

The EU as a stronger global actor

TOWARDS A MORE UNITED, STRONGER AND MORE DEMOCRATIC UNION



'There is strong demand for Europe throughout the world. I want Europe to get off the side-lines of world affairs. Europe must be an active player, an architect of tomorrow's world.'

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker,
State of the Union address, 12 September 2018

In a complex, connected and contested world, the European Union remains fully committed to **multilateralism** and to the **rules-based global order with the United Nations at its core**, promoting peace and security and developing stable partnerships, while defending universal rights and freedoms. This commitment makes the EU a **reliable and predictable partner** for countries and organisations around the world, be it the Paris Climate Agreement, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the International Criminal Court or the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The European Union is the **biggest investor in building strong international relations**, establishing strategic economic partnerships agreements with key players all over the world.

The EU is a major trade power, being the **biggest trading partner for almost any country in the world**. During this Commission's term, the EU has concluded **trade agreements** with 12 countries, including Japan, Canada and several African countries. The EU is also the main provider and the main destination of foreign direct investments in the world.

The EU set up the External Investment Plan to support countries in Africa and the EU Neighbourhood to mobilise up to €44 billion in investments by 2020.

EXPORTING STABILITY AND PROMOTING PROSPERITY IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

The European Union has renewed its efforts to delivery stability in its neighbourhood. Through its firm and credible enlargement policy, the EU exports stability and promotes political, economic and social transformation in the Western Balkans. The EU-Western Balkans relations got a significant boost over the past years, including through historic developments, signalling reconciliation, good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation. Among them is **the Prespa Agreement**, reached by Athens and Skopje in June 2018 on the settlement of the differences between their countries, including on the name, resolving one of the oldest conflicts in the region.

In addition, in 2018 the Commission presented a **new strategy for a credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans**. The strategy spells out the priorities and areas of joint reinforced cooperation, addressing the specific challenges the Western Balkans face, in particular the need for fundamental reforms and good neighbourly relations. Progress along the European path is an objective and merit-based process which depends on the concrete results achieved by each individual country.

The strategy also outlined specific actions the EU will undertake over the next years to support the transformation efforts of the Western Balkans in areas of mutual interest. The Commission is currently implementing these **flagship initiatives** - they include for example investment of €700 million that will trigger €2.4 billion for road and rail connections as well as electricity networks or abolishing roaming charges across the Western Balkans.



Photo with High Representative Vice-President, Commissioner Hahn, Prime Minister of Greece Tsipras and Prime Minister of North Macedonia Zaev

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ENGAGING WITH OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD – TO THE EAST

Through the **Eastern Partnership**, the European Union has helped to create 10,000 jobs, train 20,000 people, and provide over 100,000 loans to companies. We have improved access to free legal services, invested in transport links, promoted gender equality, and helped thousands of students to move between Europe and the Eastern Partnership region. In addition, we have agreed to achieve 20 deliveries for 2020 that will benefit the daily lives of citizens and will cover four priority areas: stronger economy, stronger governance, stronger connectivity and stronger society.



50% increase in trade between Ukraine and the EU in 2018 compared to 2015, a year before the agreement started being implemented



27% share of Georgia's total trade was with the EU as key trading partner in 2018.



62% increase of EU imports from Moldova between 2014 and 2018

The EU recently concluded a new agreement with another of its eastern partners, **Armenia**, negotiations for a new agreement with **Azerbaijan** are progressing well, and is close to finalising negotiations on Partnership Priorities with **Belarus**.

The European Union has maintained its unity and principled position in its relations with **Russia**. Economic sanctions as well as travel bans and asset freezes on individuals and companies have now been in place for nearly over 5 years, as a result of Russia's **illegal annexation of Crimea**, its failure to implement the Minsk agreements, and its actions to undermine Ukraine's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty.













Countries in the **East Neighbourhood** are benefiting from the External Investment Plan, which builds on the European Commission's experience in implementing regional investment facilities. Since 2008, the Neighbourhood Investment Facility has used € 2 billion grants to leverage more than € 16 billion from partner International Financial Institutions. Projects already supported by the EU will be stepped up with the help of the External Investment Plan and new ones will be financed.

ENGAGING WITH OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD – TO THE SOUTH

In the EU's southern neighbourhood, partnership priorities have been agreed with **Lebanon, Jordan, Algeria** and **Egypt**, including the promotion of democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, economic development and social cohesion.

In September 2016, the EU strengthened its support for **Tunisia**, the EU-Tunisia Youth Partnership was launched, and Tunisia became the first Arab country to participate fully in the EU's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme and to be associated to "Creative Europe".

