanced partnership and cooperation agreement with Kyrgyzstan were finalised, while the negotiations with Uzbekistan progressed significantly. Tajikistan also expressed the willingness to upgrade its relations with the EU. Furthermore, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan expressed interest in benefiting from the EU's Generalised System of Preferences (GSP+).

Throughout 2019, in regional and bilateral dialogue formats, the EU has been confirming its interest in stepping up engagement with Central Asia, and continued to play the role of leading supporter of the reform and modernisation processes, which the EU delivers through its ODA.

3.3.2.2. Working towards the SDGs

The following SDGs are being addressed in the region through bilateral and regional programmes: SDG 4 (Education), SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 8 (Work, Growth), SDG 10 (Inequalities), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, Institutions), and SDG 17 (Partnerships).

The Commission increased its efforts to tackle climate change in the region and supported the water and energy sectors, livestock development and education reform, including women's education. It also contributed to peace, stability and economic development.

3.3.2.3. Implementation

Bilateral cooperation including budget support

New bilateral programmes were adopted for Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The EU contributed EUR 5 million to supporting Uzbekistan's WTO accession, as well as EUR 10 million for skills development in support of employability in rural areas of Uzbekistan. Similarly, the EU allocated EUR 59 million to help Tajikistan's rural communities to use natural resources in a sustainable way, improve their resilience to extreme climatic conditions and enhance business competitiveness. On top of this, funds earmarked for investment in Tajikistan supported the adoption of a EUR 20 million investment grant to construct a hydropower plant in Tajikistan's poorest region, bordering northern Afghanistan. Education reform in Kyrgyzstan was supported through a budget support contract with a value of EUR 23.796 million.

Regional cooperation

The Commission has increased its efforts to tackle climate change in the region. This includes adopting a new EUR 47 million programme to promote SWITCH Asia and Central Asia. Through this programme, the existing SWITCH Asia engagement is being extended to Central Asia, while the overall programme structure revised with a more coherent and mutually reinforcing approach and a focus on consolidating policy dialogue and leveraging additional investments.

In addition, the EU contributed EUR 5 million to the UN-led multi-partner security trust fund for the Aral Sea to improve the environmental, social and economic situation in a region affected by environmental disaster.

The EU supports regional cooperation among Central Asian countries in key areas such as water, environment and climate change, disaster risk reduction, border management and overall connectivity with an enhanced focus on Afghanistan.

Cross Border Cooperation Overview

Positive dynamics in the regional cooperation between Central Asia and Afghanistan are an important element contributing to peace, stability and economic development. A number of EU-financed projects, such as 'Advancing Afghan Trade' or the cross-border 'Afghanistan–Tajikistan project on supporting cooperation and opportunities for regional economic development', have contributed in 2019 to strengthening such cooperation. A project promoting trilateral cooperation on education for Afghan women in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan was launched in 2019 and the first batch of trainees are now in Kazakhstan undergoing language training. Afghanistan is also included in the 10th phase of the Border Management in Central Asia (BOMCA) project, which was adopted in 2019 and should begin operations in the second quarter of 2020. To accommodate the significant needs of Central Asia and the inclusion of Afghanistan, BOMCA has been supplemented with a significantly increased budget of EUR 21.75 million and a new component related to human rights, gender and governance. The Central Asia Drug Programme was renewed for a 7th phase, continuing to build on a successful and comprehensive approach to decreasing drug demand and consumption.

Central Asia benefits from EU investment contributions for bilateral and regional projects, through the Investment Facility for Central Asia (IFCA). In 2019, EUR 30 million were committed to the facility

and five projects worth EUR 38 million were contracted. Support focuses on the energy and water sectors. Overall, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is the most important partner, benefiting from around 75% of the value of signed contracts.

Working Better Together, Development effectiveness, and donor coordination

In Central Asia, the period of political and economic opening and constructive regional dialogue, which happened thanks to the ongoing changes in Uzbekistan, continued in 2019. The Commission stepped up its dialogue with the latter country to initiate its first budget support programme, expected for early 2020, and developed a trade programme aimed at supporting its WTO accession. The Commission also adopted a programme for Uzbekistan supporting rehabilitation of the Aral Sea disaster zone, and another on vocational education.

HRVP Mogherini, accompanied by a Commission representative, attended the 15th EU-Central Asia Foreign Affairs Ministerial in Bishkek in July 2019. At this meeting, Central Asian countries confirmed their continued interest to further enhance regional cooperation and engagement with the EU and the international community on key development issues in line with the newly adopted EU Strategy for Central Asia. A number of side events took place around this meeting, including a first EU-Central Asia civil society forum and a launch event for SWITCH in Central Asia. The EU Foreign Affairs Council adopted the EU-Central Asia strategy in June 2019.

Lessons learnt

The opening up of the region required a quick reaction. An increased and constructive dialogue was needed, and ultimately led to the successful adoption of the EU-Central Asia strategy.

3.3.2.4. Humanitarian aid and civil protection: Responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

Central Asia

After closing its disaster preparedness operations in Central Asia in 2018, the EU humanitarian assistance to Central Asia supports the response to natural disasters through small scale interventions, such as in Tajikistan for the floods of June 2019, where EUR 70 000 were allocated through the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

3.3.2.5. Crisis response and preparedness

The IcSP continues to contribute to regional stability in Central Asia and, in particular, support actions intended to prevent violent extremism, support stability, social cohesion and cross-border dialogue. A number of new actions under the IcSP for Central Asia were launched during 2019 following the adoption of the new EU strategy on Central Asia. These include a regional action to strengthen resilience to radicalisation and disinformation through the strengthening of independent media and media literacy; support to media sector reform with a focus on conflict prevention in connections with the 2020 elections in Kyrgyzstan; an initiative to strengthen social cohesion in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) region in southern Tajikistan through the improved provision of basic services; and an initiative to promote an effective space for civil society and CBSD component improving the capacity for border patrolling (the first time a CBSD action has been mobilised in this region).

In Kyrgyzstan, the IcSP continued its support for civil society initiatives that promote constructive dialogue on religion and democracy, prevent violent extremism and foster a more cohesive society, as well as an initiative on judicial reform.

3.3.3. Middle East/Gulf region

3.3.3.1. Introduction (Policy developments)

Gulf

Working closely with the EEAS, EU Delegations in the region and Commission departments, the Partnership Instrument (PI) has played a key role in ensuring substantive deliverables from the EU side in this relationship. Projects have been put in place in areas of mutual interest where the EU can provide an added value, such as clean energy technologies, energy efficiency, climate change and economic diversification.

Most of the PI supported projects in the Gulf cover the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and include cooperation both at regional as well as bilateral level. Projects currently under implementation in the region include: the EU-GCC Clean Energy Network; the EU GCC Economic Diversification Dialogue; and the EU Policy and Outreach Partnership.

A new three-year project, Enhanced EU-GCC political dialogue, cooperation and outreach was approved in 2019. It will enhance the EU's political dialogue with the GCC and position the EU as a partner of choice in the ongoing national transformation processes of the GCC countries. The project will also contribute to effective implementation of the cooperation arrangements, enhance the understanding and visibility of EU in the region, and help deepen the people to people links between the two regions.

There was renewed momentum in EU-GCC relations, despite the enduring diplomatic rift with Qatar. Joint work in urban policies, economic diversification and climate change has continued. The EU strengthened its bilateral relations with GCC countries notably with the opening in July 2019 of a new EU Delegation in Kuwait that also oversees relations with Qatar. Senior officials meetings (SOM) were held with Qatar (July), Oman (September) and the UAE (November). Negotiations continued between the EU and the foreign ministries of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia to conclude non-binding cooperation arrangements. Informal human right dialogues took place with Qatar and Bahrain, while it was agreed with Kuwait to launch a dialogue in early 2020 and similar discussions continued with Saudi Arabia. In March 2019 Qatar became the first Gulf partner to have finalised a comprehensive air transport agreement with the EU. Preparations continued for the EU participation to the major Dubai EXPO 2020.

Iraq

The EU continued to work on stabilisation, post-conflict reform, accountability and inclusive reconciliation processes through sustained engagement with Iraqi authorities to preserve the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. A visit by HRVP Mogherini in July, together with Council Conclusions, allowed the EU to reaffirm its political priorities and support. In parallel, the EU continued to play a key role in humanitarian assistance and other areas such as security sector reform (notably through the ongoing EU advisory mission/EUAM), rule of law and socio-economic

reforms. After protests started in October 2019, the EU repeatedly advocated for restraint and accountability by the government to address the legitimate demands of the Iraqi people.

Yemen

Yemen remained the world's worst humanitarian crisis with more than 14 million people in acute need and more than four million displaced. The EU continued to accompany the UN-led peace process with significant political and financial support. Council conclusions in February 2019 emphasised this while advocating for prompt implementation of the 'Stockholm Agreement' between Yemeni parties under UN auspices, with a view to a political solution to the crisis. The EU's overall contribution to Yemen since 2015, including development, humanitarian and crisis-response funding, reached almost EUR 1 billion in 2019.

3.3.3.2. Working towards the SDGs

The region is characterised by significantly varying degrees of progress with respect to implementation of the SDGs. Some countries have adopted targeted strategies to further their achievements in this respect, but in many cases, for instance Yemen, the state of upheaval was such that progress has been much slower than desired.

The Commission's activities in the region comprised a series of multi-sector and multi-stakeholder measures focusing on enhancing food security, improving livelihoods, creating jobs and improving access to economic opportunities, integrating service delivery and building capacity on sustainable migration policies and management.

Iraq still faced many challenges regarding the achievement of SDGs. Significant progress on the return of internally displaced persons was made, but about 1.6 million people have not yet returned to their home. Iraq has yet to advance on the reconstruction and reform agenda, build solid governance frameworks, create opportunities for youth and deal with demographic and climate challenges. EU assistance to Iraq targeted these issues with activities focused on stabilisation, public finance management (PFM), human capital development, sustainable job creation and growth, focused in liberated and vulnerable areas.

EU's development cooperation with Yemen was closely aligned with the humanitarian response to the crisis (humanitarian-development nexus approach). During 2019, the EU continued providing crucial support to vulnerable populations and working towards peace, justice and stable institutions that are capable of providing basic services to citizens.

3.3.3.3. Implementation

Bilateral cooperation including budget support

In response to the challenges Iraq has been facing in past years, the EU delivered fully on pledges made at the 'Reconstruction for Iraq' conference held in Kuwait in February 2018 by adopting a EUR 130 million package in 2019 focusing on: stabilisation and governance (the EU aims to build the capacities of key Iraqi institutions to deliver public services); and sustainable job creation (the EU's support in this area targeted human capital development and private sector development, notably on the agricultural sector and agricultural value chains). The additional Development Cooperation

Instrument (DCI) contribution of EUR 22.5 million to the Madad Fund helped address the needs of refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees, host communities and their administrations in Iraq.

With an ongoing budget envelope amounting to EUR 323 million, the EU is amongst the leading development donors in Yemen. So far, this sizeable development assistance to Yemen has sustained the resilience of populations as well as helped prevent state institutions from collapsing and preparing for a possible stabilisation and recovery in a 'day after' scenario. This approach was reinforced in 2019 with the adoption of a new set of measures amounting to EUR 79 million to preserve a base of functioning institutional and economic actors. The ongoing conflict and the very limited access to Yemen remained a challenge for the quick and effective delivery of aid. However, the EU could count on a strong network of implementing partners, mainly from within the UN family but also NGOs, to enable access to most districts in the country. The situation on the ground was constantly monitored and assessed and Commission departments stood ready to adapt their intervention to local operating conditions.

Development assistance to Iran targeted forced displacement and migration, nuclear safety, trade, environment and private sector development.

[Regional cooperation](#)

Outreach towards Arab donors and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries has continued in 2019, with visits to and from Gulf-based international financial institutions. There is an interest from both sides in building a solid dialogue on development cooperation and pursuing coordination on SDG implementation.

Erasmus+ provides opportunities for academic mobility, including traineeships for students, and capacity-building projects, in the field of higher education in Iran, Iraq and Yemen, including regional cooperation projects. There were approximately 2 000 exchanges of higher education students and staff involving Iran and Iraq in 2019, with about two-thirds flowing from the region to Europe, and a third in the opposite direction. Iran dominates the regional allocation when it comes to credit mobility, accounting for 85% of all exchanges, whilst Yemeni institutions are unrepresented, with European partner universities showing little willing to run exchanges presumably due to the ongoing humanitarian crisis. There were also two capacity-building in higher education projects selected, one in Iran and one in Iraq. In addition, 36 scholarships for studying Erasmus Mundus joint masters degrees in Europe were given in 2019, including 30 Iranians, 5 Yemenis and 1 Iraqi. Three Iranian organisations and one from Iraq were selected as associate partners in running these joint masters degrees, whilst an Iranian institution was awarded the opportunity to run a Jean Monnet project to promote European studies in the country.

[Working Better Together, Development effectiveness, and donor coordination](#)

Commission staff were deployed in Abu Dhabi to build closer relations with key actors in the Gulf and explore possibilities for partnerships in the greater Red Sea region and, more broadly, on humanitarian and development assistance. Progress is good with regards to UAE, Kuwait and Qatar. Further work is needed to consolidate contacts with Saudi-based institutions. Commission

departments were also significantly engaged in the preparation of the senior officials meeting with Qatar and UAE and in the follow-up of the 2018 dialogue with Kuwait.

Lessons learnt

In 2019, geopolitical trends in the Middle East were dominated by uncertainty due to regional rivalries and internal splits within the GCC. The resurgence of Da'esh in Iraq and the relatively uncontrolled proliferation of violent extremism in Yemen are very likely outcomes of this increased fragility and tensions in the region. Poverty, food insecurity/famine, security, radicalisation and violent extremism, environmental degradation, water scarcity, and (youth) unemployment remain key developmental issues in the region. Most importantly, internal displacement and refugee flows still represented major challenges in 2019, with a constant need to adapt priorities to the evolving geopolitical situation. The future action of the Commission in the region take into consideration these persisting conditions and subsequent priorities.

3.3.3.4. Humanitarian aid and civil protection: Responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

The Syria Crisis

The Syrian conflict, in its ninth year in 2019, continued to cause massive displacement, casualties and tremendous suffering for the civilian population, with more than 11 million people in need of humanitarian assistance inside the country. A total of EUR 260 million was allocated to deliver life-saving assistance inside Syria and for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt. This assistance contributed to the vital delivery of food, medicine, water, and shelter. In neighbouring Lebanon and Jordan, EU humanitarian funding has contributed to cash assistance for the most vulnerable refugees as the most cost-efficient and dignified delivery mode.

Commission departments were directly involved in international diplomatic initiatives related to the Syria crisis such as the third conference 'Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region' held in Brussels in March 2019, the Humanitarian Task Force of the International Syria Support Group in Geneva, the senior officials meetings organised in February in Geneva and November in Copenhagen, and other advocacy efforts to promote the respect of humanitarian principles and respect of international humanitarian law.

Iraq

Despite the end of large-scale military campaigns and the liberation of the territory held by Da'esh, 6.7 million people are still in need of humanitarian assistance in Iraq, including 1.6 million IDPs, of which 375 000 are still in camps. In addition, there are 250 000 refugees from Syria. In 2019, Commission departments deployed operations worth EUR 38 million for emergency healthcare, basic shelter, safe water, sanitation and hygiene, and humanitarian protection, with a particular focus on people who remain displaced. It supported assistance for survivors of sexual violence, and the provision of physical therapy and rehabilitation support for the victims of the conflict, particularly for targeted groups such as the Yezidis in northwest Iraq.

The Commission supported the resumption of basic public services in war-affected areas in which infrastructure had been badly damaged such as western Ninewa, western Anbar, and Hawija,

helping 4.5 million to return home. This support included education in emergency programmes helping children return to school, often after years of interruption.

Other provisions included legal assistance to families to obtain identification papers that were lost or not produced under the Islamic States group control, basic services in overcrowded prison, assistance for minors in detention centres, and community-based mechanisms to reintegrate former child soldiers.

Yemen

After five years of deadly conflict including repeated violations of International Humanitarian Law, mass civilian casualties and widespread destruction, Yemen is today the largest humanitarian crisis in the world. As a result, 24.1 million persons or 80% of the population need assistance, of which 3 million are internally displaced. Food insecurity affects 20 million Yemenis, with at least 238 000 in famine conditions. Moreover, the number of women and children suffering from acute malnutrition has doubled since 2015. An endemic, and record-breaking, cholera outbreak resulted in more than 460 000 suspected cases in 2019. The collapse of health services left 19.7 million people in need of healthcare services. Furthermore, imports of food, fuel and medicine remained restricted, insufficient and costly. Humanitarian assistance faces serious restrictions, made worse by a collapsing economy. One in five schools can no longer be used as a direct result of the conflict.

In 2019, Commission departments deployed operations worth EUR 115 million to provide vital assistance including food, healthcare, education as well as water, shelter and hygiene kits to war-affected areas and displaced populations. It helped treat severely malnourished children, stop the cholera epidemic and outbreaks of measles and diphtheria.

The Commission also supported the treatment of physiological and psychological shock and assisted disabled people with comprehensive rehabilitation services. The rehabilitation of classrooms was also supported allowing children back to school. In addition, support was given to the United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS), which provides critical and reliable air and sea transport to humanitarian aid workers.

3.3.3.5. Crisis response and preparedness

In Iraq, the IcSP helped improve stability through an action to promote regional dialogue between Iraq and its neighbours. Furthermore, the IcSP continued to work with Iraqi authorities on their counter terrorism strategy, legislation and coordination on the basis of human rights compliance. The IcSP was also mobilised to support the UN in the digitalisation of evidence of crimes committed by Da'esh. This will play an important role in the process of accountability for Da'esh members. Furthermore, IcSP helped improve border management on the Iraqi-Jordanian border. This border is of significant economic importance for the region and can contribute to the creation of additional livelihoods and the stabilisation of the area only recently liberated from Da'esh.

In Yemen, the IcSP continues to support stabilisation efforts and the peace process. In response to the Stockholm agreement at the end of 2018, the IcSP provides support to mediation efforts and to the UN's peace building fund as well as to specific initiatives such as the agreement concerning the port city of Hodeidah where the IcSP is used to support both the Yemeni coast guard and demining activities.

3.3.4. The Pacific

3.3.4.1. Introduction (Policy developments)

In 2019, negotiations for a successor to the Cotonou Partnership agreement between the EU and ACP partners continued. High level engagement with the Pacific partners on a specific protocol on the future EU-Pacific political and strategic relationship started with consultations in Apia, Samoa, at the end of February, in the presence of Commissioner Mimica and Heads of States/Government from Pacific Islands. Substantial progress in the negotiations of the EU-Pacific protocol was made, with the EU and Pacific moving close to an agreed text.

