

Neighbourhood, development and international cooperation instrument 2021–2027

2018/0243(COD) - 27/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 420 votes to 146, with 102 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Neighbourhood, Development Cooperation and International Cooperation Instrument.

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Objectives

The general objective of the programme "Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument" shall be to provide the financial framework to support the upholding and promotion of the Union's values, principles and fundamental interests worldwide in accordance with the objectives and principles of the Union's external action.

The specific objectives of this Regulation are the following:

- contribute to the achievement of the international commitments and objectives that the Union has agreed to, in particular the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs and the Paris Agreement;
- develop a special strengthened relationship with the countries in the eastern and southern neighbourhood of the Union, founded on cooperation, peace and security, mutual accountability and shared commitment to the universal values of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, socio-economic integration and environmental protection and climate action;
- pursue the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty, particularly in least developed countries (LDCs); to enable sustainable social and economic development;
- at global level, support civil society organisations and local authorities, further stability and peace, prevent conflict and promote just and inclusive societies, advance multilateralism, international justice and accountability, and address other global and regional challenges including climate change and environmental degradation as well as foreign policy needs and priorities, as set out in Annex III, including the promotion of confidence building and good neighbourly relations;
- protect, promote and advance human rights, democracy, the rule of law as well as gender and social equality, including in the most difficult circumstances and urgent situations, in partnership with civil society including human rights defenders worldwide.

Under the new Regulation:

- at least 95% (as opposed to 92 % proposed by the Commission) of the expenditure under this Regulation shall fulfil the criteria for Official Development Assistance, established by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. This Regulation shall contribute to reaching the collective target of achieving 0.2% of the Union's Gross National Income to Least Developed Countries and 0.7% of the Union Gross National Income as Official Development Assistance within the timeframe of the 2030 Agenda;

- at least 20% of the Official Development Assistance funded under this Regulation, across all programmes, geographic and thematic, annually and over the duration of its actions, shall be ring-fenced for social inclusion and human development, in order to support and strengthen the provision of basic social services, such as health, education, nutrition and social protection, particularly to the most marginalised, and with an emphasis on women and children;
- at least 85% of the Official Development Assistance funded programmes, geographic and thematic, under this Regulation shall have gender equality and women's and girls' rights and empowerment as a principal or a significant objective.

Budget

The European Parliament has proposed to set the financial framework for the application of the Regulation for the period 2021-2027 at EUR 82 451 million at 2018 prices (EUR 93 154 million at current prices), an increase of EUR 4 billion compared to the European Commission's proposal. The envelope shall be broken down as follows:

- geographical programmes: EUR 63 687 million at 2018 prices (EUR 71 954 million at current prices) [77.24%];
- thematic programmes: EUR 9 471 million at 2018 prices (EUR 10 700 million at current prices) [11.49%]; EU funding for civil society organisations would be increased to EUR 2 390 million, with an additional EUR 500 million for local authorities;
- rapid intervention measures: EUR 3 098 million at 2018 prices (EUR 3 500 million at current prices) [3.76 %].

Parliament proposed that 45% of the funds in the new instrument shall support climate and environmental objectives related to climate, environmental management and protection, biodiversity and combating desertification, and that 30% of the funds shall be devoted to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Small Project Fund

Financing under this Regulation may be provided to small projects funds, aimed at the selection and implementation of projects of limited financial volume. The beneficiaries of a small project fund shall be civil society organisations.

Suspension of assistance

In the case of a serious or persistent degradation of democracy, human rights and rule of law in one of the partner countries, support may, by means of a delegated act, be partially or fully suspended. The Commission shall take due account of relevant European Parliament resolutions in its decision-making.

European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+)

The new EFSD+ should support investment as a means of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development objectives by focusing on poverty eradication, conflict prevention and the promotion of peaceful, just and inclusive societies, sustainable economic progress, tackling climate change, environmental degradation, the creation of decent jobs in compliance with relevant ILO standards and economic opportunities, in particular for women, youth and vulnerable people.

It shall also support a stable investment environment, industrialisation, cooperatives, social enterprises, as well as the strengthening of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, the absence of which often reflects the root socio-economic causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.

Democratic accountability

The European Parliament shall be fully involved in the design, programming, monitoring and evaluation phases of the instruments in order to guarantee political control and democratic scrutiny and accountability of Union funding in the field of external action.

Parliament may invite the Commission and the EEAS to appear before it to discuss the strategic orientations and guidelines for the programming under this Regulation.