In **Syria**, eight years after the outbreak of the conflict, the situation is still critical, with millions of Syrians displaced and in need of protection and humanitarian assistance. The EU plays a leading role in supporting Syrian refugees, asylum seekers, as well as host communities inside and outside Europe - with almost **€17 billion allocated in humanitarian and development assistance since 2011**. In March 2019, the EU hosted for the third time in a row the [Brussels Conference on Supporting the future of Syria and the Region](#). The Conference renewed the international community hosted for a third time in a row support to a lasting political solution to end the Syria crisis and addressed the most critical humanitarian and resilience issues affecting Syrians inside the country as well as refugees and host communities in particular in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. €8.3 billion for 2019 and 2020 were pledged, the EU contribution representing around two thirds of the total.

<p>IN SYRIA</p> <p> Around 7 million people have received health services, including child and maternal care.</p> <p> Around 5 million Syrians have received food assistance to meet their daily needs.</p> <p> Around 9,000 Syrian farmers got support to restart agricultural production and received grants to develop businesses.</p>	<p>IN LEBANON</p> <p> Over 170,000 refugees have benefited from protection services.</p> <p> Over 375,000 Lebanese and Syrians benefited from health services.</p> <p> Some 125,000 Lebanese and Syrian children have been granted access to education.</p>
<p>IN JORDAN</p> <p> 650,000 Syrian refugees, most of them women and children, have been provided with health, food and basic assistance, winterisation support, shelter, water and sanitation, psychosocial support and protection.</p> <p> Over 400,000 Jordanians and Syrians and more than 12,000 households will have access to running and drinking water, and better access to waste services by the end of 2019.</p> <p> Over 163,000 Syrian children have been enrolled in public schools and kindergartens.</p>	<p>IN TURKEY (through the Facility for Refugees)</p> <p> About 1.5 million people were helped to cover their basic needs through the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN).</p> <p> 635,000 Syrian refugee children have access to education and 125 solid structure and 50 prefabricated schools built.</p> <p> The families of over 470,000 refugee children received financial support for their education through the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education programme (CCTE).</p>

The EU is constantly analysing structural concerns and emerging needs in the region. Due to the protracted crisis in **Libya**, the EU has stepped up cooperation with international partners, including in the framework of the African Union – European Union – United Nations Task Force to accelerate action in Libya and along the migratory route to provide protection and increase voluntary humanitarian return and reintegration and resettlement of vulnerable migrants. In parallel, the EU continues to address the needs of the Libyan population with initiatives to foster socio-economic development of the Libyan municipalities.

A NEW ERA OF EU RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

In September 2018, President Juncker proposed to deepen the EU's economic and trade relationship with Africa through a new **Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs**. The aim of the Alliance is to take the EU's partnership with Africa to the next level, building on the commitments taken at the African Union – European Union Summit in Abidjan in November 2017. To do so, the Commission proposes to boost investment, further attract private investors, support education and skills development for employability, as well as boost trade and improve the business climate. The EU is already Africa's first partner in trade, in foreign investment and in development. The Alliance is supported by the EU's budget, for which Africa is highlighted as a priority region.

Africa-Europe Alliance: 4 strands of action



Strategic investment and job creation



Investment in education and matching skills and jobs



Business environment and investment climate



Economic integration and trade

Main expected results from the Africa-Europe Alliance on which progress in ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment through the Alliance will create up to 10 million jobs in Africa in the next 5 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 million people will have access to all-season roads through our leveraged investments in transport infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 105,000 students and academics will benefit from Erasmus+ by 2027 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 750,000 people will receive vocational training for skills development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 million people and companies will benefit from access to electricity thanks to the EU's leveraged investments in renewable energy and a generation capacity boosted by 5 GW
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The implementation of the **EU External Investment Plan** is on track. By using an EU budget **guarantee and blending grants with loans**, the European External Investment Plan is expected to leverage additional private and public investment in Africa and the EU Neighbourhood of up to €44 billion by 2020. €37.1 billion of investments are already in the process of being mobilised in this way. In addition, the EU committed to dedicate over €300-350 million per year to **strengthening the business environment** and investment climate. The European Commission and Union's delegations provide technical assistance to help develop, together with financial institutions, sustainable and financially viable projects and attract potential investors.

The EIP is designed to attract more investment in particular from businesses and private investors in Africa and EU neighbourhood to strengthen our partnerships and contribute to achieve the Sustainable Development goals, helping to address some root causes of migration.

Africa has the youngest population of any region of the world and providing people with **access to education** is of paramount importance. The **Erasmus+ programme** has already supported more than 22,600 exchanges of students and staff between Europe and Africa.