During the year, the EU held high-level Political Dialogue meetings with Tuvalu and Vanuatu (both in April), Fiji and Timor-Leste (both in May), and the Solomon Islands (in October). Discussions during the political dialogue meetings focused on human rights and democracy, rule of law, cooperation towards achieving the SDGs, increased collaboration in international forums, as well as geopolitical considerations. The EU encouraged partners to ratify and implement UN Conventions on human rights, carrying out *démarches*, where appropriate. Strategic discussions about security and maritime security were also held in the margins of the political dialogues. The Pacific countries remain some of the EU's most significant partners in multilateral forums, especially with regard to climate action (COP25). Issues of good tax governance figured prominently in the discussions between the EU and some of its Pacific partners, and the EU helped partners to meet related objectives.

The EU continued to support the Bougainville peace process as well as the peaceful conduct of the Bougainville independence referendum in November and December.

3.3.4.2. Working towards the SDGs

The Commission remained committed to supporting Pacific island countries towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs. Taking into account the specific challenges faced by Pacific island countries, the Commission continued its strong support to improve ocean governance; increase resilience against the negative effects of climate change; fight the root causes of gender inequality and violence against women; and further develop sustainable energy services. In addition, new actions addressed SDGs linked to biodiversity protection, economic growth and good governance.

3.3.4.3. Implementation

The 4th meeting of the regional steering committee for the Pacific took place in Fiji in November 2019 to discuss progress and challenges of the programmes within the Pacific regional indicative programme funded under the 10th and 11th EDF.

Bilateral cooperation including budget support

In Papua New Guinea (PNG), the financing agreement of the programme 'Support to Rural Entrepreneurship, Investment and Trade in Papua New Guinea (STREIT PNG)' was endorsed by PNG in June 2019. This is the largest EU funded action ever adopted in the region with EUR 82 million allocated over five years.

The annual action programme 2019 for Timor Leste committed the remaining EUR 15 million of the national indicative programme funds of the rural development focal sector. It included the 'Supporting Programme to Deconcentration and Decentralisation process' (EUR 15 million). This action aims to bring governance, public administration and service delivery closer to people. The Samoa water and sanitation programme (EUR 20 million) is a good example of successful cooperation through budget support. The programme improved the management of water resources, included public health measures and contributed to the protection of critical watershed areas. The implementation was exemplary, with a regular pace of payments and the allocation disbursed in full, as all targets were surpassed. The last payment was made in October 2019 (EUR 4.1 million).

For Kiribati, the annual action programme (AAP) 2019 (EUR 20.8 million) was adopted in October. This AAP indirectly addresses the crisis facing low lying atolls and more specifically that of the overcrowded capital city, Tarawa, by improving the situation in Christmas Island, the largest island of this widespread country. It focuses on the water, sanitation and health sector (WASH), building on previous EU support. The AAP has two main components, one delivered through project modality worth EUR 12.45 million and implemented mainly via UNICEF and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and the second via the budget support approach (the first time in this country), worth EUR 8 million. The medium to long term impact of the project will allow Kiribati authorities to support the settlement of families from Tarawa on Christmas Island.

For the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the annual action programme 2019, using the entire 11th EDF envelope of EUR 14.8 million, was adopted during summer. The focal sector addressed is access to energy and is distributed in four different components. The first will address public finance management (PFM), the second reinforces access to renewable energy and energy efficiency, the third supports those civil society organisations that are likely to facilitate the success of the programme and the last component supports the national officer administration.

Several payments were made in 2019 under the following budget support actions: energy sector reform programme in the Marshall Islands (EUR 2 million); WASH programme in Solomon Islands (EUR 2.05 million); energy sector reform programme in Tonga (EUR 1.625 million); sustainable waste programme in Tuvalu (EUR 1.3 million); PFM programme in Timor Leste (EUR 3.9 million); nutrition programme in Timor Leste (EUR 2 million); support to the tourism sector in French Polynesia (EUR 7.4 million) and the employment programme in New Caledonia (EUR 8 million).

[Regional cooperation](#)

The regional annual action programme 2019, covering the last commitments of the Pacific regional indicative plan of the 11th EDF, was adopted.

In August 2019, the EU committed EUR 9.9 million to the ambitious regional programme jointly initiated by France and the EU to pool funding from donors in the 'Joint Pacific Initiative on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Resilience'. This facility aims at addressing the resilience of the Pacific Islands Countries and Territories (PICTS) to climate change and, more specifically on its biodiversity, through nature-based solutions. As well as the EU and France, three other donors

joined (Australia, New Zealand and Canada) bringing the Initiative to a total of more than EUR 30 million.

The Pacific component of the Spotlight Initiative, focusing on domestic violence, was approved in May 2019 (EUR 50 million). The Pacific component includes four fully fledged country programmes: Timor-Leste (EUR 12 million), Papua New Guinea (EUR 19 million), Samoa (EUR 3.5 million) and Vanuatu (EUR 3 million) as well as a regional programme (EUR 5 million) and a separate allocation for civil society organisations (EUR 5 million). The regional programme built on the Pacific Partnership to Eradicate Violence against Women and Girls initiative that was already ongoing.

[Cross Border Cooperation Overview](#)

The action programme included the ‘Pacific Regional Integration Support’ (PRISE) programme (EUR 37 million) and the ‘Investment Facility for the Pacific’ (IFP) replenishment (EUR 57 million). PRISE will focus on trade integration and improvements in trade competitiveness critical for the Pacific Region to address challenges in poverty reduction and inclusiveness. The IFP replenishment will further encourage multi-country projects, which address common constraints and efficiently use available resources and institutions. The replenishment includes additional country allocations for Papua New Guinea (EUR 15 million) and the Solomon Islands (EUR 18 million).

[Working Better Together, Development effectiveness, and donor coordination](#)

Commissioner Mimica, accompanied by Commission department representatives, visited the Pacific region in February. During this mission, the first ever meeting of the emerging EU Pacific Partnership led to a largely consensual exchange of views on priorities including ocean governance, climate change, fisheries, and sustainable development. Moreover, the Commissioner announced the opening of the consultation on the Pacific component of the Spotlight Initiative (EUR 50 million). This programme will expand the ongoing national programmes and policies, including the 11th EDF Regional Pacific Programme ‘Tackling the root causes of gender inequality and violence against women and girls in the Pacific’ (EUR 18 million).

In addition, the Commissioner launched the ‘Pacific–European Union Waste Management Programme’ (a EUR 16.5 million initiative implemented through the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)) and the ‘Global Climate Change Alliance Plus – Scaling-up Pacific Adaptation (GCCA+ SUPA)’ (a EUR 12.79 million GCCA+ component implemented through the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and SPREP). Furthermore, the Commissioner participated to the 17th OCT-EU Forum in French Polynesia to reaffirm the partnership between the OCTs and the EU and more specifically on resilience and climate change, post-2020 and regional cooperation. The Pacific OCTs regional programme PROTEGE (EUR 36 million) was signed. Finally, the Commissioner also visited Sydney, where he met representatives of the Australian government and participated in a public outreach forum to explore possible investments and infrastructure cooperation in the Pacific.

The 4th Negotiation Round of the Pacific Protocol on Post-Cotonou took place in Suva at the end of August 2019. There was very good progress in establishing a preliminary draft text of the Pacific protocol, including agreed and bracketed parts for a further discussion and negotiations, especially with the perspective of the New York meeting between chief negotiators.

Commission departments also attended the 4th meeting of the regional steering committee for the Pacific in November 2019 in Fiji to discuss progress and challenges of the programmes within the Pacific regional indicative programme funded under the 10th and 11th EDF with all stakeholders. In addition, the Commission participated with other donors in two regional events: a Water Conference and the launch of the action to fight violence against woman and girls, both organised by the SPC.

Lessons learnt

Against a background of strong geographic fragmentation, regional integrated approaches appeared to be an essential complement to bilateral approaches. Moreover, the Commissioner's visit clearly gave momentum to the already very constructive engagement of the EU in the region.

3.4. Enlargement

3.4.1. Introduction

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II aims to help beneficiaries adopt and implement the political, institutional, legal, administrative, social and economic reforms required to comply with EU values and to align progressively with the EU's rules, standards, policies and practices, with a view to becoming members. The beneficiaries are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. In the period 2014–2020, the envelope for supporting preparation for accession as well as regional support and cross-border cooperation will reach about EUR 12.8 billion.

In 2019, 14 new IPA programmes were adopted, including: eleven annual action Programmes, two special measures to support Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in managing migration flows, one individual measure (support to the Office of the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina) and three amendments to multi-country action programmes. Total operational commitments for IPA II in 2019 amount to around EUR 1.23 billion. In addition, EUR 1.41 billion was adopted as a special measure in the framework of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey. The EU's financial assistance in 2019 focused on regional political priorities, in particular the fundamentals of enlargement, such as the rule of law and democratic governance, economic growth and jobs, as well as other important priorities such as the connectivity agenda, security and education.

The programmes adopted in 2019 were in line with the enlargement strategy and the 'fundamentals first' approach, and they reflected the priorities stemming from the Western Balkans strategy and the Sofia priority agenda. Additional financial support was provided for multi-annual programmes in the areas of regional development, rural development, employment, education and social inclusion. The Commission also continued to support regional integration and good neighbourly relations.

The Commission continued the implementation of the sector approach. This has produced strong improvement in the programming process, especially in linking policy dialogue (among the institutions involved and between the EU and beneficiaries) and financial assistance. Its outcomes are visible in terms of institutional improvements in various IPA beneficiaries. A total of EUR 435 million has been committed in the period 2014–2019 under sector reform performance contracts with five IPA beneficiaries (Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) with a focus on Public Administration Reform, border management, employment, youth and social measures.

The focus on and efforts towards performance and results-based management under IPA II has continued in 2019, in particular through training for IPA II beneficiaries on performance frameworks and linking programming to monitoring and evaluation.

The institution-building tools (TAIEX and Twinning) actively supported the IPA countries in their bilateral reform processes: In 2019, TAIEX organised 391 events and 78 Twinning projects were ongoing.

3.4.2. IPA priorities

The priorities of the pre-accession assistance derive from the IPA regulation (specific objectives and thematic priorities) and are aligned with the core principles of the enlargement policy. For enlargement to become a reality, a firm commitment to the principle of ‘fundamentals first’ remains essential. Structural shortcomings persist in the enlargement countries, notably in the key areas of the rule of law and the economy. Candidate countries and potential candidates must deliver on the rule of law, justice reform, the fight against corruption and organised crime, security, fundamental rights, democratic institutions and public administration reform as well as on economic development and competitiveness. In line with these priorities, EU pre-accession assistance remains focused on supporting these fundamental reforms. In 2019, the Commission also continued to focus on the implementation of actions foreseen in its 2018 Communication on ‘A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced engagement with the Western Balkans’ and the related Sofia priority agenda. These actions fall under flagship initiatives in six areas: rule of law, security and migration, socio-economic development, connectivity, a digital agenda, and reconciliation and good neighbourly relations.

Financial assistance under IPA was focused on delivering on these priorities both at regional and bilateral level. The EU continued work on improved connectivity both within the Western Balkans and between the Western Balkans by supporting substantive investments in the Western Balkans’ six transport and energy networks with the purpose of creating a regional environment conducive to economic growth and job creation. EU assistance is also directed at fostering good relations with neighbours in the region to help overcome legacy issues.

3.4.3. Implementation

Bilateral cooperation, including budget support, and donor coordination

Albania

The EU is the main contributor in Albania, providing an indicative EUR 639.5 million in assistance to support reforms in the period 2014–2020. In 2019, the EU focused its work on five key priorities, namely the judiciary, the fight against corruption and organised crime, public administration, and the protection of human rights.

With help of the EU assistance, good progress has been made in justice reform in terms of vetting results, establishment and functionality of the new justice institutions and finalisation of legal amendments.

The fight against corruption and organised crime made progress with the establishment of the new justice institutions including the Special Anti-Corruption and Organised Crime structure.

EU-funded assistance has played a fundamental role in moving forward the public administration reform agenda.

EU assistance also contributed to the protection of human rights through assisting the authorities in identifying missing persons from the communist era contributing to the Western Balkans strategy initiatives to support reconciliation and good neighbourly relations.

In addition, EU assistance contributed to Albania's economic development by supporting public finance management and employment and skills, as well as environmental protection, in particular through supporting the water and wastewater sectors.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The EU is the main donor in Bosnia and Herzegovina, providing an indicative EUR 530 million of assistance for the period 2014–2020. The EU has been working with the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council on the modernisation of the justice system since 2004. In 2019, a new project series EU4Justice was launched that focuses on information exchange in the entire criminal justice chain and strengthening the disciplinary system and the prosecutorial service. The judiciary's capacity for processing war crime cases of war crimes is also being strengthened with IPA assistance supporting the salaries and material costs of courts and prosecutor offices across Bosnia and Herzegovina. In view of inadequate infrastructure for the efficient operation of courts and prosecutor offices, EU funds are provided for the further (re-)construction of judicial and prosecutorial premises. Since 2013, EUR 31 million has been allocated for the re-construction and renovation of 31 justice institutions in throughout the country.

In March 2019, the Commission launched the EU initiative to enhance the monitoring of the rule of law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which culminated in a 'Right to Justice' public debate and in a report of independent experts (Priebe Report). All EU projects have been tasked to implement relevant recommendations stemming from the opinion, the analytical report and the Priebe report.

In the fight against corruption and organised crime, the EU launched three projects in 2019, which provide Bosnia and Herzegovina with a unique pool of expertise to curb corruption demonstrating the importance EU and its Member States put on a strong and sustainable track-record in this area. An EU-funded Twinning project completed in 2019 further supported the fight against money laundering and the implementation of the financial action task force recommendations including the financing of terrorist activities.

Kosovo

The EU is the main contributor in Kosovo, providing an indicative EUR 602.1 million of aid for the period 2014–2020 to support reforms. There are two sector reform performance contracts on public administration reform (PAR) and on public finance management (PFM).

The IPA 2019 programmes amount to a total of EUR 86.4 million. Most of the funds (EUR 76.4 million) were dedicated to reducing the environmental impact of the Kosovo B power plant. A new action to support innovation in Kosovo, increasing efficiency and productivity of the private sector through use of ICT, was also adopted. Work has also started on the construction of biomass heating plant in Gjakova.

In 2019, the Kosovo government inaugurated the Kosovo Energy Efficiency Trust Fund (the first such fund in the region), to which the EU is contributing EUR 10 million from IPA 2017 and intends to contribute an additional EUR 3 million under IPA 2020. The trust fund will help municipalities in the implementation of their energy efficiency action plans and contribute towards the achievement of the national energy efficiency targets.

While the political situation in the second half of 2019 was challenging, EU assistance continued without interruption. The coordination and complementarity between donors, in particular EU Member States, on programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluations has improved. The EU office in Kosovo has established a good practice to regularly inform Member States on all IPA activities in Kosovo. The 2019-2020 programmes have been presented at a Member States technical coordination meeting.

North Macedonia

The EU is the main contributor to North Macedonia, providing EUR 573 million of assistance for the period 2014–2020 to support reforms. The 2019 programme for North Macedonia represents EUR 51 million including the first budget support programme for the country (EUR 16.5 million). This will support North Macedonia in improving the employment of young people, focusing on those aged 15 to 29 in the least developed regions, with low qualifications for the labour market. Assistance also focuses on competitiveness, innovation, agriculture and rural development with support to start-ups and SMEs from under-developed regions, and restructuring of agricultural land, irrigation systems and innovative solutions. IPA will also support social and economic inclusion of people belonging to the most vulnerable groups and address the reduction of poverty.

Under the multi-annual programme for transport and environment, EUR 9 million was allocated to the environment sector for wastewater management and EUR 34 million to rail transport for the construction of a key project Orient/East Med corridor section Kriva Palanka-border with Bulgaria.

The EU delegation in Skopje established the good practice of informing Member States on all IPA activities. For the 2019 annual action programme, intensive consultations were held with Member States representatives in special meetings and sector working groups.

Montenegro

The EU is the main contributor in Montenegro, providing an indicative EUR 279.1 million of assistance to support reforms in the period 2014–2020. In 2019, the IPA contribution of EUR 30 million focused on addressing the environment and climate change. Complementing this, the transport sector was also supported with a major new programme.

During 2019, programmes continued on a range of sectors, including rule of law and fundamental rights, agriculture and rural development. In addition, there are the budget support programmes in integrated border management and public administration reform, both of which continued to make an important impact in the country.

Support was provided also in education, employment and social policies under the SOPEES programme for EUR 15.3 million. In parallel to this, 2019 saw the continuation of a number of social

programmes aiming to address gender issues as well as the integration of Roma and other vulnerable communities.

The EU is encouraging the government to work towards the creation of an overarching government-led donor coordination mechanism. Dialogue among bilateral and international donors on public administration reform was reinforced in 2019 and an updated donor matrix is maximising synergies and preventing overlap. At technical level, an EU-led coordination structure exists amongst stakeholders involved in ongoing projects in the rule of law sector. Equally, in the social sector cooperation between the EU, the authorities and other donors is improving.

Serbia

The EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to Serbia. An indicative amount of EUR 1.54 billion of assistance has been earmarked to support reforms in the country in the period 2014–2020. In 2019, assistance focused on four key sectors: democracy and governance, rule of law, migration and competitiveness.

In the area of democracy and governance, under the European integration facility, specific actions support legislative harmonisation with the EU *acquis* and the strengthening of Serbia's institutional capacities in different areas.

In the area of rule of law and fundamental rights, the programme focuses on strengthening the rule of law in Serbia in line with European standards and on Serbia meeting the obligations stemming from the EU accession negotiation chapters on judiciary and fundamental rights (Chapter 23) and justice, freedom and security (Chapter 24) in line with the EU *acquis*. Support is also provided to enhance Serbia's civil protection mechanism and reduce vulnerability to disasters.

In the area of migration, additional support is provided to Serbia under a new special measure, which intends to strengthen protection and resilience of migrant or refugee populations in Serbia and improve the capacity of the authorities to manage migration flows in a protection sensitive manner including enhancing shelter capacity and delivery of services.

Finally, a substantial action under the competitiveness, innovation and agriculture and rural development sector aims to increase business efficiency of Serbian SMEs and enhance the ecosystem for research and development through measures such as increased coordination of reforms in the area of business environment, technologically improved production capacity solutions, and innovation.

Implementation of sector reform performance contracts introduced under IPA II has accelerated with tangible results achieved in the key areas of PAR and PFM, integrated border management and education. Progress was noted in a number of investment projects in the environmental sector, which were particularly complex and challenging. There was also positive development in the competitiveness sector, in particular with support to SME development and strengthened coordination role of the innovation fund.

Turkey

As a result of the reductions applied in the framework of the budgetary procedure, the final 2019 budget allocation for IPA II Turkey was lowered to EUR 248.7 million. Consistent with the approach

taken in previous years, and in light of the country's backsliding in the areas of rule of law, fundamental rights and public administration reform, the EU continued redirecting financial support to Turkey to focus on sectors that reflect the EU's priorities.

