

Trade Union comments on the European Commission PREPARATORY DOCUMENT FOR THE ELABORATION OF THE THEMATIC PROGRAMME 'CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES' 2014-2020 – OBJECTIVE 2 SUPPORT TO REGIONAL AND GLOBAL NETWORKS

The Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (TUDCN), an initiative of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), bringing together affiliated trade union organisations, solidarity support organisations, the regional ITUC organisations from Africa, Latin America, Asia Pacific and Europe, the Global Union Federations-GUFs (sector unions), the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC), took note of the above-mentioned discussion paper and offers the following inputs:

1. We welcome the current formulation of the priorities of objective 2 recognizing a “pivotal role (of global and regional networks) in linking local concerns and priorities, often caused by global challenges such as climate change, to regional and global debates, including at EU level”;
2. In this respect, we support an 'actor based approach' funded on participatory dialogues, involving CSOs in development policies and programs making, be it at regional and global level according to their right of initiative (development actors in their own right), their mandates and structures;
3. We strongly encourage the EC to adopt programme funding modality (as opposed to call for proposals) within objective 2, which is coherent with the actor based approach. As highlighted also in the Global Public Goods and Challenges 2014-20 discussion paper: “a shift in EC financing from focusing on projects to supporting programmes and processes, coupled with the possibility for longer-term support, is considered by many as the most appropriate in order to strengthen impact and sustainability, while also allowing for greater predictability of funds”. This is also supported by the Structured Dialogue recommendations, clearly pointing at “an appropriate mix of funding mechanisms (including modalities and selection procedures), incorporating sensible actor differentiation and a flexible set of responses adaptable to different situations, to pursue development objectives in a more strategic, effective and sustainable manner”;
4. We support the current focuses on “strengthening their (CSOs) representativeness and capacities to effectively link local realities to regional and global debates”. We highlight the importance of adopting representativeness criteria and standards of CSOs platforms which might include: geographic coverage in a given continent (50%+1) or worldwide (all continents), recognition by institutional instances at regional or global level, existence and functioning of democratic governance structures, political and financial autonomy, and proven administrative and financial capacity;
5. In particular, considering regional networks, we strongly suggest the precognition of integrated programs where the regional, sub regional and national dimensions can be linked up, allowing for better coherence of initiatives, which can range from capacity development to policy advocacy at all levels.