In support of the African Continental Free Trade Area, the long-term perspective is to create a **continent-to-continent free trade area** between the EU and Africa. In the meantime, currently, 52 African countries benefit from a trade agreement, an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) or a trade arrangement (Everything But Arms and the two Generalised Scheme of Preferences, Standard GSP and GSP+) with the EU to grant privileged access to its market. These countries pay fewer or no duties on exports to the EU, giving them vital access to the EU market and contributing to their growth.

The EU has also invested in **targeted partnerships with the African Union and the United Nations**. This has not only paved the way for enhanced cooperation to address the dire situation of refugees and migrants in Libya, but also to enhance peace and security in the region.

In addition, in order to **address the root causes of irregular migration**, the **EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa** (€4.2 billion) addresses skills gaps, improves employability through vocational training, and supports job creation and self-employment opportunities with a focus on strengthening micro, small and medium size enterprises, through 193 projects.

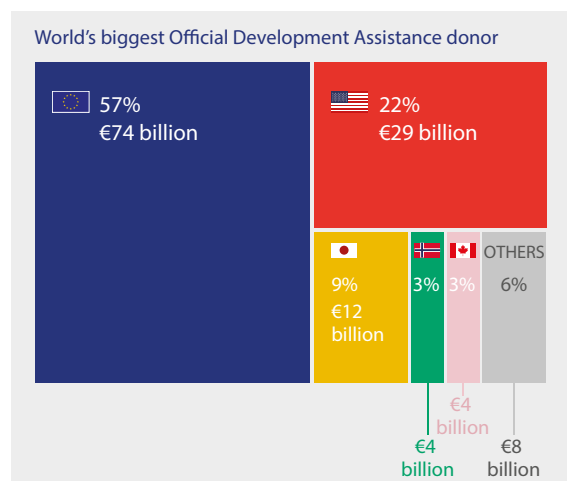
A LEADER IN GLOBAL COOPERATION, CRISIS RESPONSE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The EU plays an important role in diplomacy, the promotion of human rights, development cooperation and humanitarian aid and working with multilateral organisations. As such, the EU interests are represented in 140 countries around the world through its Delegations.

The EU remains by far the **largest provider of Official Development Assistance**. With €74.4 billion in 2018 the EU mobilised more funds than the rest of the world combined.

EU humanitarian assistance reached people most in need in over 90 countries in 2018, including Syria, Yemen, Venezuela, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

The EU is the biggest donor of development and humanitarian aid



Source: OECD, April 2019
2018 data, EU = EU and its Member States

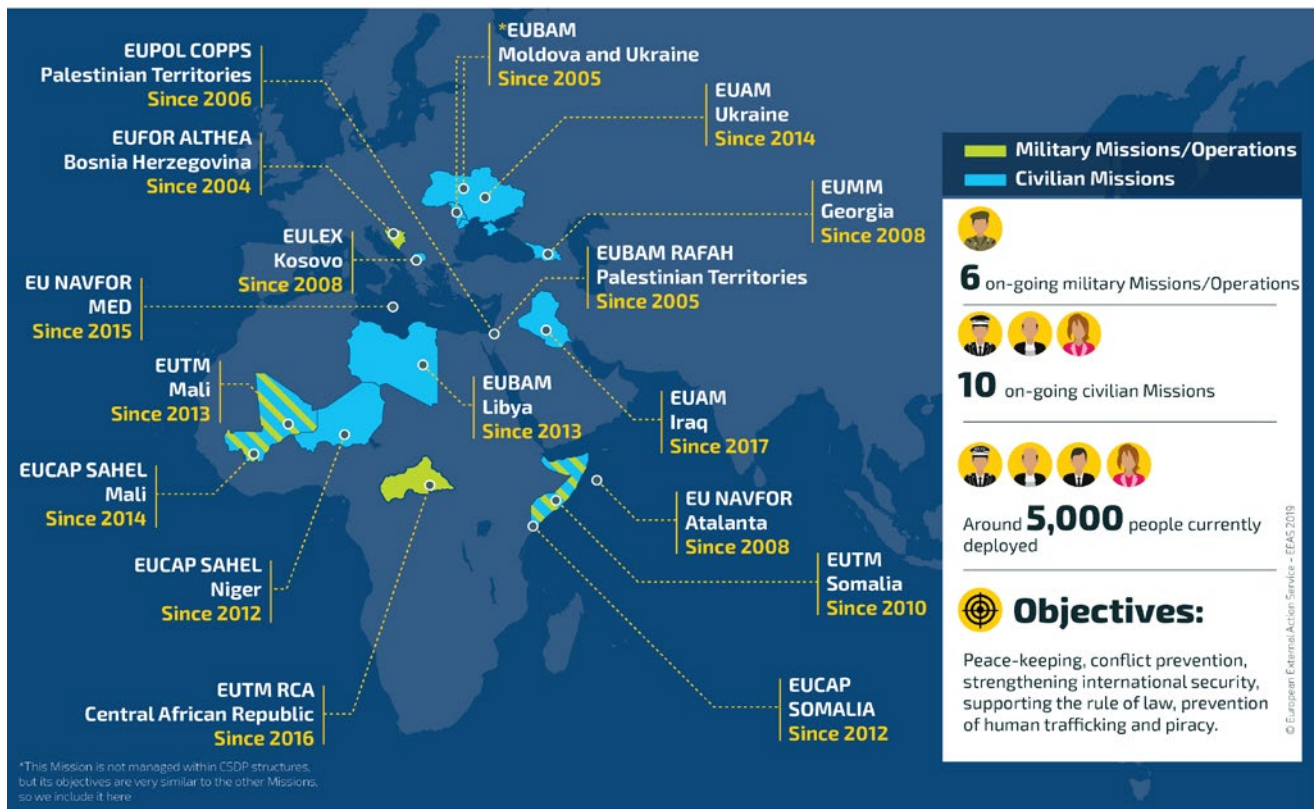
As a leading development actor, the EU has contributed significantly to the adoption of the UN **Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development**, and is committed to lead on its implementation across all sectors of intervention. For example, the EU has assisted tens of millions of people in improving their food security, providing high quality education, improving people's health or promoting peace and stability.