Approximately two-thirds of the annual budget envelope (EUR 158.6 million) has been programmed to support actions on democracy and governance, rule of law and fundamental rights, including EUR 80.5 million as a contribution to participation in EU programmes and agencies (for example Erasmus+), and EUR 30.6 million to fund civil society organisations.

The remaining third of the IPA 2019 Turkey budget allocation (EUR 88.7 million) has been devoted to fund actions in other areas to promote further EU interests and policies such as environment, climate action and renewable energies (EUR 12.2 million), sustainable urban mobility (EUR 2.5 million), competitiveness and innovation (EUR 17 million), as well as to the rural development programme (Instrument for Pre-accession assistance for rural development – EUR 40 million).

During the third quarter of 2019, a surge of irregular migration to the EU via Turkey, in particular originating from Afghanistan, Pakistan and sub-Saharan Africa, increased the migratory pressure on the country and two new measures on migration management, with a combined budget of EUR 31.75 million, have been included in the package of actions related to home affairs.

Of particular importance, in 2019 the EU and Turkey signed the bilateral agreement for the Halkali-Kapikule rail line project (EUR 275 million), the EU's biggest infrastructure project in a third country. The project, foreseen under the IPA II transport programme (2014-2020), is part of the comprehensive Trans-European Transport (TEN-T) railway network and will connect Turkey to the network via Bulgaria and has the potential to become a key freight corridor for EU-Turkey trade.

Case study: The facility for refugees in Turkey

Context

The Facility for Refugees in Turkey became operational in February 2016 with a total budget of EUR 6 billion (EUR 3 billion from the EU budget and EUR 3 billion from Member States).

Objectives

The facility is implemented as humanitarian and development assistance. Under the first tranche (2016-2017) roughly EUR 1.4 billion and EUR 1.6 billion were allocated to the respective strands. Given the protracted nature of the Syria crisis, interventions under the second tranche (2018-2019) increasingly focused on socio-economic support activities and the creation of livelihood opportunities with EUR 1.1 billion allocated to humanitarian assistance and EUR 1.9 billion to development assistance.

Impact

- Under the humanitarian strand, a total of 64 projects have been implemented through 19

partners covering response to basic needs, protection, education, and health for the most vulnerable refugees. For example, the 'Emergency Social Safety Net' (ESSN) now benefits around 1.7 million of the most vulnerable refugees and the 'Conditional Cash Transfer for Education' (CCTE) programme, launched in 2017, is the largest programme on education in emergencies ever financed by the EU, facilitating access for refugees to formal education systems.

- The development strand supports longer-term needs in the fields of health, education and socio-economic development of refugees, such as access to public services, livelihood opportunities, and municipal infrastructure. For example, a EUR 300 million grant implemented in cooperation with the Turkish Ministry of National Education has supported the integration of Syrian children into the Turkish education system, providing access to education to well over 600 000 children. Under health, the Facility is delivering EUR 300 million to ensure refugees can access healthcare services. A direct grant with the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Services is being negotiated to allow support for the most vulnerable refugees comparable with social assistance provided under the Turkish social security system. In addition, projects are being financed under socio-economic support to increase employability and skills development of refugees and host communities, improve services provided in relation to Vocation Education and Training, market supply and demand matching, and creating a conducive environment for business growth.

Further information on the Facility for Refugees here: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/migration.

The nuclear safety regulator, NDK and its technical support organisation NÜTED were supported within the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation in their regulation of the Akkuyu NPP construction project, to ensure a high level of safety.

In terms of donor coordination, joint consultations with the EU Member States development counsellors take place monthly allowing a regular exchange of information on operational programmes. Member State representatives are also briefed in advance and after the steering committee meetings of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey, as well as meetings of the IPA committees for the endorsement of the programmes with Turkey.

Regional cooperation

Bilateral assistance was supported by continued efforts to strengthen regional cooperation, which is a cornerstone of the EU's approach to the region and an essential element of the European perspective on the Western Balkans. During 2019, the EU continued to work closely with partners to improve cooperation within the region and with the EU, connecting infrastructures, economies and people. These priorities have featured prominently in recent summits, and the relevant ministerial-level meetings, with particular attention to the Digital Summit in Belgrade in April, with the signature of the regional roaming agreement, the endorsement of the Roma integration declaration and the declaration on recognition of academic qualifications in Poznan, the signature of the joint statement on 'Clean Energy Transition in the Western Balkans' in Podgorica, and the support to the region's efforts to develop a green agenda for the Western Balkans.

The implementation of the connectivity agenda is progressing steadily. The EU has to date provided EUR 880.7 million under regional and national IPA envelopes for 39 transport and energy connectivity projects, which is expected to leverage overall investments of more than EUR 3.2 billion.

The Transport Community Treaty Secretariat was inaugurated in 2019. As part of the Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans, the regional roaming agreement was signed, enabling a gradual reduction of roaming charges in the region. Impetus was given to the development of a green agenda for the Western Balkans through the adoption of the 'Clean Energy Transition' Statement in Podgorica.

The EU's commitment to regional cooperation was reinforced by continued funding of the key regional organisations, including the regional cooperation council and Central European free trade agreement to help develop a competitive regional economic area (REA). The call for proposal for the EUR 150 million Western Balkans guarantee was launched to attract further private sector investments in the region.

In terms of connecting people, the focus on young people has significantly increased with work to double the support for Erasmus+ as well as the launch of the Western Balkans youth policy lab and the pilot mobility scheme in the field of vocational education and training in line with the commitment under the 2018 Western Balkans strategy and the Sofia declaration. Work also continued on enhanced social inclusion, including support to Roma, as well as to the most vulnerable and persons displaced in the 1990s conflicts through the regional housing programme.

Further support has been provided to improve media freedom and pluralism through new programmes with the European Endowment for Democracy and UNESCO, as well as to enable civil society organisations to advocate for democracy, good governance, a better environment and anti-corruption at central and local levels. A new stronger focus on culture as a vector for reconciliation has been developed. In the field of security, action has been taken to reform the Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG).

Cross border cooperation overview

The flagship initiative of the Western Balkans strategy, 'Supporting reconciliation and good neighbourly relations', is the common thread of the cross border cooperation programmes in the Western Balkans, rebuilding connections and cooperation in the region. The thematic priorities include: encouraging tourism, and cultural and natural heritage; protecting the environment, and promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as risk prevention and management; promoting employment, labour mobility, and social and cultural inclusion across borders; enhancing competitiveness, the business environment and the development of SMEs, trade and investment; and investing in young people, education and skills.

During 2019, all nine 2014–2020 cross border cooperation (CBC) bilateral programmes among Western Balkans beneficiaries launched at least their second call for grant proposals. With more projects implemented, the focus is now on monitoring and measurement of performance. With their significant resources (EUR 48.5 million from IPA II as of December 2019), these programmes and projects have triggered real change for local communities. For example, they have improved the

lives and opportunities for rural populations, increased the employability of women, brought young people together, and made common cause between people with disabilities.

Programmes also addressed environmental issues across borders: improving waste management (for example, the 'Suburban recycling' project in suburban areas of Užice and Tuzla from the Serbia – Bosnia and Herzegovina programme); sharing good practices to use local renewable energy sources; and working together on energy efficiency measures. On the tourism side, infrastructure, products and services based on shared natural and cultural resources and traditions were developed together (for example, in the Lake Ohrid region the 'Safe Destination for Adventure Travel' project on mountain and lake rescue is part of the North Macedonia - Albania programme).

In peripheral cross-border areas, these programmes are highly visible, and reinforce relations between the local population and the EU. Furthermore, the approach is a unique tool for national and local authorities to become familiar with the management of EU structural funds, enabling swift follow up upon accession.

3.4.4. Humanitarian aid and civil protection - responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

Turkey

With over 3.5 million Syrian refugees and over half a million non-Syrian refugees and migrants, Turkey is the country with the highest number of refugees in the world. In 2019, the large majority of refugees and migrants faced significant humanitarian needs, which the EU addressed through the second tranche of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey.

In total, under the first and second tranche of the Facility, the EU has contracted about EUR 2.4 billion on humanitarian projects and supported around 1.7 million refugees, through 64 projects and 19 partner organisations working on basic needs, non-formal education, protection and health.

In 2019, the Commission has contracted almost the entire amount corresponding to the humanitarian part of the Facility (EUR 1.021 billion out of EUR 1.041 billion). The flagship humanitarian programme under the Turkey Facility is the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) which provides monthly cash payments directly to refugees through a debit card to help meet their basic needs. By the end of 2019, the programme was supporting over 1.7 million refugees on a monthly basis. The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) is the biggest education in emergencies programme providing cash transfers to vulnerable families to promote school enrolment and regular attendance for refugee children. By the end of 2019, this programme alone had reached more than 560 000 children.

Western Balkans

Since the beginning of 2018, a new migration 'sub-route' leading via Bosnia and Herzegovina towards Croatia and Slovenia has emerged. Some 29 000 people of concern (PoC) arrived via this route in 2019, compared to 24 000 in 2018 with the total number of migrants and refugees present in the country at around 8 000, of which around 2 000 are sleeping rough. In 2019, Commission departments support to Bosnia and Herzegovina amounted to EUR 3.8 million providing health, protection and outreach assistance (including identification of vulnerable individuals, provision of

emergency food and non-food items, medical assistance, etc.) to refugees and migrants. In addition, shelter, water and sanitation, food and non-food items were also covered.

3.4.5. Crisis response and preparedness

Engagement under the IcSP in the Western Balkans continues although no new measures were adopted during 2019.

In Turkey, the IcSP has been largely used to respond to the regional consequences of the conflicts in Syria, notably with the delivery of vessels to the Turkish Coast Guard for search and rescue operations. The IcSP also continues to finance mediation activities, bringing together representatives from various Turkish political parties to discuss political solutions around the 'Kurdish issue' inside Turkey.

3.4.6. Working towards SDGs

Commission assistance in the region contributes to several SDGs. Given strong IPA focus on rule of law, human rights, institution building, legal approximation and public sector reforms, SDG 16 is by far the goal most targeted by IPA assistance. At the same time, substantial IPA support for infrastructures, both at bilateral and regional levels, contributes to clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) in the case of Albania, affordable and clean energy (SDG 7) in the case of Kosovo and Turkey, and environment and climate action (SDG 13) in Kosovo and Montenegro. Support to innovation and industry (SDG 9) is also targeted in most countries. Finally, sector support programmes in favour of health, education, employment and social policies are financed with several beneficiaries contributing to SDG 4 (education), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 10 (reduced inequality).

3.5. European Neighbourhood

3.5.1. European Neighbourhood East

3.5.1.1. Introduction (ENI priorities and policy developments)

During 2019 the EU continued to develop its relations with its six eastern partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) bilaterally under the European neighbourhood policy and multilaterally under the Eastern partnership framework. Both dimensions are firmly based on common values, mutual interests, and the principles of shared ownership, responsibility, differentiation and mutual accountability.

The EU focused on the implementation of the Eastern partnership '20 deliverables for 2020'⁹¹ endorsed at the 2017 summit which provide a clear roadmap for implementing actions and promoting reforms in key areas. The last monitoring performed in 2019 confirmed good progress across all areas, including in transport, trade, economy, digital, connectivity, energy efficiency and mobility and people to people. Moreover, 67% of citizens in the Eastern partnership now have a

⁹¹ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/20_deliverables_for_2020.pdf.

positive impression of the EU (up 6% since 2017). However, challenges remain in the areas of rule of law, shrinking space for civil society and independent media.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the Eastern partnership, the President of the European Commission and the HRVP hosted a series of high-level gatherings in Brussels on 13 and 14 May, with the participation of the six Eastern partner countries, EU Member States and stakeholders. A number of events were held throughout the year in EU Member States and all partner countries, providing the opportunity to celebrate a partnership that has proved to be mutually beneficial and delivered substantive results for the Eastern partnership citizens and businesses.

In 2019 the European Council reaffirmed the importance of this strategic partnership and invited the Commission and the HRVP to “evaluate the existing instruments and measures, and on the basis of appropriate consultations, to present by early 2020, with a view to the next Eastern partnership summit, a further set of long-term policy objectives”.

In this context, President Juncker launched a structured consultation on the future of the Eastern partnership. More than 200 contributions were received from a wide range of stakeholders including governments, academia, the business community, civil society, youth organisations and individual citizens. Together with the assessment of the current agenda, this vast capital of ideas and aspirations provides a solid foundation to devise the strategic direction beyond 2020.

The EU also continued to play an active role in bilateral relations with the six countries. EU relations with Armenia focused on the implementation of the EU-Armenia comprehensive and partnership agreement (CEPA) based on the CEPA implementation roadmap that was adopted by Armenia in June, consolidating the democratic achievements of the Velvet Revolution and supporting the ambitious reform agenda of the new government, in particular reform of the judiciary and the fight against corruption. The negotiations on a new agreement with Azerbaijan and the implementation of the partnership priorities were on top on the agenda, while the EU continued to support Azerbaijan’s efforts to diversify its economy, particularly through assistance in key areas of education, SME development, agriculture and rural development. Engagement with Belarus continued to develop on a more positive agenda: the EU and Belarus concluded the negotiations on the visa facilitation and readmission agreements which will pave the way for improved mobility of citizens and the finalisation of the negotiations on EU-Belarus partnership priorities remained a firm political priority for the EU. With regard to Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine the EU continued to support implementation of the ambitious association agreements/deep and comprehensive free trade areas (AA/DCFTA). For the EU, ensuring the sustainability of reforms and of progress achieved in Georgia, notably in the areas of rule of law and justice, is of primary importance. EU assistance to Moldova continued to focus on improving the lives of Moldovan citizens and to support of the ambitious reform agenda launched by the government in the second half of the year. Following the presidential (April) and parliamentary (July) elections, Ukraine resumed rapid legislative activity, in particular in economic reforms and rule of law. The EU continued to support the structural reforms and the implementation of the AA/DCFTA as well as providing an unprecedented package of financial assistance to the areas and communities suffering from the conflict in the east of Ukraine. Commission institution-building tools (TAIEX and Twinning) actively supported the six countries in their bilateral reform process: in 2019, TAIEX organised 139

events, mainly in the areas of economic development and good governance, and 49 Twinning initiatives are ongoing.

3.5.1.2. Implementation

Bilateral cooperation, including budget support, and donor coordination

Armenia

Following the ‘Velvet Revolution,’ the new government took over in Armenia at the beginning of 2019 and set itself an ambitious and comprehensive reform agenda based on democracy, transparency, and rule of law, in particular the fight against corruption, elimination of monopolies, delivering on justice and accountability to citizens, and improving economic and social opportunities. The government has been committed to the implementation of the comprehensive and enhanced partnership agreement (CEPA), which it considers not only an important international agreement, but also a domestic reform tool.

In 2019, the EU was the key reform partner and the largest contributor in Armenia. Under 2019 support, a comprehensive and enhanced partnership agreement (CEPA) reform facility has been designed to support the implementation of the CEPA and facilitate reform processes that includes EU high-level advisors who will advise the government on strategic reforms. This is complemented by an action to increase energy efficiency in public buildings and multi-apartment residential buildings, with an emphasis on low-income households. In this context, the high-level energy efficiency initiative of the EU and international financial institutions was extended to Armenia in March 2019. Finally, local empowerment of actors for development (LEAD) will bolster the participation of local stakeholders in the socio-economic development of their communities building on the LEADER approach.

Blended grants with loans have generated additional investment in energy, water infrastructure and irrigation as well as the agriculture and transport sectors. In addition, the strategic use of TAIEX and Twinning has been designed to support CEPA implementation.

Regarding sector reform performance contracts, in 2019 there were four ongoing programmes with a total multi-annual value of EUR 62 million: ‘Human rights protection support’, ‘Public finance policy reform’, ‘Better service delivery through a more efficient and responsive public administration’, and ‘Better qualifications for better jobs (VET)’.

Ongoing operations were reviewed with the government to align them to the new priorities. A new programme in support of the reform of the justice sector has been developed under the annual action plan 2020. The government also expressed interest in future programmes supporting reforms in the areas of education and public finance.

Azerbaijan

Negotiations on a new EU-Azerbaijan agreement continued throughout 2019. The partnership priorities guided EU-Azerbaijan cooperation, and the EU approved a new partnership priorities facility to support their implementation. Through its ongoing programmes, the EU continued support in three main areas: economic diversification, human capital and regional development. The

EU4Lankaran programme started its implementation to sustainably enhance the competitiveness of the fruit and vegetable sector in Lankaran as a focus of EU assistance.

The EU also continued to support the government's reform agenda in areas such as energy management, environmental policy, gender equality, cybersecurity and e-government, including through active use of the TAIEX instrument. In collaboration with the Council of Europe, the EU supported justice reform and the fight against corruption and money laundering. Civil society initiatives were supported particularly in the areas of rural development and education, and a new civil society facility was approved to support capacity building of CSOs and social entrepreneurship.

Twinning has remained a successful tool in supporting the government's efforts to modernise its administration and to start aligning with European standards and practices in selected sectors, such as labour and social protection, public finance management, higher education and the agriculture. Based on the findings of the annual EU business climate surveys in Azerbaijan, the EU continued its support to areas such as SME development and reform of the customs, taxation and judicial system.

Belarus

EU – Belarus financial and technical cooperation in 2019 contributed to the initiation and implementation of reforms and institutional change processes in a range of sectors. Reaching out to 53 of the 118 administrative units or *rayons* across Belarus, it supported many small investments and actions in environmental management, energy efficiency, business development, social service delivery and promoted culture and heritage in collaboration with local administrations and civil society organisations. EU funding remains an important source for civil society activities seeking to strengthen democracy and improve the human rights situation in the country.

Since 2016, Belarus has been eligible to access European Investment Bank lending and a facilitated European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) approach. Three extra loans were signed in November 2019: a EUR 90 million loan to support investment in biomass-based heat generators, an upgrade of district heating systems and thermal renovation of multi apartment buildings; and EUR 85 million to Belarusbank and EUR 20 million to Belagroprombank to co-finance SME projects that are expected to create 3 700 full time jobs and support some 200 companies. Belarus is also eligible for the EBRD administered E5P programme that can leverage investments in energy efficiency, waste management and energy reduction. With good progress on the E5P supported Puhovichu solid waste project, a new investment grant for wastewater treatment plant rehabilitation was approved in 2019.

With the successful conclusion in 2019 of the first Twinning programme for the National Bank of Belarus, two new programmes (Strengthening the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Belarus and strengthening the capacity for geospatial data management and interoperability of the National Cadastral agency) were started and preparation of four more programmes with the state border committee, the state customs committee, BelStat (the national statistical committee) and the second programme for the National Bank initiated. Twinning has become a preferred modality for EU – Belarus cooperation in support of institutional development and modernisation of public administration.

