

UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - Public Consultation on revising the European Consensus on Development

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

(1) Introduction

The year 2015 was a strategic milestone for global governance, poverty eradication and sustainable development. It marked the target date of the UN Millennium Development Goals and a point to reflect on the progress made to date and the challenges ahead in addressing their unfinished business. 2015 also saw a series of landmark international summits and conferences over the course of the year (the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#), the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#), the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the COP 21 [Paris Agreement](#) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) which have collectively re-cast the way the international community, including the EU, will work to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication for many years.

Importantly, and in contrast to the Millennium Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda, including its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, is a universal Agenda which applies to all countries. It reflects many core European values and interests and provides an international framework for tackling global challenges such as climate change. The EU response to the 2030 Agenda is moving ahead in a range of ways:

- Firstly, as part of EU efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, the [Commission Work Programme for 2016](#) announces an initiative on the next steps for a sustainable European future which will explain how the EU contributes to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and map out the internal and external aspects of EU policies contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Secondly, the High Representative will present the [EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy](#) that is expected to steer the different EU external policies contributing to the global vision of a more stable, prosperous and secure world. It should set out the strategic direction for the full range of EU external action, and as such will help guide EU implementation of the 2030 Agenda in external action.
- Thirdly, the EU will review its development cooperation policy. Existing leading policy documents (including the [2005 European Consensus on Development](#) and the [2011 Agenda for Change](#)) are currently framed around the Millennium Development Goals and need to adapt to incorporate the 2030 Agenda. Given its direct relevance to the EU's overall relations with developing countries, this review will be carried out in full consistency with the ongoing work on the future of the partnership between the EU and the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, under a post-[Cotonou](#) framework.

Views from this consultation will be used to inform the way forward on the initiatives above and in particular the revision of the European Consensus on Development and other external aspects of 2030 Agenda implementation. The consultation seeks your views on **how development policy, in the context of EU external action as foreseen by the Lisbon Treaty**, should respond to the range of landmark 2015 summits and conferences, and also to the rapid changes happening in the world.

Replies can include views which could apply only to the EU institutions and also to both the EU and its Member States – it would be helpful to clarify this in your response. This open public consultation will run for 12 weeks from 30 May 2016 to 21 August 2016. A brief summary and analysis of all consultation contributions will be published by November 2016 and all individual contributions will also be made available on the consultation website (unless respondents ask for their contributions not to be published).

(2) Information on respondents

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2.1 Received contributions may be published on the Commission's website, with the identity of the contributor. Please state your preference with regard to the publication of your contribution.

Please note that regardless of the option chosen, your contribution may be subject to a request for access to documents under [Regulation 1049/2001](#) on public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. In such cases, the request will be assessed against the conditions set out in the Regulation and in accordance with applicable [data protection rules](#).

- I do not agree that my contribution will be published at all
- My contribution may be published but should be kept anonymous; I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that prevent publication
- My contribution may be published under the name indicated; I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that prevent publication

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2.2 Are you registered in the EU's Transparency Register?

Please note: Organisations, networks, platforms or self-employed individuals engaged in activities aimed at influencing the EU decision making process are expected to register in the transparency Register. During the analysis of replies to a consultation, contributions from respondents who choose not to register will be treated as individual contributions (unless the contributors are recognised as representative stakeholders through Treaty provisions, European Social Dialogue, Art. 154-155 TFEU).

- Yes
- No

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2.2.1 If yes, what is your registration number?

51806831589-68

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2.3 Name (entity or individual in their personal capacity)

Trade Union Development Cooperation Network / International Trade Union Confederation

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2.4 Contact details (address, telephone number, email)

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2.5 What type of stakeholder are you?

- Government institution / Public administration
- University / Academic organisation
- Civil society (including Non-Governmental Organisation, specialised policy organisation, think tank)
- International organisation
- Private sector or private company
- Citizen/private individual
- Other

2.6 Please specify

Trade union

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2.7 What is your place of residence (if you are answering as a private individual) or where are the headquarters of your organisation situated (if you are answering on behalf of an organisation)?

- In one of the 28 EU Member States
- Other

2.8 Please specify

Belgium

(3) Context: why a change is needed

The EU and its Member States are determined to implement the 2030 Agenda through internal and external actions as well as contribute to the successful implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, given the strong interlinkages. In this context, our policies, should take into account changing global conditions and trends, to ensure that they remain fit-for-purpose across the time-horizon to 2030.