The EU is also a leader in international **civil protection response**, helping to coordinate the delivery of essential supplies following various natural disasters or other crises around the world. In 2018, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has been at the forefront of channelling lifesaving assistance for crises such as the Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo, hurricanes in the Caribbean as well as the forest fires affecting Europe and neighbouring regions.

The EU is a global security provider. It is committed to contribute to the **resolution of different conflicts all over the world**. It currently has 16 military and civilian missions with over 5,000 staff, mainly in Africa, but also in the Middle East, Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. The EU is working in the areas of peace-keeping, conflict prevention, the strengthening of international security, the support to the rule of law and the prevention of human trafficking and piracy.



EUROPEAN UNION CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS 2019



Together, the EU and its Member States have the **second largest defence budget in the world**, after the U.S. With the launch of the Permanent Structured Cooperation in 2018, 25 Member States committed to working and setting up projects together.

The European Union with its Member States are working on ways to tap into the potential of the existing Treaties in order to increase the use of **qualified majority voting** while maintaining a culture of consensus-building within the EU and to allow the EU act quickly and robustly in foreign affairs, be it for the imposition of sanctions, the dialogue on human rights respect or the decisions of civilian missions.

A TRUE GLOBAL ACTOR SHAPED BY SHARED INTERNATIONAL VALUES

Our foreign policy and diplomatic relations are shaped by shared international values: human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. These relations range over many fundamental issues and cover most regions and countries in the world.

The EU promotes international non-proliferation and disarmament agreements and supports denuclearisation talks. In the case of the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)**, the EU has introduced restrictive measures while keeping channels of dialogue open with all parties.

The European Union played an essential role in brokering and preserving the **nuclear deal with Iran** (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) which continues to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

In 2018 the EU set out its vision for a new and comprehensive strategy to better **connect Europe and Asia**. This strategy will contribute to build efficient cross-border connections and transport, energy, digital and human networks.

The European Union negotiated with **Japan** an Economic Partnership Agreement, the biggest trade agreement ever negotiated by the EU and the first to include a commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement. The EU also concluded with **Japan** an arrangement that created the world's largest area of free data flows, based on a high level of protection.

The EU pursues with **China** a realistic, assertive, and multi-faceted approach with a view to ensuring fair, balanced and mutually-beneficial relations. The EU works for a more balanced economic relationship with China while at the same time pursue deeper engagement on global and multilateral issues, including reform of the World Trade Organisation.

For the EU, **Canada** is a like-minded partner globally, while bilaterally relations have grown importantly through Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) and Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

The EU is currently negotiating the new agreement that will govern its relations with 79 countries in **Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP)**, the 'post-Cotonou' Agreement.

The European Union (EU) and the countries of **Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)** have developed one of the most politically and economically integrated relationships and have concluded 27 association, trade or political and cooperation agreement.

The EU-U.S. partnership has prospered for more than six decades, constructed on a solid foundation of shared history. We remain natural partners and natural friends and continue to work very closely with the **United States** on a wide range of issues, from trade to foreign policy, to security and defence matters. The transatlantic partnership must remain the anchor of global stability and the driver of our common prosperity.