The nuclear regulator received support in regulating the nuclear power plant in Ostrovets via a multinational team of experts to ensure a high level of nuclear safety.

Georgia

Georgia remains committed to the obligations and undertakings of the association agreement. Alignment to the EU *acquis*, as well as to European standards, particularly in human rights, has continued. However, challenges remain in the areas of electoral reform, political dialogue and reform of the judiciary. The EU is continuing to support these reforms, in particular in the justice sector including the implementation of a fourth wave of judicial reforms.

Furthermore, the EU is supporting Georgia to reap the full benefits of economic integration through the implementation of the deep and comprehensive free trade agreement (DCFTA). Support is provided to increase access to finance for SMEs including microenterprises through local currency lending, as well as to support cluster and value chain development. Technical assistance and Twinning programmes have been put in place to assist Georgia with the implementation of the EU *acquis* in technical regulations, standards, public procurement, competition, rules of origin and intellectual property rights. However, more remains to be done in the area of food safety to be able to increase exports of food products to the EU. The EU's European neighbourhood programme for agriculture and rural development (ENPARD) will be instrumental in this regard.

Implementation of the 2018 bilateral allocation (EUR 134 million) started in 2019. EU support will continue to focus on the implementation of the association agreement, including greater participation by Georgia in Erasmus+ and action on strategic communication. A new economic governance and fiscal accountability programme will bring Georgia closer to the EU model of economic governance, while a holistic programme on security, accountability and the fight against crime will strengthen good governance, the rule of law and the security of Georgian citizens. The bilateral allocation for 2019 (EUR 127 million) covering ENPARD IV, EU4 Integrated Territorial Development and EU4 Human Rights was adopted at the end of 2019.

In 2019 there were six ongoing budget support programmes (EUR 272.64 million, including the technical assistance component) on public administration reform, the European neighbourhood programme for agriculture and rural development (phases II and III), skills development and matching for labour market needs, economic and business development, and economic governance and fiscal accountability.

During 2019 there was an emerging consensus amongst the European development partners in Georgia (EU delegation, Member States, Norway and Switzerland) to move towards joint programming, as continued donor coordination is crucial to achieve higher impact, promote synergies and avoid duplication. To this end, the development partners have drawn up brief sector gap analyses and formulated corresponding "joint European messages" in key thematic areas. These messages will communicate identified gaps and advocate overall priorities and desired governmental actions in a consistent way. The joint key messages are expected to be used within reinvigorated government-led coordination platforms in 2020 and in other dialogue opportunities.

Moldova

Following the parliamentary elections in February, a new coalition government led by Prime Minister Maia Sandu took office in June. The European Council conclusions of 20 June called on the Commission to step up its support to Moldova to help the new government pursue its reform agenda.

Against this background, and once related conditions were met, the EU resumed payments under various budget support programmes, which had previously been put on hold for nearly two years due to a deterioration in the rule of law in the country. In October, the EU also approved a EUR 30 million disbursement of macro-financial assistance to Moldova having established that all related conditions were fulfilled.

In response to the initial, positive steps made by the Sandu Government, the EU also mobilised a team of high-level advisors to provide quick reform advice to the government and organised a high-level workshop on justice reform in September 2019 drawing on the expertise of EU Member States.

The 2019 funding package for Moldova contained the following actions: EU4Moldova - Startup City Cahul; EU4Moldova - Clean Water for Cahul; Eastern partnership Civil Society Facility 2019 – 2020; and EU4Moldova - Improving Energy Efficiency in Moldova.

In 2019, the EU continued to provide assistance through bilateral and regional programmes to improve the quality of life citizens in a tangible and visible manner, strengthen the rule of law, and capitalise on the opportunities afforded by the Association Agreement and DCFTA. For example, more than 17 660 SMEs have benefitted from EU support to access finance in Moldova under the EU4Business programme since 2009. The EU consolidated its position as Moldova's largest trading partner and the biggest investor in the country, accounting for 70% of the Moldova's total exports and more than 50% of its total trade.

Ukraine

The overall environment for the implementation of EU assistance in Ukraine remained favourable following the profound change in its political leadership following the presidential and parliamentary elections in spring and autumn of 2019. The new leadership remains committed to an ambitious and comprehensive reform agenda based on the association agreement and DCFTA and is pursuing implementation of reforms with extraordinary speed, in particular in the economic area.

EU assistance has been well aligned with national priorities and has been able to respond swiftly and flexibly to emerging new priorities such as e-governance and digital economy. The comprehensive programme to support the implementation of the association agreement (Association4U project) completed its first phase successfully in July.

Territorial reorganisation and decentralisation of competences from central and regional authorities is still one of the most successful reforms in Ukraine. The Ukrainian government stated repeatedly its commitment to the reform, which is supported by a EUR 101 million EU-funded programme U-LEAD that is jointly financed and implemented with Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Estonia and Poland. A new financing agreement for U-LEAD phase II (EUR 40 million) was signed in 2019 to ensure the continuation to this successful programme.

The EU anti-corruption initiative (EUACI) provided substantial support to anti-corruption efforts at both central and local level.

The EU flagship project PRAVO-Justice continued its extensive support, including providing timely advice to the new government on the draft legislation to reform the Supreme Court, judicial self-governance bodies and procedural codes. In the area of law enforcement, the project PRAVO-Police supported the National Police of Ukraine with IT equipment to ensure uninterrupted policing and investigative services, contributing to faster and more reliable response capabilities.

In 2019, the EU continued supporting the public administration reform and public finance management (PFM) in Ukraine.

EU assistance was provided to support capacity building and development of civil society organisations, particularly outside Kyiv.

In summer 2019, the ongoing programme 'EU support to the east of Ukraine' (adopted in 2017 with EUR 50 million budget) was topped up with EUR 10 million to extend and further strengthen the support to the southeast of the country, following the November 2018 escalation in the Sea of Azov.

In terms of energy security, a major step forward was made with the unbundling of Naftogaz as an outstanding key element of gas sector reform.

Building on almost 20 years of cooperation, the regulator SNRIU and the State Agency of Ukraine for Exclusion Management benefited from cooperation projects within the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation to further enhance nuclear safety in Ukraine.

Energy efficiency remains a priority for EU support in Ukraine with a number of ongoing projects with a combined budget of nearly EUR 180 million. The Ukrainian Energy Efficiency Fund, supported by the EUR 104 million EE4U programme, aims to renovate multi-storey buildings in Ukraine and saw the implementation of its first 12 projects.

A major EU-funded intervention in support of the reform of the VET system started in 2019. The EUR 38 million programme 'Modern skills for modern Ukraine: EU4Skills Programme' focuses on the development and implementation of a new VET strategy to improve the quality and attractiveness of VET including increased relevance to the needs of the labour market.

In 2019 there was one budget support programme to support the implementation of the public administration reform with the total multi-annual value of this programme being EUR 90 million.

With a new President and a new Government taking power in 2019 and pushing through reforms, donor coordination and international cooperation were not initially a priority. The Government did however by the end of the year take first steps to promote cooperation with international partners.

[Regional cooperation](#)

2019 was characterised by the 10-year anniversary of the Eastern partnership, which was celebrated in a series of events including a high-level event in Brussels in May. The event was an opportunity to take stock of the partnership's key achievements including through implementation of the '20 Deliverables for 2020'. At the high-level event, a consultation on the future of the Eastern partnership was launched by President Juncker encouraging reflection on how to keep the

partnership relevant and inclusive beyond 2020. This demonstrated the substantive vision and commitment from all partners to improve the lives of all citizens in line with the four key priority areas of economic development, connectivity, good governance and people-to-people contact.

Concerning market opportunities and economic development, more than 40 regional and bilateral programmes under the 'EU4Business' initiative continued as the key collective tool to deliver substantive support for development of SMEs, complementing national reform plans.

In the area of connectivity, to develop the digital economy, the Eastern partnership countries have affirmed their commitment to reduce roaming tariffs through the signature of a regional roaming agreement among the Eastern partners by 2020. In addition, support for policy work in six priority topics (electronic communications and infrastructure, trust and security, eTrade, digital skills, ICT innovation and start-up ecosystems and eHealth) is streamlined through the 'EU4Digital' initiative and the related technical assistance programmes. Through the Partnership Instrument, a study to evaluate the LNG market potential in the region was commissioned. Finally, through the EU blending facility, the Neighbourhood Investment Platform, grant funding will leverage loans from partner international financial institutions for investments in broadband. The European Investment Plan also provides EUR 1.54 billion of financial guarantees to attract private sector investments in a number of areas, including digital for development.

Continuing in the area of connectivity, in 2019 regional cooperation focused on the four deliverable priorities.

In the area of good governance, to strengthen the rule of law, anti-corruption mechanisms and justice sector reform for the Eastern partnership countries, the EU continued its long-standing cooperation with the Council of Europe under the Framework Partnership for Good Governance phase II, which started in early 2019. The programme reflects in a more concrete manner the focus of the EU's efforts to assist the EaP countries in the areas of the rule of law, anti-corruption, judicial reforms and anti-discrimination, in line with Deliverables 9 and 10 of the '20 Deliverables for 2020'.

In the areas of mobility and people-to-people contacts, the emphasis remains, in line with the Youth and Education Package (EUR 340 million committed under 2017–2020 budgets, almost EUR 390 reached) under the '20 Deliverables for 2020', on youth employment and employability, entrepreneurship, inclusion, social entrepreneurship as well youth civic engagement.

In the areas of mobility and people-to-people contacts, education and youth cooperation have been further supported by 'Erasmus+' and Creative Europe. In higher education, Erasmus+ supports students and staff mobility, full degree scholarships for Erasmus Mundus joint masters degree students, and capacity building for higher education. In addition to cooperation in higher education, Erasmus+ supports exchanges and cooperation for young people and youth workers. Since the beginning of the current Erasmus+ programme there have been over 38 000 student and staff International Credit Mobilities, out of which almost 7 300 were in 2019. In addition, almost 500 students were awarded full master degree scholarships, out of which 113 scholarships were awarded in 2019. To support modernisation and reform of higher education in the Eastern Partnership in 2019, 27 Capacity Building projects were granted. Finally, almost 7 100 young people from the Eastern Partnership participated in youth exchanges, youth workers mobility and

volunteering projects in 2019, bringing the total number of mobility projects to youth to over 46 000 since 2014.

Four of the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) participate in the Creative Europe programme, supporting the cultural sectors. To date, 46 cultural organisations have taken part in projects under this programme as partners and 22 of these have been coordinators of small projects. In addition, the four countries took part in the new pilot mobility scheme, i-Portunus, resulting in almost 50 individual artist exchanges.

In 2019, the EU fostered research and innovation cooperation with Eastern partnership countries, continuing also with Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions for researchers. Various activities were performed through the Horizon 2020 policy support facility (PSF) to improve the framework conditions of EU scientific cooperation in the region.

Cross border cooperation overview: Neighbourhood east and south

CBC is an important element of EU policy towards its eastern and southern neighbours, adding cohesion and territorial cooperation to EU relations. In 2019, with all the administrative structures established and approved, the 15 European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) CBC programmes (13 of which are in the east) for the period 2014-2020 totalling around EUR 1 billion moved to full implementation phase. By the end of January 2019, all 25 financing agreements between the Commission and partner countries were in force. A total number of 45 calls for proposals were launched, out of which 38 were closed and selection of projects finalised. Almost 500 projects were contracted from approximately 750 selected projects. In addition, 49 out of 53 approved large infrastructure projects were contracted. The projects to be implemented under these programmes support sustainable economic development along the EU's external borders, thus reducing differences in living standards and addressing common challenges across these borders. For each of these programmes, the participating countries have selected up to four thematic objectives, such as SME development, culture and environment, and climate change.

3.5.1.3 Humanitarian aid and civil protection - responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

Ukraine

After more than five years of increasingly protracted and complex crisis, the humanitarian situation in Ukraine remains difficult. The conflict is affecting over 5.2 million people, of which 3.5 million are still in need of humanitarian assistance, mainly in the areas not under government control and along both sides of the contact line. The EU, together with its Member States, is the biggest donor of humanitarian and early recovery/development assistance to Ukraine. It has provided over EUR 762.5 million since the beginning of the conflict of which approximately half is for humanitarian aid; Commission departments alone have provided over EUR 141.8 million. In 2019, the Commission allocated EUR 23 million to 11 partners working on both sides of the line of contact in six sectors of intervention: health, shelter, water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH), education, basic needs and protection.

3.5.1.4. Crisis response and preparedness

In 2019, IcSP involvement in the crisis in Ukraine continued including support to the OSCE special monitoring mission (SMM). New interventions focused on the Azov Sea region following the naval confrontation in the Kerch strait in late 2018 and the illegal construction of the Kerch bridge. The support included providing psychosocial assistance to conflict affected civilians, de-mining action, as well as support to greater resilience in the region that is under severe pressure both from the proximity of the front line and from the economic isolation the Kerch bridge and the naval confrontations initiated.

Support under the IcSP is provided to help to counter disinformation, with a particular focus on the Azov Sea region. Funding under the IcSP has also continued to promote the protection of civilians from the worst elements of war through engagement with Ukrainian armed forces.

The IcSP continues to be a major supporter of confidence-building and conflict-prevention actions in the south Caucasus. The confidence building early response mechanism (Coberm) has been a particularly successful initiative, and in Georgia it has developed into an EU brand standing for neutrality, transparency and quality. Similarly, the other protracted conflict in the region in which the IcSP is engaged is Nagorno-Karabakh where the 'European partnership for the peaceful settlement of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh' programme is supporting media initiatives, conflict-affected groups and facilitation of a negotiated peaceful settlement.

3.5.1.5. Working towards the SDGs

Principally guided by the revised ENP and the priorities established at the Eastern partnership summit in Riga in 2015, the EU's relations with its eastern neighbours are well aligned with and contribute to the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030. The four main priority areas of the Eastern partnership, which are pursued both at bilateral and regional level through a combination of policy dialogue, technical assistance and financial assistance, are: stronger economy (economic development and market opportunities), which broadly covers SDGs 8, 9, and 12; stronger governance (strengthening institutions and good governance), which covers SDG 16; stronger connectivity (connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate change), which covers SDGs 6, 7 and 13; and stronger society (mobility and people-to-people contacts), which covers SDGs 3, 4, 5 and 10.

3.5.2. European Neighbourhood South

3.5.2.1. Introduction (ENI priorities and policy developments)

The 14th EU-Morocco Association Council in June, gave new impetus to EU-Morocco relations.

In the framework of their privileged partnership, EU and Tunisia continued implementing the strategic priorities for 2018-2020, with the Youth Partnership remaining high on the agenda. The EU and Tunisia also continued negotiations for the conclusion of a deep and comprehensive free trade area (DCFTA) and on visa facilitation and the readmission agreements up to May 2019. Since then the negotiations have been suspended due to elections and pending the formation of a new Tunisian government. The EU monitored Tunisian general and presidential elections through the deployment of an election observation mission (EOM).

The 2018-20 single support framework was the main channel for the EU financial and technical cooperation with Algeria and, in line with the EU-Algeria partnership priorities, included actions in areas such as research and innovation and promotion of jobs for youth.

The EU and Egypt continued political engagement and enhanced cooperation under partnership priorities, with a focus on the socio-economic sector. Migration and energy cooperation has been deepened through thematic dialogues.

The EU and Jordan strengthened their relations along the lines set out in the EU-Jordan partnership priorities, including supporting economic reforms, such as organising a large conference with international financial institutions in June and by adopting a decision on a third macro financial assistance programme, as well as youth empowerment and public engagement, and continuing work on integrated border management.

The EU and Lebanon continued to deepen the partnership under the partnership priorities framework, with a focus on delivering on reforms following the massive public protests. The EU supported democratic participation (including electoral reform to follow-up on the EU election observation mission 2018 recommendations), the promotion of local economy development and the security sector (in complementarity with actions from other EU instruments such as the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace) by promoting community policing.

The EU remains committed to a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine⁹². It continued supporting the peace process and investing in the capacity building of the Palestinian Authority, guided by its commitment to a viable and democratic Palestinian State, living side by side with Israel in peace and security. The EU also continued working to improve the living conditions in the Gaza Strip and supporting Palestine refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

In 2019, the EU continued to support the population of Syria, as well as refugees and the communities that host them in neighbouring countries, with humanitarian, development, economic and stabilisation assistance. On 12-14 March, the EU and the UN co-chaired the third Brussels Conference on 'Supporting the future of Syria and the region', which brought together 57 countries and more than 20 international organisations and UN agencies. The conference succeeded in mobilising aid to Syrians inside the country and in the neighbouring countries, including for hosting communities, through pledges totalling EUR 6.2 billion for 2019, and multi-year pledges of close to EUR 2.1 billion for 2020 and beyond.

Through diplomatic action and bilateral support, the EU continued to support Libya in its political transition towards a stable, secure and prosperous country. The EU remains a strong supporter of the UN led mediation efforts and, since the conflict erupted again in Tripoli in April 2019, it has intensified its efforts to convince the Libyan, regional and international stakeholders that the only solution to the crisis is a sustainable ceasefire, respect for the arms embargo and a return to the political process. The EU is the biggest donor of humanitarian aid to Libya and provides assistance to

⁹²This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

Libyans in various areas. The EU is also engaged in providing focussed support to Libya through its common security and defence policy (CSDP) missions and operations, namely Med Operation Sophia (formally known as European Union Naval Force Mediterranean (EU NAVFOR Med)), and EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya (EUBAM Libya).

The implementation of the European Investment plan (EIP) continued successfully in 2019, with two new European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD) guarantees signed in November 2019. One of them, FMO Ventures Programme, will be active in the European Neighbourhood South and in Africa. A EUR 40 million guarantee, complemented by further EUR 6.5 million for technical assistance, will help to boost investment in innovative start-ups offering digital solutions in areas ranging from agriculture to education and healthcare. The guarantee will support up to 125 000 new jobs, directly and indirectly. It was signed with Dutch development bank FMO which is already implementing, albeit not yet in all countries, the very first EFSD guarantee for the Nasira risk-sharing facility signed in 2018. Four further EFSD guarantees with four different financial institutions were to be signed in January 2020. Three of those guarantees would cover activities in the European Neighbourhood South. In addition, the EU continued its efforts in improving the investment climate under the third pillar of the EIP, with three main actions ongoing in the European Neighbourhood South.

The institution-building tools (TAIEX and Twinning) actively supported the countries in Neighbourhood South in their bilateral reform processes: In 2019, TAIEX organised 91 events and 42 Twinning projects were ongoing.

3.5.2.2. Implementation

Bilateral cooperation, including budget support, and donor coordination

Algeria

2019 was marked by political developments starting with the popular movement Hirak asking for a complete overhaul of the current political and the election of the new President at the end of the year.