The global landscape has changed significantly compared to the time of adoption of the Millennium Development Goals. While much has been achieved, with more than one billion people having been lifted out of extreme poverty since 1990, great challenges remain and new ones are emerging. At global level, more than 800 million people still live on less than USD 1.25 a day. The world is witnessing multiple conflicts and security tensions, complex humanitarian and global health crises, deteriorations of human rights, environmental degradation, resource scarcity, urbanisation and migration. Migration flows across the world will continue to have important impacts, and present both a risk and an opportunity. The EU needs to address global security challenges, including tackling the root causes of conflict and instability and countering violent extremism. Climate change can continue to amplify problems and can severely undermine progress. Important changes include demographic trends, a new distribution of wealth and power between and within countries, the continuing globalisation of economies and value chains, an evolving geography of poverty and a proliferation of actors working on development. Projections also suggest important challenges are ahead (for example, continuing unprecedented urbanisation, and other demographic challenges including ageing societies for some and the potential for a demographic dividend for others). Continued attention will be given to a democratic, stable and prosperous neighbourhood. A revision to EU development policy should take into account these trends (including anticipating those that will remain central in future) whilst retaining a core focus on eradicating poverty and finishing the job started by the Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, the EU Consensus needs also to adapt to the Lisbon Treaty, which provides for all external action policies to work within the frameworks and pursue the principles of objectives of Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union. In particular, coherence between the different parts of EU external action and between external and internal policies is crucial.

The EU will need to address these new global challenges, many of which require coordinated policy action at the national, regional and global levels. The 2030 Agenda provides a framework which can guide us in doing so.

3.1 There is a range of key global trends (e.g. changing geography and depth of poverty; challenges related to climate change, political, economic, social, demographic, security, environmental or technological) which will influence the future of development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Which of these do you think is the most important?

The new global development agenda, enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, has since the early days of its negotiation been accompanied by the slogan and ambition to "leave no one behind". For workers and the union movement this means recognising and taking action on the ever increasing inequalities people face, within and between countries.

Rising income inequality is no longer just an ethical issue - it has economic costs and restrains a broad-based and sustainable economic recovery. There are also serious long-term consequences. High inequality leads to low inter-generational mobility. The capture of the policy agenda by top income earners through their excessive domination of political funding in some countries is leading to a serious distortion of public policy and builds inequity into economic growth models.

Increases in household income inequality have been largely driven by changes in the distribution of wages and salaries, "the labour share", which account for 75% of household incomes among working-age adults. Inequality is not limited by geographical scope and is pervasive in the developed and developing world alike. While, according to the Gini coefficient, it is highest in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, income inequality within the wage share is increasing in many countries in the developed world. Inequality as measured by the ratio of top to bottom deciles of income earners rose in most, albeit not all, G20 countries. From the late 1980s, the increase in income inequality became more widespread, though significant differences between countries remain. Tax havens are a perverse manifestation of and further entrench income inequality and must also be exposed and completely uprooted. The existence of tax havens is not limited to Panama but prevalent in countries which profess to combat tax evasion and corruption, including the United States, EU member states and other OECD countries.

High and rising inequality has a significant social and economic cost. A series of papers from the IMF research department have argued that rising inequality, combined with the behaviour of financial intermediaries contributed to the financial bubble prior to 2008. Other work concludes that "equality appears to be an important ingredient in promoting and sustaining growth". The current rise in inequality is increasingly at odds with established paths towards sustainable development. Leaving aside the moral case for greater equality, there is also a compelling economic case against inequality.

Poverty excludes millions of citizens from the mainstream economy, depriving them of the opportunity to achieve their potential. Over the past years an increasing number of governments have cut public spending, often within the context of so-called austerity measures, and ultimately failed to deliver on their obligations to ensure quality education, health care and social protection for all. This undermines social mobility and efforts to build fair, equitable and inclusive societies, and reduces the prospects for sustainable growth in the medium term.

The weakening of labour market institutions is one key cause of increasing inequality. The "structural reform paradigm" employed since the 1980s had the undesirable effect of reducing the ability of labour market institutions to moderate market inequality. The proportion of workers covered by collective agreements has declined in many industrialized economies.

The integration of national economies into global markets and the expansion of global supply chains have intensified competition and caused leading firms to

cut labour costs through restructuring, outsourcing and off-shoring. This, in turn, has increased downward pressure on wages and working conditions. In a number of countries, these changes were accompanied by the deregulation of labour markets and a rollback in policy support for strengthening labour market institutions and collective bargaining. These policies, together with the increased mobility of capital, have tipped bargaining power away from workers and their representatives. The model of global supply chains is based on low wages, insecure and often unsafe work. Goals to realise sustainable development have to realise decent work.