Despite the uncertainty surrounding the events, the 2019 annual action programme (EUR 40 million) was adopted in October 2019. It includes three new programmes (on local governance and administrative decentralisation; youth employment promotion in the tourism sector; and improvement of the Algerian research and higher education system to access to EU funding and exchange programmes) for a total of EUR 35 million, and a EUR 5 million envelope for Algeria's participation in the Erasmus+ programme.

At the end of 2019, the Delegation's portfolio was composed of 29 ongoing projects for a total amount of EUR 229 million. Coordination with donors and Member States' cooperation agencies took place on a regular basis.

Egypt

In 2019 a total amount of EUR 110 million was mobilised for Egypt. Planned actions under the ENI instrument focus on support for promoting economic governance, strengthening the education system in local communities and ending female genital mutilation.

Throughout the year, a high level of engagement was maintained in the priority sectors of energy, water, environment and climate change. In social sectors in particular, the EU remained a major cooperation partner in the education, urban and rural development sectors and the first contributor to the implementation of the national population strategy. The EU played an important role in supporting private sector development, through institutional capacity building of relevant authorities, direct grants to non-governmental actors or blending operations facilitating access to finance for women, start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs, as well as green economy transition for energy efficiency and small-scale renewable energy investments.

Three projects for a total amount of EUR 501 million, including EUR 53 million in grants were approved under the NIP on the Alexandria west wastewater treatment programme, TVET in the field of energy efficiency, and finally the electricity grid reinforcement project. Close cooperation was also ensured in the context of the memorandum of understanding on energy and through the EU's role in supporting the East Med gas platform.

An EU facility for inclusive growth and job creation (EUR 75 million) is in place aiming to foster job creation particularly among youth. In spite of a complex operating environment, EU's commitment to human rights and civil society was upheld, using a mix of policy tools and financial instruments to enhance the capacities of civil society partners in the promotion and protection of rights, improved access to public services, as well as enhanced participation in public policies.

Israel

Being an OECD member country, Israel benefits from technical assistance for public bodies. Two Twinning projects were implemented in 2019 covering the areas of education and communication while a new project on the environment was launched in September.

Managed jointly by the EU delegation in Tel Aviv and the EU representation in Jerusalem the 'People Academy' project funded under the EU peacebuilding initiative programme continued to help increase the understanding of the conflict and the conditions for its resolution among Israeli youth.

Jordan

EU support to Jordan in 2019 continued to be multi-faceted and focused on the reinforcement of democratic institutions, social inclusion, economic growth and integrated border management. The total of new programmes launched in 2019 amounted to EUR 99 million.

The EU remained the lead donor for institution building and public administration reform through Twinning projects, which contributed to enhance capacities for two security agencies. The EU supported the Jordanian House of Representatives to implement an e-voting system and advised the independent election commission, while a specific programme supported the decentralisation reform and administrative capacities levels. A budget support programme accompanied the justice sector reform and a new programme has been launched on integrated border management. The new social protection support programme launched in 2019 supports improvements including the quality of social work, preparation of the de-institutionalisation plan and modernisation of 100 social care centres.

A programme on strengthening financial inclusion, access to microfinance and consumer protection regulations, and licensing of microfinance institutions, was concluded. Under the EU-International Labour Organisation project, decent work opportunities and inclusive economic growth were promoted. The EU also concluded a renewable energy programme which helped deliver a 5 MW solar electricity facility, 10 000 solar water heaters and 500 photovoltaic (PV) rooftop systems in rural areas, 320 solar water pumps for farmers, and rehabilitated five public buildings with energy efficiency applications. One municipality also received a new recycling facility.

The EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis has allocated EUR 141 million to Jordan in 2019 and supports 28 projects. Trust Fund projects continued to pursue a long-term resilience agenda with a transformative effect on public service delivery in key sectors (basic and higher education, livelihoods, health, WASH, protection and social cohesion), directly impacting the lives of Syrian refugees, Palestinian refugees from Syria and vulnerable host communities in Jordan.

Lebanon

Programmes launched in 2019 amounted to EUR 52 million from the bilateral budget allocations. The EU has been working on how to help tackle the economic, social and fiscal crisis. The EU is in contact with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to fund a trade facility in view of increasing the credit lines for import of essential goods. Commission departments are also exploring with the European Investment Bank how to address short-term liquidity issues affecting the real economy, with a focus on SMEs and continues to play an active role in seeking international and other European financial institutions' support to accompany the very much-needed economic reforms in Lebanon.

Achievements for 2019 include the adoption of the integrated border management strategy by Lebanon; establishing the basis for a policy dialogue with the Ministry of Energy and Water to prepare for the implementation of the electricity sector reform plan; and the private sector development programme to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of MSMEs, facilitating their access to finance and markets, and creating jobs.

With regard to governance and rule of law, the EU completed the implementation of an EUR 8 million programme for the automation of 12 pilot courts. Programmes worth EUR 29 million were adopted in the areas of local economy, community policing, electoral reform and democratic participation.

Together with the EU Regional Trust Fund (EUTF) in Response to the Syrian Crisis, a series of initiatives in the water sector to improve access to water services were funded. The EUTF allocated EUR 223.5 million to Lebanon in 2019 corresponding to 38 current projects. In the continuity with previous years, operational sectors covered basic education, livelihoods and resilience, health, social protection, WASH, directly benefitting and improving the capacities of Syrian refugees and vulnerable host communities in Lebanon.

Libya

The security situation remains challenging for the implementation of assistance programmes in Libya. The EU wants to help Libya return to peace and resume its transition towards a stable, secure and prosperous country. The EU supported this objective through its international cooperation and

allocated EUR 97.9 million for the 2014-2020 period under the European Neighbourhood Instrument bilateral assistance to support Libya in the fields of governance/public administration, private sector development, civil society, youth and higher education and service delivery including in the health sector. In 2019, the EU approved new programmes to promote governance and the rule of law (EUR 28 million), as well as public-private dialogue and competitiveness of SMEs (EUR 4 million).

In addition to the bilateral assistance, under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUR 408 million for Libya), the EU provides direct emergency assistance to migrants, refugees and internally displaced people affected by the ongoing conflict and continues to improve the daily life of Libyans in the municipalities. Joint efforts with UNHCR and IOM have already helped to evacuate more than 5 500 persons needing international protection, and return over 50 000 migrants from Libya to their home.

UNSMIL (United Nations Support Mission in Libya) has the official mandate to coordinate international assistance in Libya. The EU actively participated in UNSMIL coordination forums and coordinates with its Member States in the field.

Morocco

Morocco benefited from a bilateral allocation of more than EUR 200 million in 2019. There was good progress in the implementation of the EU cooperation programmes with Morocco, in particular regarding the development of the government's inclusive development agenda (good governance and public administration reform, education, health and social protection). The *Programme d'Appui au Secteur Santé* – phase II 2014-2019 that has supported the expansion of health services in the territory came to a successful conclusion. As a result, a significant reduction in maternal mortality was observed (a 35% reduction since 2012). At the end of 2019, building on this positive dynamic, the EU adopted a new programme to support the health sector (PASS III programme for 2020-2024, EUR 100 million).

In the framework of the EU programme for the extension of social protection in Morocco (2018-2022, EUR 110 million), the EU contributed to the creation of legal mechanisms to integrate auto-entrepreneurs into the universal social protection system that will benefit 4.9 million people. The Moroccan universal protection system now covers 68% of the population.

Support continued to be provided to reforming public administration and improve service delivery for citizens through the Hakama II programme (EUR 40 million). The democratic process was support through work with Parliament and the Human Rights council (EUR 9 million).

The EU Delegation continued to support donor coordination and enhanced policy dialogue with the government, and to this aim, is co-leading thematic networks in the areas of education (with Agence Francaise de Developpement), health (with WHO) and good governance and public finance management (with World Bank).

Palestine⁹³

The political and economic context for external assistance to Palestine continues to be very challenging. 2019 saw a continuing deterioration with regard to Palestinian sovereignty and the viability of the two-state solution.

Despite this, EU's cooperation in Palestine remained steadily geared towards promoting statehood capacities, incentivising and promoting reforms, strengthening resilience in key areas such as Gaza, Area C and East Jerusalem, identifying sustainable solutions to address key critical issues and continued to be fully aligned to the conclusions of the 'Review of modalities of EU engagement on the ground in support of a two-state solution'.

With unpredictable revenues due to the Palestinian Authority's fiscal crisis, the PEGASE (*Mecanisme Palestino-Europeen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique*) programme continued to provide predictable support to ensure the delivery of key public services to the Palestinian population. EUR 14 million has been disbursed following the agreement on public finance management targets. EU's political and financial support to UNRWA was of critical significance in maintaining the agency's operations and in preserving basic services to Palestine refugees. The EU sustained its engagement in calling for other donors to help bridge the financial gap as well as creating synergies to better respond to the growing needs of the Palestine refugee population. In total, the 2019 programmes launched amounted to nearly EUR 300 million.

Syria

The highly volatile political situation continued to substantially affect the implementation of EU assistance to the Syrian population through the European Neighbourhood Instrument. It required high programmatic agility to uphold political parameters and enable robust risk monitoring of projects and mitigation measures.

In 2019, programmes were deployed to strengthen the resilience and protect the rights of the Syrian population and its civil society organisations, promote dialogue and social cohesion. Key achievements include significant progress in implementing urban analysis and the UN-Norwegian Refugee Council joint programme on Housing Land and Property. The joint programme with the UN supporting non-state actors through different sectorial entry points (non-formal education and TVET, health, and livelihoods etc.) has registered progress too, albeit at a pace reflecting the UN's operating constraints in Damascus. EU support to Syrian civil society has remained significant, with activities bearing fruit in terms of nurturing dialogue space, local civic actors and peace dividends.

Further support to UNRWA was also committed, for a total EUR 7 million, to extend the provision of services in the area of basic education, vocational training, health, psychosocial support, and cash assistance for Palestine refugees in Syria.

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Tunisia

Tunisia is one of the major bilateral recipients of EU support in the region with around EUR 300 million per year in grants to support its political and economic transition. The EU also supported the electoral cycle through a grant to the UNDP-managed basket fund, contributing to the consolidation of Tunisian democracy.

In 2019, Tunisia consolidated into law the longstanding results-based budget management reform process that started with the 2014 constitution requirements on budget and oversight formalising an increased public transparency of the reporting on the budgetary process and providing for the autonomy of the Court of Auditors. Through its macro-financial assistance and targeted budget support operations such as the support programme for fiscal reform, the EU has been a strong supporter of this process. Through the '*Programme d'appui à l'écosystème d'innovation*', the EU has supported job creation and innovation with a focus on vulnerable people, women and less developed regions.

The implementation of the code for local authorities, adopted in 2018, continued in 2019. In a country plagued by disparities between and within regions, this paves the way for effective decentralisation to empower regional and local authorities. Through various programmes such as the budget-support operation '*Cap vers la Décentralisation et le Développement intégré des territoires*', the '*Initiative Pilote de Développement Local Intégré*', or the '*Programme d'Appui à la Gouvernance Locale: Ettamkeen Elmahalli*', the EU invested in making this process a success for the benefit of the most vulnerable.

In terms of donor coordination, Tunisia has been a pilot since the July 2018 holding of the first joint high-level mission led by Commissioner Hahn together with eight European and International development finance institutions in the Southern Neighbourhood. Intense follow up work took place in 2019.

Migration

In 2019, the EU continued to play a pivotal role in driving forward policies and programmes aimed at managing migration to the EU. EU contributions to European Neighbourhood South countries for tackling migration challenges and their root causes were crucial.

The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF for Africa) continued to save lives and tackle the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration. Actions focused on protection and support to those in need, the fight against trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants and the return and reintegration of migrants to their countries of origin by promoting development and security. The EUTF for Africa with its three windows further consolidated its achievements by approving 36 new actions and 16 'top-ups' for ongoing actions, which brings the total number of approved actions to 223, for a total of EUR 4.4 billion.

On the Central Mediterranean route, despite the difficult security situation in Libya, the total number of arrivals to Italy and Malta in 2019 decreased significantly by around 40% compared to 2018. The situation and migratory pressure along the route continued to be the centre of attention as conditions for migrants and refugees in Libya remains a cause for great concern, in particular since the conflict in Libya escalated in April 2019. Along the Western Mediterranean route since

February 2019, the total number of irregular arrivals to Spain decreased substantially by around 50% compared to 2018.

Under the North of Africa window of the EUTF for Africa, the pace of implementation of actions ensuring stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in North African countries continued with new programmes totalling EUR 807 million approved since the creation of the Trust Fund.

Through the adoption of a new EUR 100 million budget support package, the EU stepped up its efforts to fight the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking across the Western Mediterranean route by reinforcing Morocco's border management capabilities.

Libya remained a key priority for the Commission, where the number of migrants was estimated at around 635 000 and at least 355 000 internally displaced persons across the country. The EU stepped up its cooperation with international partners, including in the framework of the African Union–European Union–United Nations Taskforce, to accelerate protection actions in Libya to provide life-saving assistance to those in need, enhance the resilience of host communities in Libyan municipalities, support border management, and fight the vicious economy of smugglers and traffickers.

Regional cooperation

In 2019, the EU continued to promote regional cooperation in the Southern neighbourhood through political and sector policy dialogue, in partnership with regional organisations such as the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the League of Arab States, the Anna Lindh Foundation and the Council of Europe, as well as through financial support, notably regional programmes in the fields of economic development and job creation, security, connectivity, and youth and culture. In 2019, the EU also held the first-ever summit with the League of Arab States, as a clear sign of the need for further engagement with the region.

An UfM Ministerial on employment was held in April 2019, giving a new impetus on employment policies in the Euro-Mediterranean region and the need to measure their impact. The first UfM Business Forum took place in Egypt to integrate the views of the private sector on trade and investment issues. The UfM energy platforms continued to support dialogue among southern neighbourhood partners and with EU Member States on key issues such as regulatory convergence and market interconnection. UfM ministers of foreign affairs gathered in October 2019 for the Regional Forum to reaffirm their commitment to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and to set regional priorities for the coming year. This also provided the occasion to present ground-breaking findings of the scientific report on climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean area.

A key highlight was the 'EU MED means Business' conference in May, which focused on private sector development, in particular on young entrepreneurs, bringing together 150 young entrepreneurs to discuss barriers to growth and vote on recommendations to shape sector policies and future support.

The 2019 regional programmes, complementing bilateral actions, addressed major common priorities, such as the nexus of trade and investment policies with job creation, judicial and police cooperation jointly with European agencies, energy and transport connectivity, and support to youth

and culture. The continuing approach focuses on stimulating economic reforms, innovation and inclusive growth as well as democratisation efforts undertaken by civil society. In this context, a new regional programme was launched with the European Endowment for Democracy.

Engagement with civil society was reinforced, in view of the shrinking space for CSOs across the region, as well as region-wide actions on countering violence against women. The EU continued to support the Anna Lindh Foundation to reach out to young people in the South and also increasingly in Europe through the Young Med-Voices initiative. The Civil Society Forum for the Neighbourhood South is a credible and inclusive dialogue platform between civil society, EU institutions and regional entities to debate on the regional policy agenda.

The importance of blending operations through the Neighbourhood investment platform (NIP) as a powerful instrument to leverage significant additional financial resources was reaffirmed. At the regional level, blending was used in 2019 to accelerate the green economy transition of Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia, and enhance the competitiveness of the countries' private sector through high-performing eco-friendly technologies through the 'Green Economy Financing Facility'. This facility covers both climate mitigation and climate adaptation investments.

The Erasmus+ programme provides for academic mobility, including traineeships for students, and capacity-building projects, in the field of higher education in the Southern Mediterranean, including regional cooperation projects. The Southern Mediterranean enjoys the biggest international cooperation budget allocation under the programme, resulting in 2019 in over 28 000 mobilities of higher education students and staff from the Southern Mediterranean to Europe (and over 15 000 from Europe to the Southern Mediterranean) and 34 capacity-building projects allocated. Israel, Morocco and Tunisia were the countries with the largest number of mobilities towards Europe, while Tunisia, Palestine, Egypt and Jordan had the biggest participation in capacity-building projects. In addition, 530 scholarships for studying Erasmus Mundus joint master's degrees in Europe were given in 2019, with Egyptian and Syrian students receiving the largest number of scholarships in the region.

Erasmus+ also supports the field of informal education, notably through youth exchanges. About 2 000 young people from the Southern Mediterranean participated in such exchanges in 2019. In addition, thanks to a Tunisia window, six new capacity-building in the field of youth projects, also involving a number of organisations in other countries in the region, were allocated to Youth NGOs in 2019, dealing with topics such as tackling early school leaving, clandestine immigration and entrepreneurship.

3.5.2.3. Humanitarian aid and civil protection - responding to the emergency needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters

Libya

The situation in Libya continues to deteriorate and is turning into a huge protection crisis. Since April 2019, the combat in and around Tripoli has also limited access to primary healthcare, clean water and sanitation, and other basic services. More than 820 000 people are in need of humanitarian assistance. There are frequent medicine shortages. 20% of health facilities are closed due to destruction, damage or occupation. Crime against international humanitarian law and human

trafficking are rampant, with reports of abduction, abuse, and smuggling. Combat has a severe impact on aid delivery and access by aid organisations is irregular and difficult. The most vulnerable displaced people also need food, shelter, basic hygiene and other essential items.

In 2019, the Commission deployed operations, worth EUR 8 million, helping vulnerable IDPs, returnees and host populations, in conflict-affected areas, including vulnerable migrants and refugees. This supported essential healthcare for victims of the conflict including emergency war surgery, trauma kits, physical rehabilitation, prosthesis and psychosocial support, provision of essential medicines and care of gender-based violence survivors. The support contributes to the restoration of primary healthcare services in conflict-affected areas. The services were provided indiscriminately to all vulnerable people, including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Commission departments provided food assistance and livelihood support to vulnerable IDPs, returnees, and refugees. Where preconditions exist, the most vulnerable people received cash-based assistance. It also supported the restoration of essential education in conflict-stricken Benghazi and Sirte. This enabled thousands of children to access basic education and to receive psychosocial support.

Egypt

Egypt remains a country of destination and transit for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants with people arriving from the Middle East and East Africa. 250 000 registered refugees are stranded in the most overcrowded and poorest neighbourhoods of large cities such as Cairo and Alexandria, where hosting communities suffer from similar vulnerabilities. Syrians account for over 50% with the remainder originating mainly from East Africa, Iraq and Yemen.

In 2019, Commission departments deployed operations, worth EUR 5 million, offering humanitarian protection, emergency health services, in particular maternal and reproductive healthcare, and providing cash for access to basic expenditures. With 38% of all refugees being children, and a sharp increase of unaccompanied and separated children being observed, Education in Emergencies was also provided.

Saharawi Crisis

After four decades of unresolved political conflict with humanitarian consequences, tens of thousands of Sahrawi refugees are stranded in a forgotten and protracted crisis. They live in five camps in the desert of southwest Algeria with little access to outside resources, making humanitarian aid essential to their survival.

In 2019, Commission departments deployed operations worth EUR 9 million supplying food to tackle the rising malnutrition among Sahrawi refugee children and women and safe drinking water. Essential medicines covering 80% of the health needs of the population in the camps were also supplied and specific support for people with disabilities. In addition, education in emergencies, mitigating the poor state of the education infrastructures and sanitary facilities in schools was provided.

3.5.2.4. Crisis response and preparedness

With EUR 35.6 million allocated in 2019 under the IcSP, Syria continues to constitute a significant part of the IcSP portfolio. In 2019, four new IcSP exceptional assistance measures were adopted for Syria. This includes the continuation of the Syria peace process support initiative, co-funded by Germany, in support of the Geneva peace process on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2254. The IcSP was also able to increase its engagement in the areas liberated from Da'esh by the global coalition in the north-east of Syria. This include demining activities as well as support to the delivery of basic services to the population, notably water. Finally, two actions address the important issue of accountability. One continues the work with the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) to address the issue of missing persons, while the other supports the 'international, impartial and independent mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes under international law committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011' (IIIM).

In Lebanon, work on the CBSD action to support and consolidate the presence of the Lebanese state south of Litani River continued during 2019. The intervention will cover infrastructure works (headquarters) to allow for the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces' 'Model Regiment' in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) area of operations, in line with UNSCR 1701. The IcSP also supports stability in the Aarsal region on the border with Syria, through demining actions.

In Jordan, the IcSP supports border management capabilities on the Jordan-Iraq border. These actions are of particular relevance following the withdrawal of Da'esh. Given the economic importance of the border for the region, the improved operation of the border will be an important element in stabilisation efforts.

The IcSP also remains active in Libya where efforts to support local dialogue and mediation continues. In 2019 additional support was provided to the UN-led peace process as well as to stabilisation efforts and capacity building in the field of security.

Finally, in Palestine⁹⁴ the IcSP has been mobilised to avert further crisis. This has been pursued through support through UNRWA to ensure service delivery to local communities; through support for the reintegration of young Palestinians affected by violence, arrest and detention; and through strategic and political dialogue amongst Palestinian communities in the West Bank and Gaza.

3.5.2.5 Working towards the SDGs

In 2019, by implementing the revised ENP, the EU also contributed to the pursuit of several SDGs in the European Neighbourhood South. Its primary focus is on good governance, the rule of law and human rights (SDG 16) to help consolidate democracy in the region. Support for decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) and industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9) has featured prominently in EU cooperation in several countries. Support for affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) and climate action (SDG 13) is also provided both bilaterally and at regional level. In almost all countries in the region, the EU supports basic needs and inclusive

⁹⁴This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of Member States on this issue.

human development (health - SDG 3, gender equality - SDG 5 and education - SDG 4), in particular for the most vulnerable, for migrants and for refugees.

3.6. Overseas Countries and Territories OCTs

3.6.1. Introduction (Policy Developments)

The Overseas Association Decision (OAD)⁹⁵ establishes the legal framework for relations among the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)⁹⁶, the Member States to which they are linked and the EU. As stated in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the purpose of the association is to promote the economic and social development of the OCTs, to establish close economic relations between them and the EU as a whole, and to promote EU values in the wider world.

In this context, the EU provides financial support to the OCTs for 2014-2020, through the EDF, with EUR 364.5 million allocated under the 11th EDF–OCT, and through the Greenland Instrument with 217.8 million euro from the EU budget⁹⁷.

The 11th EDF–OCT resources available to the OCTs are (Annex 2 of the OAD): EUR 229.5 million for territorial allocations to 16 OCTs, in accordance with the criteria established in the Decision; EUR 100 million for regional cooperation and integration; EUR 21.5 million in Envelope B to finance humanitarian and emergency assistance; EUR 5 million to finance interest subsidies and technical assistance through the OCT Investment Facility managed by the EIB; and EUR 8.5 million for studies and technical assistance.

Regional programmes seek to foster cooperation among OCTs in the same region that share similar challenges and priorities. Partnerships with other funding sources, including other EU financial instruments, are encouraged through cooperation with the neighbouring ACP and/or third countries as well as the EU's outermost regions.

In addition to territorial and regional programmes, an allocation for the 'Thematic programme' – an 'all-OCTs' programme – fosters inter-OCT cooperation.

⁹⁵<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013D0755>.

⁹⁶Until 31 January 2020, the EU OCTs depended constitutionally on four of the EU Member States: Denmark, France, United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The 25 EU OCTs were: Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, Bonaire, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Falkland Islands, French Polynesia, French Southern and Antarctic Territories, Greenland, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Pitcairn Islands, Saba, Saint Helena and Dependencies, Saint Martin, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, Saint Barthélemy, St Eustatius, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands and Wallis and Futuna.

After the UK withdrawal on 31 January 2020, 13 EU OCTs are remaining : Greenland (DK), French Polynesia (FR), French Southern and Antarctic Territories (FR), New Caledonia and Dependencies (FR), Saint Barthelemy (FR), St. Pierre and Miquelon (FR), Wallis and Futuna Islands (FR), Aruba (NL), Bonaire (NL), Curaçao (NL), Saba (NL), Sint Eustatius (NL), Sint Maarten (NL).

⁹⁷ The European Council's decision on relations between the EU on the one hand and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014D0137&from=EN>) allocates EUR 217.8 million for the period 2014–2020 to encourage cooperation between the Union and Greenland in an area of mutual interest.

3.6.2. Implementation

Institutional dialogue

Institutional political and policy dialogues were conducted regularly throughout the year according to the processes in the EU-OCTs Overseas Association Decision. The main political event, the 17th EU-OCT Forum, took place in March 2019 in French Polynesia, with high-level representatives from the OCTs and Member-States and chaired by Commissioner Mimica. During 2019, three tripartite consultation meetings were held, chaired by the European Commission, with participation from OCTs and relevant EU Member States. One partnership working party took place on environment, climate change and energy: important areas of common interest.

Bilateral cooperation

With the adoption of the 11th EDF programming documents for Aruba and Bonaire in 2019, 14 out of 16 OCTs with an EDF allocation have finalised their programming.

OCTs in the Caribbean region

The 11th EDF programming document for Bonaire was adopted in early 2019 aiming to make Bonaire's youth healthier, more employable and with improved living standards. Also, the programming document for Aruba was adopted, aiming to increase technical skills for innovative sustainable development. The non-allocated Envelope B under the 11th EDF was mobilised in 2019 (EUR 2 million) for post-emergency assistance for the British Virgin Islands.

OCTs in the Pacific region

New Caledonia undertook efforts in the employment sector through widening access to training programmes to increase employment rates. On tourism, French Polynesia made progress on its sectoral policy, pursuing the implementation of its sustainable tourism strategy. Pitcairn also continued the roll out of its strategic development plan by promoting tourism. On digital development, Wallis and Futuna continued deployment of services linked to the Tui-Samoa broadband cable⁹⁸.

Other OCTs

Both the Falkland Islands and Saint Helena benefited from connectivity programmes under the 11th EDF. Regarding tourism, the budget support programme in Saint-Pierre et Miquelon has been completed in 2019, resulting in visible progress in tourism and maritime transport sectors.

Greenland

Greenland benefited from a contribution of EUR 29.1 million from the 2019 EU budget focusing on education. This programme is supporting the reform of the elementary school system, improving the management skills of school directors, upgrading the skills of existing teachers and updating the country's education strategy for 2019–2022.

⁹⁸The Tui-Samoa submarine cable runs between Apia, Samoa and Suva, Fiji, with landing stations in Savai'i, Savusavu and Wallis and Futuna.

Regional and all-OCTs cooperation

The three regional programmes started their implementation and are developing well. The Pacific (EUR 36 million) is protecting biodiversity and renewable natural resources, the Caribbean regional programme (EUR 40 million) is focusing on resilience, sustainable energy and marine biodiversity, and the Indian Ocean regional programme (EUR 4 million) aims to improve the surveillance of terrestrial and marine ecosystems in the French Southern and Antarctic Lands, restoring ecosystems and reinforcing prevention.

The 11th EDF all-OCTs thematic programming document was adopted in March 2019. This programme will focus on the sustainable use of natural resources, with sustainable energy and climate change defined as sub-components.

Finally, through an operating grant in 2019, the Commission supported the Overseas Countries and Territories Association to fulfil its mandate of representing OCT partners and facilitating the dialogue between the EU and its OCTs partners.

Lessons learnt

Budget support is generally the preferred implementation modality for OCTs' territorial allocations (14 partners out of 17, including Greenland). Budget support offers an efficient way of addressing crosscutting, long-term and structural challenges, to focus on the results of national policies and maintain a constructive policy dialogue. Practice confirms that this modality provides satisfactory results in OCTs through a high level of appropriation from local authorities.

4. Managing aid

4.1. Monitoring systems

4.1.1. New reporting system on SDGs

At the end of 2018, the working party on development finance statistics of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC WP-STAT), which oversees ODA reporting among DAC members, decided to allow for the reporting of SDGs in ODA statistics.

The decision made before the end of 2018 to adjust reporting rules allowed reporters to provide data for the complete year in 2019. However, there was no time to create any rules to support consistency of reporting, or to support the input of statistics by operational teams. The data quality of the SDG field therefore remains a work in progress.

Targeted SDGs are recorded at commitment and payment level as per ODA taxonomy. The transversal nature of SDGs is taken into account, as one single commitment can be connected to several SDGs (up to 10). Therefore, unlike vertical sectoral statistical breakdowns, such as the DAC purpose codes, the aggregate total is likely to be larger than the figure for total ODA as several SDGs can be targeted simultaneously.

For the first time, a full data set is available for 2019 commitments (except administrative costs), while only a partial data set is available for 2019 payments. This is explained by the fact that many of these payments were made on earlier commitments for which no SDG field had been identified. As a result, this year's reporting is done exclusively on commitments.

Despite all these limitations, the initial results look promising (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Synthesis of the volume of commitments for SDGs in 2019

(Budget Heading IV & EDF - EUR)



In this first year, the vast majority of commitments has been flagged with only one SDG. Only about 9% of them (in volume and in numbers) have been identified as being related to more than one SDG and only 1% of commitments have been related to more than five SDGs.

A preliminary analysis has shown that the SDG used most in a multiple combination is SDG 1 (No poverty)⁹⁹. This is consistent with the primary objective of EU development cooperation as laid down in the EU Treaty and the European consensus on development, including the multi-dimensional nature of poverty.

Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the highest amounts go to SDG 1 (EUR 5.8 billion), but it is also interesting to note that the other top five SDGs are SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth – EUR 5.14 billion), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions – EUR 4.35 billion), SDG 5 (Gender equality – EUR 3.31 billion) and SDG 3 (Good health and wellbeing – EUR 3.22 billion). Consistent with the nature of the SDGs, which balance the three dimensions of sustainable development, this reporting also shows a significant effort on environmental concerns.

Statistics also allow examination of the geographic breakdown of specific SDGs. The two examples below show the geographical focus of SDG 4 (Quality education), mostly in Asia and global / regional programmes, and the geographical focus of SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production), which is in Europe and to a lesser extent Africa.

Figure 2. Geographical focus of SDG 4 (Quality education)

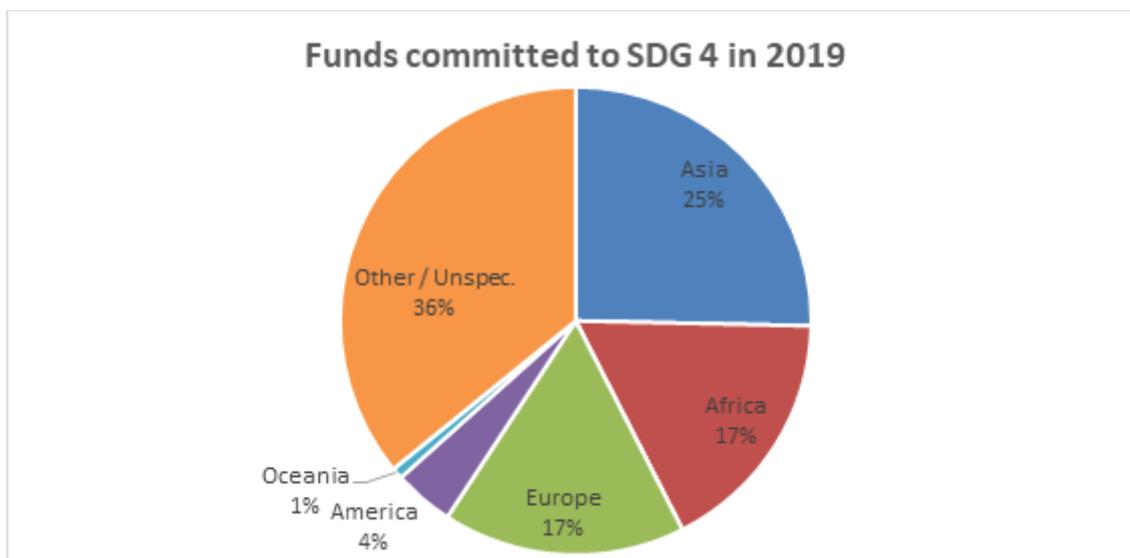
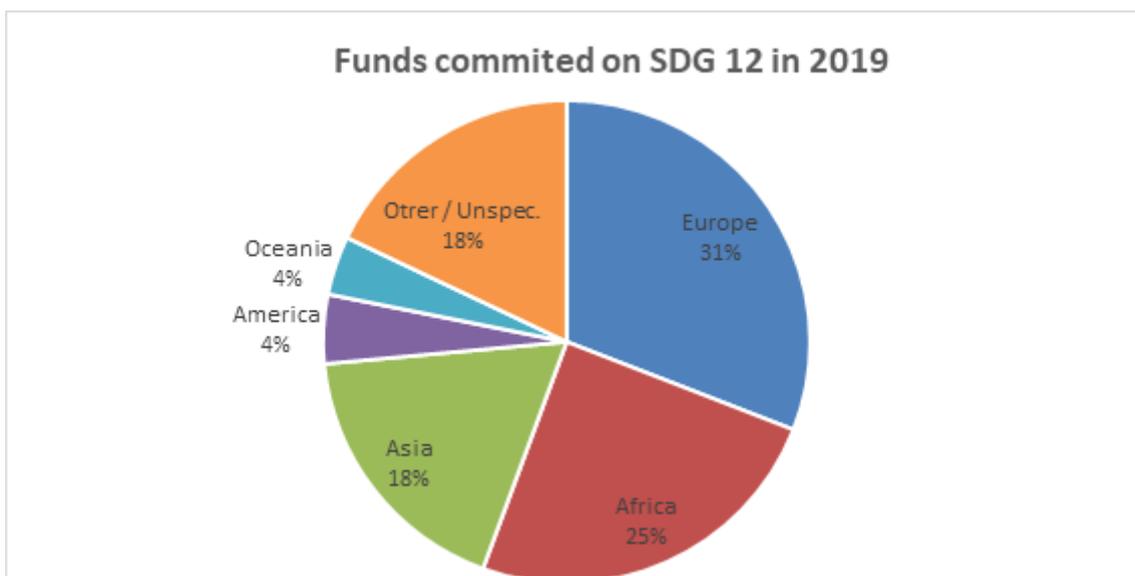


Figure 3. Geographical focus of SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production)

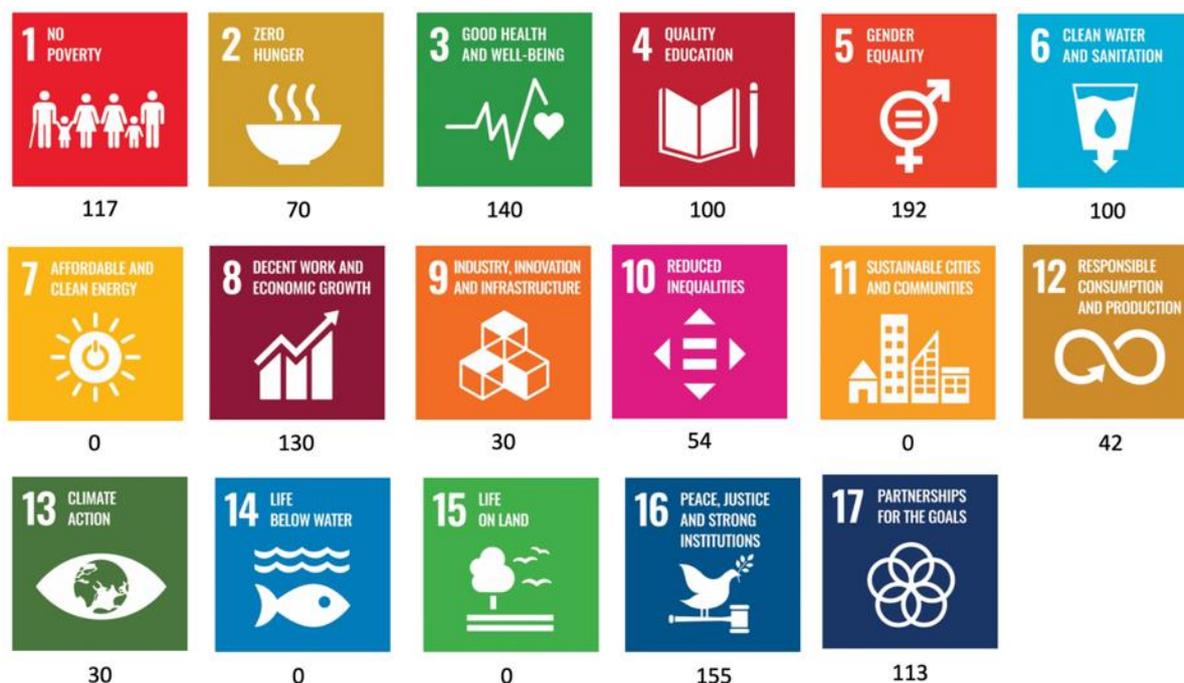
⁹⁹A more detailed analysis of **interlinkages** of SDGs remains to be done, to enhance consistency in the reporting of projects that contribute to several SDGs, whether they are the principal or otherwise a significant objective of the action.



Another way to look at the data is the focus of the Commission interventions on one or several SDGs in a given country.

As an example, the table below shows the SDGs targeted by the European Commission in Afghanistan in 2019 (commitments).

**Figure 4. Example of commitments to SDG by country
(Afghanistan 2019 – million EUR)**



Once the statistical needs are better known, and with at least two years of data available where consistency should be enhanced, the SDG reporting will be further developed and mainstreamed into the financial annexes of the Annual Report.