3.2 How should EU policies, and development policy in particular, better harness the opportunities and minimise the negative aspects of the trend you identified in the previous question?

First and foremost trade unions call on the EU to mainstreaming social policy throughout the external implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with a stronger focus on decent work (SDG 8), including social protection, and the fight against inequalities (SDG 10), including wage policies; future trade agreements should include strong chapters on sustainable development with enforceable labour and environmental provisions, as well as political dialogue, with a focus on participation of non-state actors and social dialogue as essential building stones for democratic governance. Trade unions believe that EU delegations should include labour reporting officers with close relations with the social partners in those countries, as well as with the international social partners (including the ITUC and its relevant regional organisations) and with enhanced contacts with the European social partners, including the ETUC. Trade unions encourage the EU to work closely with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the promotion of international labour standards.

The current 2030 Agenda will have implications for the way in which the EU engages in international and development cooperation, including for the role played by EU aid in the achievement of the SDGs. The ongoing discussions on the sustainable development agenda have introduced a paradigm shift aimed at ending the North-South conceptual framing that has historically underpinned development. There are a number of principles inherent to the post-2015 agenda, such as universality, the move towards policy coherence for sustainable development in all countries, and the growing emphasis on shared responsibilities. These will have implications for the future of the EU with its partners.

As the Council Conclusions on a New Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015 (26 May 2015) noted, “full and productive employment and decent work, including implementation of labour standards guided by, amongst others, ILO conventions and recommendations, are key to addressing inequality and social exclusion. There should be adequate social protection floors and inclusive and equitable development measures should be integrated in relevant socio-economic policies. The right of social

partners to freely negotiate and conclude collective agreements is essential. Social dialogue is crucial to strengthen democracy and to enhance transparency. In addition, to combat inequalities national legislation, policies and practices should be inclusive and ensure access to affordable, adequate and quality services and goods without discrimination”.

The ILO Decent Work Agenda (DWA) is a comprehensive policy package, accompanied by practical implementation tools, including Decent Work Country Programme papers and indicators for measurement of implementation. The strength of the DWA lies in its coherent and comprehensive approach to empowerment through work. It does not only involve job creation through adequate policy measures and programmes, but looks at what is needed to make the work effective in improving the living standard of people employed. The DWA sets four strategic objectives: job creation, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection and promoting social dialogue. All of these pillars are interrelated and jointly contribute to empowering people through the creation of decent, productive and quality jobs that allow especially the most vulnerable groups to secure and improve their livelihoods and take a fuller part in the life of the society.

(4) Priorities for our future action: what we need to do

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require sustained EU efforts to promote a more just world, including a strong focus on the need to address gender equality and women's empowerment. Peace, inclusiveness, equality and good governance including democracy, accountability, rule of law, human rights and non-discrimination will need particular emphasis. The 2030 Agenda also requires recognition of the close interconnectedness between poverty, social issues, economic transformation, climate change and environmental issues.

To achieve poverty eradication, EU development policy will need to take into account key demographic and environmental trends, including challenges related to climate change, and concentrate effort on least developed countries and fragile states. The EU will also need to strengthen our approach to fragility and conflict, fostering resilience and security (as an increasing proportion of the world's poor are expected to live in fragile and conflict affected states) and to protect global public goods and to maintain our resource base as the prerequisite for sustainable growth. Peace and security, including security sector reform, will have to be addressed also through our development policy, as will the risks and opportunities related to migration flows. Tackling social and economic inequalities (both within and between countries) is a crucial element of the 2030 Agenda as is addressing environmental degradation and climate change. Job creation will be an important challenge in which the private sector has to play an active role. Finishing the job of the Millennium Development Goals requires identifying and reaching those people throughout the world who are still not benefitting from progress to ensure that no one is left behind.

To achieve lasting results, EU development policy will need to foster transformation and promote inclusive and sustainable growth. Drivers of inclusive sustainable growth, such as human development, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and healthy and resilient oceans should be an important part of our efforts to implement the new Agenda as will efforts aimed at tackling hunger and under-nutrition. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require a multi-dimensional, integrated approach to human development. Implementation will also require us to address vectors of change, such as sustainable urban development and relevant use of information and communication technology. Our development policy will have to engage and identify new ways of partnering with the business in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth, industrialisation and innovation. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will also require cooperation with partner countries and regions on science, technology and innovation. In all aspects of our external action, the EU will need to ensure that our approaches, including development cooperation, are conducive to achieving the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals and that the EU intensifies efforts to promote pursue coherence between our policies and our internal and external action.