4.1.2. Evaluation: Review of the work programme

Commission evaluation services are responsible for the steering, coordination, monitoring and reporting of the evaluation function. They produce timely, high-quality evaluation results to ensure evidence for informed decision-making and accountability. They carry out strategic evaluations, which can be geographic, thematic, sectoral or focused on specific financing instruments or budget support. They also monitor and support the evaluations carried out by other Commission departments that implement EU projects and programmes.

In 2019, the Commission published ten strategic evaluations in the field of EU external action, comprising:

- three thematic evaluations on the rule of law in enlargement and Neighbourhood countries, the sector approach under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance II (IPA II); and Twinning;
- three regional evaluations on cooperation with Central Africa, West Africa and Latin America;
- two country-level evaluations on EU cooperation with Afghanistan and ex-post of EU assistance to Croatia; and
- two budget support evaluations on cooperation with Cambodia and El Salvador.

In December 2019, strategic evaluations were in progress under the following areas:

- 1) Ten thematic/instrument evaluations on:
 - a) conflict prevention and peacebuilding;
 - b) CSOs and local authorities (separately for sub-Saharan Africa, Asia–Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean countries);
 - c) local authorities for enlargement and neighbourhood regions;
 - d) vocational education and training for sustainable and inclusive growth;
 - e) state-building contracts;
 - f) the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa;
 - g) EU information centres in Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries;
 - h) migration;
 - i) gender equality and women and girls' empowerment; and
 - j) cross border cooperation between IPA II beneficiaries.

- 2) Six country-level evaluations on:
 - a) Armenia;
 - b) Central African Republic;
 - c) Mali (evaluation cancelled in December 2019 due to contractual problems);
 - d) Mauritania;
 - e) Myanmar; and
 - f) Serbia.
- 3) Two budget support evaluations, in:
 - a) Kyrgyzstan;
 - b) Rwanda.

Summary of strategic evaluations

Thematic evaluations

Humanitarian Aid Evaluations

Combined evaluation of the European Union's humanitarian interventions in Central Africa, and of humanitarian coordination (2014-2018).

The scope of this evaluation was the European Union's humanitarian interventions in Central Africa from 2014 to 2018 and its humanitarian coordination interventions during that period.

From 2014 to 2018, the Central Africa region suffered multiple humanitarian crises, notably the Central African Republic's conflict and protection crisis, Cameroon's complex and multi-layered crisis, and Chad's food, nutrition and refugee crisis, together leaving 7-10 million people in need of assistance. In response, the EU provided humanitarian funding worth EUR 499.9 million to Central Africa. Commission departments developed and implemented strategies to address both acute and protracted needs, and 317 actions were carried out. Meanwhile, EUR 277.8 million of funding went to support humanitarian coordination, predominantly to support country-level coordination and global clusters; considered as a strong and consistent asset.

Overall, the evaluation found that the EU made significant contributions to addressing acute needs and strengthening humanitarian responses in Central Africa. Commission departments' country-based donor activities and the reliable delivery of intended results through partners and support to UN OCHA's coordination function, particularly in filling coordination gaps, were key strengths. In addition, EU funding to Central Africa and humanitarian coordination was strong and consistent.

The evaluation also highlighted several challenges, particularly related to addressing chronic needs in Central Africa and coordination gaps that persist and offered recommendations to support future EU humanitarian assistance in Central Africa and coordination.

Combined evaluation of the European Union's humanitarian interventions in Afghanistan, and of the partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council (2014-2018).

The scope of this evaluation was the European Union's humanitarian interventions in Afghanistan from 2014 to 2018 and it also assessed the partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council during that period.

The country evaluation found Commission departments to be a key player in the Afghanistan aid context and that it is supporting the synergy between development and humanitarian actions. Commission actions were found to be helping target communities to partly cope with the immediate after-effects of conflict and disasters. Its Emergency Response Mechanism and cash assistance were found to deliver need-based response to people displaced internally due to the conflict. Its health and trauma-related actions and support to provincial hospitals for communicable disease surveillance were found to meet critical needs.

The partnership evaluation found that a high-quality partnership existed. Strong evidence of regular, comprehensive and transparent exchange of information at all levels existed. The key factor influencing perceptions of quality is trust between partners. This was found to be strong at policy level and very strong at country level. There were some weaknesses too: some processes were inefficient, there were some lapses in internal communications, and audit requirements came at considerable cost to both parties.

Evaluation of Sector Approach under IPA II

For all IPA II beneficiaries the scope of this evaluation embraces the effects of the adoption of a sector approach, as a key feature of IPA II compared to IPA I, at different levels, including programming and implementation. The evaluation covers all IPA II sectors but puts a special focus on democracy, governance, rule of law and fundamental rights. It provides key success factors of the sector approaches and recommendations on political commitment and capacities of the beneficiaries, on the involvement of the citizens in the supported policy processes, on sector policy development (sector tools and performance), and on IPA aid modalities.

Most stakeholders recognised the great potential of sector approaches for improving sector policies and implementing reforms in the IPA beneficiaries. On the other hand, only sector budget support and, to a lesser extent, multi-annual programmes helped realise this improvement and reform, thanks to their strategic dialogue framework and their financial and capacity development incentives. Even in such cases, however, the results were inchoate and not consolidated because they depended upon the political commitment of the beneficiaries and the clarity of their political perspectives vis-à-vis the EU.

Evaluation of EU Support for Rule of Law in European Neighbourhood and Enlargement region (2010-2017)

Based on the description of rule of law provided in the Commission's Communication entitled 'A new EU framework to strengthen the rule of law'¹⁰⁰ and other key policy documents, the evaluation

¹⁰⁰ COM(2014)158 final of 11 March 2014.

focused on assistance provided to core state institutions, including the executive, the legislative, the judiciary, and relevant public institutions and civil society organisations. The evaluation assessed the performance of EU interventions to support rule of law in ENI countries and IPA beneficiaries under implementation and/or decided upon during the period 2010-2017. The evaluation found that rule of law has taken an increasingly central role in EU policies and strategies, which are of high relevance and quality, and now occupies a central place in EU external support in the enlargement/neighbourhood regions. The interventions have been generally well designed and many instances of progress have been identified. However, rule of law as a whole has proven to be a difficult area in which the EU has not managed to fully meet its own expectations.

Evaluation of the Twinning instrument (2010-2017)

The evaluation covers both, Twinning and Twinning light projects financed in the enlargement region (and Croatia) and the European Neighbourhood. Rule of law, public administration reform, and economic governance and competitiveness are among the areas that have received greater attention. The evaluation provides key success factors of Twinning projects and recommendations on the regulatory framework and institutional set-up; added value, complementarity and coherence; project selection and design; and implementation.

The evaluation has highlighted the solid performance of Twinning to exchange public sector expertise and build the capacities of administrations. The evaluation also revealed a number of shortcomings that affected the performance of Twinning at various stages of the project cycle, and that prevented the dissemination of Twinning achievements. The 2017 Twinning Manual¹⁰¹ addresses many of the shortcomings identified in this evaluation.

Regional evaluations

Evaluation of EU cooperation with the West Africa region (2008–2016)

This study covers all focal sectors of regional cooperation with 15 Member States, namely: regional peace, security and stability; regional economic integration; transport; energy; food and nutrition security; agriculture and resilience; and natural resource management.

EU regional support paved the way for developing common methodologies for use by all West African countries in fundamental areas such as PFM or the prevention of food and nutrition crises. EU support facilitated the drafting and adoption of policies that were essential for strengthening regional integration. However, the sustainability and impacts of EU-funded regional cooperation actions are rather low. The main factors accounting for these limited performances are superficial ownership by the various West African stakeholders, the inability of regional organisations to discharge the duties entrusted to them by their Member States and shortcomings in the formulation of the regional programmes supported by the EU.

Among others, one important recommendation is to support a revival of regional cooperation based on a common vision of regional integration.

¹⁰¹ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/twinning_manual_2017_-_update_2018.pdf.

Evaluation of EU-Central Africa cooperation (2008-2016)

The evaluation covers the EU regional development cooperation with Central Africa during the period 2008-2016. It provides lessons learnt and recommendations for the overall regional strategy. In doing so, it assesses the relevance of regional cooperation, as well as the areas of peace and security, commercial integration and competitiveness, interconnectivity and regional infrastructures, preservation of natural resources and biodiversity, and regional governance. The evaluation stresses the fact that the EU policy agenda has been too ambitious for the actual capacity of local actors, with goals often detached from the reality of the region, therefore resulting in suboptimal outcomes (even if relevant for some areas) and very limited impact on the daily life of people in the region.

Evaluation of EU cooperation with Latin America (2009–2017)

The evaluation covers the EU regional development cooperation with Latin America during the period 2009-2017. It provides lessons learnt and recommendations for the overall regional strategy and in five focal areas: security-development nexus, environment and climate change, social equity, inclusive growth, and higher education. Amongst the main findings, the evaluation shows that the EU regional cooperation has been highly relevant over the period, applying a demand-driven approach and being flexible. Furthermore, the EU support has proved to have a strong added value, promoting innovative approaches and fostering intra-regional cooperation.

Country evaluations

Evaluation of EU cooperation with Afghanistan (2007–2016)

The evaluation covers EU cooperation with Afghanistan during the period 2007–2016 and assesses its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, coordination and complementarity as well as EU added value, potential negative effects and gender as a cross-cutting issue. The evaluation shows that the gradual streamlining of the EU portfolio towards fewer and larger contracts and the increased proportion of funding in the form of contributions to multi-contributor trust funds (resulting in higher support on-budget) has had multiple benefits. It also highlights the importance of continuing to use a mix of on-budget and off-budget interventions and of taking into account the absorption capacities of the government. A major added value of EU support has been its reliability and continuity, which is widely appreciated by stakeholders and has led to tangible outcomes and impacts. Another instance of EU added value has been the relative independence of its support from geopolitical interests.

Ex-post evaluation of EU assistance to Croatia (2007-2013)

The evaluation focuses on the performance of EU pre-accession assistance, particularly its effectiveness, impact and sustainability as regards the strengthening/development of the capacities for the uptake of Croatia's commitments for its EU membership and for EU post-accession funds management.

Among major findings, the evaluation found that EU support was directly geared to preparing Croatia to meet the *acquis* requirements, but did not sufficiently follow a whole-of-government perspective to prepare Croatia for effectively assuming its future membership obligations. EU pre-

accession support was anchored in a relatively piecemeal strategic framework as far as capacity development was concerned.

Budget support evaluations

Evaluation of EU budget support in Cambodia (2011–2016)

This evaluation provides evidence of the contribution of two budget support operations (the ‘Education sector policy support programme 2011–2013’ and the ‘Education sector reform partnership 2014–2016/17’) to the achievement of the education sector goals of the Cambodian government.

The evaluation concludes that the budget support programmes were effective in influencing the achievement of the reforms targeted in the government’s education policy (Education Strategic Plans) and that these reforms contributed to improving education outcomes. The complexity of pivotal reforms, sector capacity constraints and insufficient scaling resulted in slower progress than initially planned by the Cambodian government, but this progress would have been even slower without the budget support programmes.

Evaluation of EU budget support in El Salvador (2009–2017)

This evaluation covers the five budget support programmes implemented in El Salvador during the period 2009-2017 and assesses to what extent they contributed to the country’s achievements in the areas of social inclusion, private sector development and public finances management.

The evaluation found that the EU budget support programmes responded appropriately to the Salvadoran context and even though the financial resources disbursed to the national treasury were relatively modest compared to the total budget, they remained strategic for the Government of El Salvador. Most of the technical assistance delivered as part of the budget support programmes (for example, studies, training, and capacity building activities etc) was significant, relevant, of quality, and the correlation between actions and useful outputs was found to be strong. Policy dialogue was less relevant than expected. The evaluation concluded that, via budget support, the Salvadoran institutions reinforced their capacities and improved the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies and that, in turn, these improvements had a positive impact on the delivery of services in the sectors supported.

4.1.3. Lessons learned

Some key lessons emerged from the evaluations of EU cooperation published in 2019.

Evaluation of Sector Approach under IPA II

An open political commitment of the beneficiaries at the highest levels towards the reforms with respect to the EU and their own public opinions was the main determinant of the success of the sector approach, especially in the main sectors of democracy and governance, rule of law and fundamental rights. Such commitment helped with the mobilisation of authorities, ensured political guidance of the processes, extended responsibilities to parliaments and fostered civil society engagement.

Capacity was the second determinant of success. Working on medium-term sector strategies, results-based frameworks, monitoring and evaluation systems and medium-term budgeting implies a revolution in the way of operating and, even more so, of the thinking within the beneficiary institutions. They need continuous effective support over a long period, but their absorption capacities are low, and the institutional setup is often volatile.

Evaluation of the Twinning instrument (2010-2017)

The evaluation identified key success factors for the implementation of Twinning and the long-term impact of such projects. Among these, it is worth highlighting the following: (i) a clear-cut demand for up-to-date EU public sector expertise to address well-defined operational needs in the host administration, especially where public administrations have special competences that are not found in the private sector, and/or the legislative environment is evolving or subject to change; (ii) robust policy and reform frameworks already in place in the sector; (iii) a clear positioning of the Twinning project within the public administration reform process; (iv) a strong and continuous political will in the partner country to commit resources, implement activities, adopt outputs and fulfil recommendations; (v) an effective deployment of EU expertise through an early identification and preparation of committed short-term experts; and (vi) pro-active support and advice from the EU Delegation task manager to steer the project, foster linkages and ensure follow up.

Evaluation of EU cooperation with the West Africa region (2008–2016)

Regional integration is a long-lasting process, so is regional cooperation. Short-term results cannot be expected. In addition, failure to give adequate consideration to political, social and economic factors and not to have a clear regional integration vision and model, meant that EU-West Africa regional cooperation yielded only few lasting outcomes. To reach sustainable impacts the approach should be grounded on a dual dynamic: on one hand the Member States and on the other, groups such as the private sector and civil society and should rise above purely national interests.

There was little evidence of the EU's 'natural' added value in terms of support for regional integration. In particular, regional cooperation made very limited use of the European institutions' expertise and experience in formulating, implementing and overseeing regional policies.

Evaluation of EU cooperation with Latin America (2009–2017)

The EU support has appropriately focused on strengthening institutional capacities and response strategies in the region, improving the level of ownership. It has significantly contributed to strengthening joint EU-LA responses to key development challenges, leading to improved policy and institutional frameworks in areas such as social cohesion, environment and climate change, higher education, science and technology, and key governance matters. EU support effectively promoted innovative approaches (South-South and Triangular cooperation) where graduated countries have played a key role.

Nevertheless, the evaluators observed a lack of regional capacity to monitor and evaluate the implementation of sectoral policy support; and a potential for coordination and synergies between regional, sub-regional and national cooperation programmes had not been fully exploited.

Evaluation of EU cooperation with Afghanistan (2007–2015)

Regarding sectoral EU support, the evaluation finds that in the agriculture and rural development and health sectors, institutional capacities and policy frameworks have been improved and this has positively affected service delivery. This, in turn, has contributed to improving people's lives by enhancing agricultural productivity and incomes, reducing maternal and child mortality rates and improving local governance. However, in democratisation and accountability and policing and rule of law sectors, EU-funded interventions have produced mixed results, with improvements associated mainly with capacity development and service delivery projects in the areas of budgeting and public sector management. The impact of interventions that aimed at increasing civic engagement and citizen participation in the democratic process has been limited.

The evaluators also conclude that a general shortcoming at the programme level is that monitoring has been mainly output oriented with less attention paid to tracking and verifying outcomes and impacts.

Evaluation of EU budget support in El Salvador (2009–2017)

Although budget support is usually identified with financial contributions to the national treasury, the value of this tool also lies in its other components, particularly in middle-income, mid-level capacity countries like El Salvador. The inclusion of disbursement indicators whose achievement does not depend on government actions, should be avoided because failure to meet the targets may have a negative effect on all other envisaged actions. Policy dialogue works effectively when it is formalised, structured, regular, strategic and lead by the government. The best way to ensure adequate donor coordination is with government leadership. In settings where institutional capacities are reasonably in place, the sustainability of outputs and outcomes is mainly a matter of funding and of political will (not influenced by budget support). The intervention logic of a budget support intervention will only be complete if it is known how the sectoral outcomes influence the impact indicators and if these indicators are defined correctly.

4.2. Aid delivery modalities

4.2.1. Budget support

Budget support continues to be a pivotal instrument for EU external action. It provides a platform for policy dialogue, it meets development effectiveness principles and it is fully performance-based, with payments conditional on results and progress towards the SDGs.

In 2019, budget support was provided to 91 countries or territories and accounted for almost 40% of EU bilateral ODA. Total new commitments in 2019 amounted to EUR 1.8 billion and payments to EUR 1.7 billion. Sector reform performance contracts remain the most used type of budget support (around 75% on average), followed by State and resilience building contracts (around 15%) and SDG contracts (around 10%).

Sector reform performance contracts are implemented in all sectors covered by the SDGs, of which the largest are education, agriculture and health. State and resilience building contracts are instrumental in stabilising post-conflict, post-disaster and fragile situations. They are implemented in countries like Afghanistan, Central African Republic and Niger. They aim to support countries' vital

state functions and help deliver basic services to populations, thus addressing the causes of fragility, accompanying stabilisation processes and building up resilience. SDG contracts, introduced by the updated budget support guidelines in 2017, are implemented in countries like Ghana and Senegal.

A review of the 164 budget support programmes implemented between 2014 and 2018 and of the 3 240 performance indicators used to that context led to the following conclusions:

- output and outcome indicators account for more than 60% of the total number of indicators, which highlights the unique performance focus of EU budget support;
- 54% of this EU budget support portfolio contributed directly to poverty and inequality reduction (SDGs 1 & 10); and
- 49% of the 164 programmes had a principal or significant contribution to gender equality and women empowerment (SDG5).

In the enlargement and the eastern Neighbourhood regions, budget support has a strong emphasis on public administration and PFM reforms, which contributes to transforming the national legislative and regulatory frameworks, and provide guidance and better quality assurance processes for more streamlined strategic planning, coordination, monitoring and human resources management across administrations. This strengthens the conditions for budget support operations in general and effectively embeds the sector reform performance contracts within the overall process for modernising public services and enhancing service delivery.

In 2019, the evaluation of sector approach under IPA II¹⁰² concluded that there was positive correlation between introduction of budget support and strengthening of the monitoring systems in the sectors covered by the budget support contracts. In the enlargement and the eastern Neighbourhood regions, budget support has significantly contributed to SDG 16, be it about public finance management, public administration reform, the fight against corruption and justice reform.

Case study – EU budget support has brought tangible results for citizens in Albania

Through the observed period, the employment service has been reorganised and modernised both centrally and locally. The adoption of the Employment Promotion Law in 2018, enabled the established of the National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES) with the purpose of promoting, jobs and skills in Albania through its network of 34 vocational schools, ten vocational training centres (VTC) and thirty-five public employment offices (LOs) to improve the quality and effectiveness of active labour market measures.