4.1 How can the EU better address the links between achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on climate change and addressing other global sustainable development challenges?

Decent work, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability are three of the defining challenges of the twenty-first century. Economies must be productive to meet the needs of the world's growing population. Societies must be inclusive, providing opportunities for decent work for all, reducing inequalities and effectively eliminating poverty.

Climate impacts hit working people first, and with extreme weather events, changing seasons and rising sea levels, whole communities stand on the frontlines. In order to stabilise the climate, profound changes need to be made to energy systems – and therefore to all economic sectors. Trade unions are involved in every aspect of this challenge; from activists campaigning for action on climate to workers organising in new industries to workers in fossil fuel production.

The new EU development policy can help address climate change and promote a just transition for workers and communities, based on renewable energy, sustainable forestry and agriculture, emission-free manufacturing, construction, transport and services, needed to keep the temperature rise to less than 2 degrees Celsius. Moreover, a significant shift in the capacity to recycle and reuse is vital to create a circular economy that ensures our way of life stays within planetary boundaries. Making the transition to zero carbon in our economies and societies is an imperative, but can only succeed if the transition is just. Ultimately, there are no jobs on a dead planet.

Success needs governments, international and multilateral organisations to show leadership when setting ambitious climate goals but it also requires all stakeholders – businesses, workers and trade unions, civil society and communities to support change. The transition requires dialogue and understanding of different needs at all levels. It requires an integrated approach to both climate action and the UN Sustainable Development Goals for inclusive development, with investment consistent with these objectives.

A just transition should 1) Invest in jobs – decent work opportunities in sectors which reduce emissions and help communities adapt to climate change; 2) respect the contribution that workers in fossil-fuel industries have made to today's prosperity and provide them with income support, retraining and redeployment opportunities, as well as secure pensions for older workers; 3) guarantee social protection and human rights; 4) invest in community renewal to gain the hope and trust of regions and townships at the forefront of the energy transition, industrial transformation or climate impacts; 5) support innovation and technology sharing to enable a rapid transformation of energy and manufacturing companies along with all other economic sectors and the involvement of workers and communities in the sectoral plans for transforming megacities; 6) formalise jobs associated with rescue, restoring communities' and building resilience to climate disasters; 7) be based on social dialogue with all relevant parties, collective bargaining with workers and their unions for workplace change, resource productivity and skills development with the monitoring of agreements which are public and legally enforceable.

Working for a just transition means to leave no one behind, and EU development policy can also work for this endeavour. For instance, during the energy transition process, required by the Paris Agreement and consistent with Agenda 2030, social dialogue can play a pivotal role in assisting workers and communities whose livelihoods depend on sectors that must reduce carbon emissions, and to explore the incentives, regulations and finance needed to assist the industrial transformation and community renewal through

facilitating new opportunities. Social dialogue between workers and companies (at enterprise, industry-wide and national as well as global levels) is essential for ensuring the appropriate investments are made in skills retraining and redeployment, job creation, governance capacity and finance for an effective transition to a low carbon economy.

The four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda - social dialogue, social protection, rights at work and employment - are indispensable building blocks of sustainable development and must be at the centre of policies for strong, sustainable and inclusive growth and development.

4.2 How should the EU strengthen the balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in its internal and external policies, and in particular in its development policy?

Economic development is not sustainable if it is not accompanied by a social and environmental dimension. On the social side, decent work can lift people out of poverty and provide workers and their families with a decent life.

The evidence that inequality is increasing in all corners of the world is overwhelming. Consequently, UN Member states and the international development community more generally, have identified inequality as one of the main and growing challenges for sustainable development. This is illustrated by Sustainable Development Goal 10 (SDG 10). The 2030 Agenda has further acknowledged that sustainable development can only be achieved through the creation of productive employment and decent work for all by enshrining it in SDG 8 respective targets of the SDGs. Fulfilling the four pillars of decent work - employment creation, workers' rights, social dialogue and social protection- are crucial to ensure that "no one is left behind". In light of global trends, the importance of social dialogue and collective bargaining cannot be understated in efforts to combat inequality. There is a need to reverse the current trends by promoting and supporting social dialogue and the role of the social partners.