The results of budget support are measured through its contribution to the success of countries' policies. The first incentive for results lies in the four criteria, which condition the provision of budget support: (i) a relevant and credible public policy; (ii) stability-oriented macro-economic outlook; (iii) progress in public finance management and revenue mobilisation; and (iv) budget transparency and oversight. Results are further incentivised by performance tranches, whose amounts vary according to the achievement of specific targets drawn from countries' policies.

¹⁰²See *Evaluation of Sector approach under IPA II assistance* at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/tenders/monitoring-and-evaluation_en.

The following outcomes¹⁰³ in countries receiving budget support are worth highlighting:

- SDG 1 (no poverty) – the share of people living in poverty has dropped from more than 26% of the population in 2002 to less than 14% in 2017;
- SDG 3 (good health and well-being) – the EU supported Rwanda in achieving universal healthcare through the roll-out of a compulsory health insurance scheme, which now covers more than 90% of its population;
- SDG 4 (quality education) – in Bangladesh, the completion rate for primary education improved to 81% in 2017 from 60% in 2010 and girls now account for more than half of the pupils at schools; in Jordan, the EU joined forces with the authorities to allow more than 30 000 young Syrian refugees to attend schools in 2018;
- SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation) - the number of villages without any access to drinkable water in Burkina Faso has fallen from 360 in 2015 to 100 in 2018;
- SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) – in countries receiving EU budget support, the income share of the bottom 40% of the population has risen by two percentage points between 2002 and 2017 (to reach 17.5% of gross national income in 2017);
- SDG 17 (peace, justice and strong institutions) – countries receiving EU budget support perform on average better than other developing or emerging countries in the control of corruption, according to the World Governance Indicators of the World Bank.

Gradually the improvement of business environment and investment climate has become a priority for EU budget support. In full complementarity with the External Investment plan, scaling up public and private investment is conditional on a conducive policy and regulatory framework. Budget support has been contributing to strengthening policy formulation, medium-term planning and budgeting, public procurement, the regulatory framework and human capital. These are essential to foster a better climate for private investors, to enhance the efficiency of public spending and to secure shared and sustainable returns on investment.

In close coordination with the IMF, budget support includes a strong focus on macroeconomic stability, another key component of the investment climate. In the current global financing landscape, debt sustainability will be a key constraining factor in scaling up investment in many partner countries. Moreover, a well-functioning financial sector in partner countries will also be increasingly important for the efficient allocation of resources.

In line with the European Green Deal, budget support is increasingly called upon to support the mitigation of and adaption to climate change and promoting the transition to greener economies. The dialogue performed with countries' authorities and stakeholders aims to mainstream this global priority in all the policies for which budget support is provided. Budget support also supports the development of innovative financial tools such as green debt instruments, it promotes green public procurement/investment and it contributes to fostering green taxation.

¹⁰³Refer to *Budget Support – Trends & Results 2020* [to be published in September 2020] for more information on EU budget support programmes and results: https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/budget-support-trends-and-results_en.pdf.

Case study – Supporting sustainable and local development in Colombia



A dedicated EU budget support contract in Colombia targeted management of protected areas and forests, green business development and administrative capacities to preserve biodiversity, rooted in local development initiatives. The programme has led to tangible results on the ground and complemented very well other EU operations related to security and peace in the country.

The Commission's activities in the field of public finance, debt management and domestic revenue mobilisation are more specifically highlighted in the chapters on SDG 16 and SDG 17.

4.2.2. Blending

In order to finance the SDGs and respond to an increasingly complex world, development finance needs to rely on a combination of funding sources. To increase the impact of ODA, public and private funds must be leveraged as efficiently as possible. The EU must be ready to adapt and further develop its financial instruments and policy tools for investments outside the EU if it is to deliver on its ambitious commitments to sustainable development.

In this context, the EU through blending uses limited amounts of public grants to mobilise financing from partner financial institutions, like international development banks and the private sector, for projects that will do most to help countries develop. The strategic use of a limited grant element can result in projects with low financial return but a high economic (i.e. societal) return. Blending projects aim to achieve sustainable growth and reduce poverty.

The EU Blending Framework comprises seven regional blending facilities (Africa Investment Platform (AIP), Asia Investment Facility (AIF), Caribbean Investment Facility (CIF), Investment Facility for Central Asia (IFCA), Investment Facility for the Pacific' (IFP), Latin American Investment Facility (LAIF), and Neighbourhood Investment Platform (NIP)) and covers all regions of EU external cooperation. From the creation of the first blending facilities in 2007, almost EUR 7 billion of EU

grants have leveraged around EUR 60 billion of loans by financial institutions and regional development banks for a total investment volume of more than EUR 98 billion.

The amounts approved in 2019 are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. EU contribution approved in 2019
(EUR million)

2019	
NIP	578.34
AIP	374.69
ITF	50.39
LAIF	76.6
Thematic	20
IFCA	43.65
AIF	216.6
CIF	41.31
IFP	18
Total	1 419.58

In addition, in 2017 the European Commission developed the External Investment plan (EIP), a new EU initiative offering an innovative way to attract more investment, in particular from businesses and private investors, to countries in Africa and the EU Neighbourhood. At the core of the EIP, the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD) combines a new guarantee instrument with two regional investment platforms (the Africa Investment Platform (AIP) and the Neighbourhood Investment Platform, NIP). The EFSD, with approved projects reaching EUR 4.65 billion to date, is expected to mobilise over EUR 47 billion of investments in support of MSMEs, as well as the energy, agriculture, transport, cities and digital sectors.

The EU blending allocated for 78 projects in sub-Saharan Africa and for 79 projects in the Neighbourhood is expected to leverage nearly EUR 30 billion in sustainable investment.

Overall, programmes and projects approved by the EFSD by the end of 2019 are expected to mobilise around EUR 47 billion in investment, which exceeds the EU's target of unlocking EUR 44 billion by EUR 3 billion.

In 2019, three EFSD guarantee programmes were signed; one focusing on providing access to finance across Africa for high potential small businesses by piloting capital market solutions with the Italian development finance institution 'Cassa Depositi e Prestiti' (CDP); another with the Dutch development finance institution 'Financierings-Maatschappij voor Ontwikkelingslanden N.V.' (FMO) to guarantee venture capital to start-up companies, in particular led by young entrepreneurs in the digital space; and the third with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), to boost financing in renewable energy resources in the Neighbourhood. The EFSD is implemented through two Regional Investment Platforms, the Africa Investment Platform and the Neighbourhood

Investment Platform, that combine financing from the blending facilities and the new EFSD Guarantee.

4.2.3. EU budget Guarantees

The EU External Investment plan includes a EUR 1.54 billion financial guarantee. Through it the EU shares the risk of investing in countries neighbouring the EU and in Africa, so private investors and development banks will lend to entrepreneurs or finance development projects.

The overall guarantee is divided into smaller, individual guarantees. One or more partner financial institutions, mostly development banks, manage each guarantee. Once they have signed a guarantee agreement with the EU, they can then start to put the guarantee to work.

In 2019 the European Commission and its partner financial institutions signed three such agreements for guarantees worth EUR 120 million:

- FMO Ventures is a EUR 40 million guarantee with the Dutch Development Bank (FMO)¹⁰⁴. It will target start-up companies offering digital solutions in agriculture, energy, education, healthcare and transport, and support up to 125 000 jobs.
- Archipelagos One Platform for Africa (One4A) is a EUR 30 million guarantee with Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP), the Italian development bank, and the African Development Bank (AfDB). It will support access to finance for up to 1 500 high-potential small businesses and generate up to 50 000 jobs.
- Boosting Investment in Renewable Energy is a EUR 50 million guarantee¹⁰⁵ to scale up investment in renewable energy in Ukraine and in the EU Southern Neighbourhood. It will substantially boost renewable energy potential.

Together, these three agreements are expected to generate EUR 1.65 billion in overall investment. Negotiations on four more guarantee agreements were completed in 2019 for official signature in January 2020.

4.2.4. Technical Assistance: Twinning and TAIEX

The Commission's increasing interest in mobilising public sector expertise is based on the understanding that learning from peers is one of the most effective ways of transmitting and sharing knowledge and the recognition that increasingly public sector counterparts in our partner countries want to learn from the public sector experience in Europe through a partnership approach.

Twinning is essentially a longer-term support modality of peer-to-peer cooperation between two public administrations (one being in a Member State), while TAIEX provides short-term assistance through expert missions, workshops, or study visits to Member States.

¹⁰⁴FMO revised its request for funding from EUR 45 million to EUR 40 million after the Dutch government decided to invest an additional EUR 5 million in the programme.

¹⁰⁵The total value of the guarantee is up to EUR 100 million when taking into account its two parts: one part covers the EU Neighbourhood; the corresponding agreement was signed with the lead financial institution, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); and the other part covers Sub-Saharan Africa; the corresponding agreement is still being negotiated and to be signed with the lead financial institution, the Association of European Development Finance Institutions (EDFI).

TAIEX and Twinning operate predominantly in the Neighbourhood and Enlargement regions. In 2016, a service level agreement (SLA) was signed with FPI, making all non-EU countries around the world eligible for TAIEX assistance. In July 2019, the Commission once again expanded the geographical scope of TAIEX and Twinning to include developing countries on a pilot basis under a similar agreement with Commission departments. This pilot programme envisages 30 TAIEX activities per year and five Twinning projects. TAIEX assistance is also available to EU Member States under SLAs with Commission departments.

Twinning and TAIEX complement the existing range of technical assistance modalities used in these countries well and can tap into expertise from Member States who may not necessarily be active in development cooperation, but who can offer pertinent expertise in specific areas of reform. The Africa-Europe Alliance for sustainable investments and jobs sets out our commitment to the enhanced use of EU instruments of Twinning and Technical Assistance and Information Exchange to support efficient, transparent and accountable public administrations.

4.3. Improving ways of working

4.3.1. Simplification of procedures

Within the proposals for the next multiannual financial framework, the Commission proposed that most external financing instruments, including the 11th EDF, should in future be replaced by a single instrument, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)¹⁰⁶, designed to cover all external actions except those with a distinct legal basis. The result is laid down in the Commission's NDICI, Overseas Association Decision¹⁰⁷ and Nuclear Safety¹⁰⁸ proposals.

The aim of merging all previously existing external financing instruments into one is to achieve simplification in an area that was characterised by a multitude of diverging and sometimes conflicting provisions. Moreover, the budgeting of the European Development Fund, which the Commission's NDICI Proposal aims to achieve, will result in one single set of rules applicable to all external actions.

Indirect management

The new financial regulation (Regulation (EU) 2018/1046) provides several simplifications to facilitate better cooperation with partner organisations. Indeed, the same set of contractual provisions apply in all cases where actions are implemented by pillar-assessed organisations (in particular international organisations and Member State organisations) as there is no longer a need to distinguish between direct and indirect management.

In this context and in 2019, further to the drafting of the contribution agreement template which takes into account the novelties of the 2018 financial regulation and that streamlines cooperation

¹⁰⁶ Commission Proposal COM(2018)460 of 14.6.2018 for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument.

¹⁰⁷ Commission Proposal COM(2018)461 of 14.6.2018 for a Council Decision on the Association of the Overseas Countries and Territories with the European Union including relations between the European Union on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other ('Overseas Decision').

¹⁰⁸ Commission Proposal COM(2018)462 of 14.6.2018 for a Council Regulation establishing a European Instrument for Nuclear Safety complementing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument on the basis of the Euratom Treaty.

with pillar-assessed organisations, Commission departments have developed a manual applicable to contribution agreements in order to provide assistance, both to Commission colleagues and partner organisations, and to ensure consistency of interpretations and to speed-up contracting. For the manual, feedback from finance and contracts units as well as partner organisations has been collected and included in the text.

In addition, Commission departments have been working intensively on the drafting of a template for contribution agreements for financial instruments (CAFI) as well as its corresponding manual. The CAFI template has been drafted in close collaboration with various Commission departments, has undergone an inter-service consultation and was finalised in June 2019. Unlike the previous contractual template (PAGODA FI), the CAFI comprises a single set of general conditions applicable to both financial instruments and the related technical assistance/ancillary support. Moreover, the CAFI caters both for funded and unfunded financial instruments. After consultation with partner organisations and finance and contracts units, a manual for contribution agreements for financial instruments is under preparation to provide guidance on the provisions of the template.

Lastly, it is worth underlining that the European Commission has signed four framework financial partnership agreements with pillar-assessed organisations. Such agreements aim at stabilising the contractual terms with the relevant partner organisations, thus simplifying and speeding-up the contracting process.

Grants and procurement

For procurements and grants, the Practical Guide for European Union External Actions (PRAG) has been revised in 2019 and consolidates previous simplifications and recommendations for improvement.

In parallel, extensive work is being undertaken to streamline the external action grant-templates into a Commission-wide corporate grant-model, designed to provide a common basis for all grant-beneficiaries whether applying to calls related to internal policies or those related to external actions, thereby eliminating the efforts needed to understand the distinct templates and award procedures and the resulting risks of misinterpretations.

In 2019, issues regarding eligibility have been streamlined through up to date 'Brexit disclaimers', and progress has been made in agreement with Commission budgetary services on reinforcing the use of simplified cost options and result based financing.

The next step towards a major simplification in procurement and contract management, including financial aspects, will be achieved when OPSYS is deployed, which should happen in early 2021. OPSYS will provide a state-of-the-art tool for e-procurement and contract management and will also replace CRIS, the existing information system for the Commission's external action services.

4.4. Communication & transparency

4.4.1. Communication

As this report shows, EU development cooperation continues to make a real difference to the lives of millions of people in our many partner countries around the world. Communicating the results and achievements of our programmes and projects is a critical part of this work: it strengthens our

accountability towards citizens and contributes to maintaining a high level of support for the EU's policies and funding.

In its outreach and communication on development, the Commission adopted an approach based on social media, storytelling, and a greater focus on young people, gender equality and partnerships.

The 13th edition of the European Development Days (EDDs) was held on 18-19 June 2019 in Brussels under the theme: 'Addressing Inequalities'. The event attracted 9 057 participants, the highest number ever recorded, with very strong VIP participation and high media interest.

A large number of events at the External Cooperation Information Point in Brussels, as well as nine Kapuscinski development lectures, were organised with significantly increased audiences, giving great visibility to development policies with high-profile speakers as Tony Blair and Michael Kremer (later awarded the 2019 Nobel Prize for Economics). Furthermore, relevant online campaigns were launched - #2030IsNow (linked to SDGs), #ThinkTwice (linked to the EDDs), #Faces2Hearts and several smaller campaigns, for example #InspiredByHer on gender issues. The campaigns specifically targeted young audiences and, combined, they reached an audience of 1.6 billion people.

A major new campaign inspired by the Africa-EU Alliance was also launched with the aim of connecting with young Africans in their own languages. It is the first such initiatives undertaken in Africa.

In addition, following the relaunch of the EU development communication network, in 2019 Commission departments organised a joint, SDG-themed campaign with Member States that saw some 60 000 young Europeans interact with our #2030isnow wall at 19 festivals and events in 13 countries. Three million more were reached by the accompanying social media campaign, which was carried in all national languages on Member States' channels.

Communicating the objectives and results of the European Neighbourhood and enlargement policies continued to be a priority. Commission departments worked closely with the three EEAS strategic communication task forces and EU delegations/offices in the enlargement and neighbourhood regions to improve its strategic communication on these policies. Target audiences continued to be the wider public, through traditional media and social media channels, as well as stakeholder communities, young people and media representatives through dedicated events, study visits and press trips. Information on the EU and EU assistance in individual partner countries was increasingly based on thematic or country-specific campaigns and reached millions of citizens, to reinforce EU visibility and EU branding of its projects and outreach activities. Improving communication and visibility about EU action was the aim of information and training seminars held for implementing partners in the EU's neighbourhood.

In the Western Balkans, the EU–Western Balkans Media Days in September 2019 saw around 350 media professionals participating. Training seminars continued to be organised on strategic communication for government officials, providing a platform to exchange know-how between national administrations of the EU Member States and government communicators.

With regard to the Neighbourhood South and East, activities continued to focus on the implementation of the two regional communication programmes 'EU-Neighbours.eu' through activities like the 'Young European Ambassadors' scheme, including now more than 700 volunteers,

business conferences for 100 young entrepreneurs, 'Campus Tours', reaching 17 000 students in 2018-2019, a 'Digitool', collecting and providing information on ENI related projects, production of audio-visual material, and social media campaigns etc. These initiatives complement increased activities to address disinformation and misperceptions of the EU with positive messages and success stories of people who benefited from EU assistance.

4.4.2. Transparency

The Commission is firmly committed to aid transparency, one of the key principles of development effectiveness. The Commission has continued to improve the accountability and openness of aid through publishing timely, comprehensive and forward-looking data in line with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard and the OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS) and Forward Spending Survey.

The Commission remains an active member of IATI and has hosted its 2019 Members' Assembly in Brussels. It also advocates the benefits of IATI with Member States. Data are published at least on a monthly basis in IATI. An inter-service working group meets regularly to discuss and coordinate transparency issues, including increased coherence between the OECD CRS and IATI reporting and publication of EU Trust Fund data, forward-looking data and results data.

The Commission launched a new version of its transparency portal, the EU Aid Explorer that visualises aid data of all EU institutions (Commission and EIB) and of Member States. The tool was presented to Member States, EU institutions, civil society and international forums and organisations. It was well received and increases the use of, and applications for, EU aid data.

4.4.3. Learning

The Commission departments organise a wide range of learning events to train colleagues in Delegations and HQ on the various priorities and key thematic development topics. The learning possibilities are also often open to a wider community, such as to practitioners from Member States or, in the case of the e-learning platform DEVCO Academy, to the general public.

In 2019, Commission departments organised 356 learning events on international development cooperation, including online courses, webinars and face-to-face courses in HQ and the delegations. The themes covered included a large range of topics such as development policies, thematic areas, aid delivery methods, finance and operational systems. Some of the priority areas in the 2019 training offer were the EU's External Investment plan (EIP), the Rights-Based Approach (RBA) and the different types of funding modalities such as budget support, always keeping the learning needs of the staff in EU delegations as a prime concern.

The DEVCO Academy, the Commission's first open online learning platform has further expanded its e-Learning resources and added new formats, such as podcasts and short learning videos ('DEV in a snapshot'). The Academy now offers more than 230 different learning resources (e-Learning courses, videos, webinars, documents and podcasts), has about 10 000 registered users and received in 2019 roughly 400 000 site visits. The DEVCO Academy also participated and fostered learning partnerships through participation in international learning events such as 'e-learning Africa' and 'Online Educa

Berlin' conferences, hosting sessions on 'Online Learning for All Development Community' and 'Open Learning for Development: Launching Your E-Learning Platform and Making It Successful'.