Social dialogue is any type of negotiation, consultation or exchange of information between representatives of employers, workers and governments on issues relating to economic and social policy. It can take place at different levels, from enterprise-based, sectoral or inter-professional, to national and international. It can produce different outcomes from collective agreements at enterprise level, international framework agreements between multinational companies and global union federations that apply across a global supply chain, to national tripartite compacts.

Trade unions believe that the four pillars of decent work are equally important and mutually reinforcing. Consequently, any goal or target related to the decent work agenda will not be fulfilled unless all dimensions are realized, including social dialogue. It is notable that social dialogue is

nowhere explicitly referred to in the 2030 Agenda, but is nevertheless a critical element for achieving decent work (for goal 8 but also many other goals, 1, 5, 10 and 16 for example).

Social Dialogue and collective bargaining play crucial roles in ensuring fair wage distribution, while also tackling informality. Addressing the issue of a minimum living wage for the “working poor”, constitutes one of the most important priorities to fight inequalities. The erosion of workers’ bargaining rights over the last decades explains to a large extent the current divergence between productivity growth and wage increases for a majority of workers. The divergence between wage increases and productivity is indeed at the heart of inequalities.

Social dialogue requires an enabling environment and an effective institutional framework. This begins with respect for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Representative and independent employers and workers’ organisations, sound industrial relations practices, functioning labour administrations, including labour inspection, and respect for the “social partners” are the other building blocks of social dialogue.

With an increased orientation towards the private sector in development and the focus on economic growth, coupled with increasing concerns about social and income inequalities, social dialogue is indispensable. Social dialogue has a function to ensure businesses respect working conditions and consequently serves as a means to ensure accountability of businesses and private sector actors in their operations. Human rights mechanisms should guarantee dedicated and enforceable whistle-blower protection for workers. Unions have an important role to play in exposing and identifying corrupt practices.

Moreover, social dialogue is a vehicle for improving system effectiveness and equity, and enhancing the quality of service provision and delivery. Workers represent an invaluable source of knowledge not only in terms of working conditions and professional needs, but, importantly, in contributing to sector-wide and system-level improvements.

Finally, in many post conflict situations and countries transitioning to democracy, social dialogue has proven to be a powerful tool to stabilise social relationships and pave a way forward, by bringing around the table the economic and social actors and governments. Social dialogue has been at the heart of transitions to democratic and free societies in places like South Africa, Tunisia, Indonesia and many countries in the post-Soviet Eastern Europe.

4.3 What are the main changes you would like to see in the EU's development policy framework?

The EU’s development framework must fully align with the 2030 Agenda commitments, and set up a clear implementation and follow-up roadmap, both at

EU at Member State level. This necessarily means an alignment and coherence between the external policies of the EU dealing with development, i.e. trade, human rights, climate change, with Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) as a guiding tool.

Development policy should continue being one of the main instruments of EU external relations. The EU support is crucial for many partner countries to undertake the road of sustainable development and create wealth and decent jobs while reducing poverty and inequalities. Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR), a domain in which trade unions have been involved for decades, should be a prominent element of the new Consensus, particularly given the many challenges the 2030 Agenda seeks to address, which necessitate a deeper involvement of citizens and workers for their realisation.

The EU should sustain and increase its support for non-state actors in development. Particularly in the case of authoritarian and repressive regimes, where civil society and social partners find it difficult to defend their priorities and constituents. This is why pursuing an actor-based approach ensures the most relevant priorities in development, including decent work and social dialogue.

Another change trade unions would like to see is an increased accountability of the private sector as actors in development and development cooperation. While trade unions understand the contribution the private sector can make in job creation and economic growth, this should not prevent greater responsibility and duty from the private sector and multinational enterprises, to ensure their involvement in developing countries truly benefits the societies in which they operate.

Business compliance to binding social and environmental standards must be granted in order to achieve sustainable development. Compliance with ILO labour standards and environmental commitments, social dialogue, corporate accountability/transparency, country ownership, and development effectiveness principles must be the key compulsory criteria for any participation of private-sector actors in poverty eradication efforts and transition to sustainable production. Responsibility cannot be a voluntary concept as it concerns accountability for the consequences of one's actions. Moreover, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are clear that business enterprises must respect all of the recognised human rights. Operationalizing UN Guiding Principles are essential to any private sector role in rights-based development programs. Due diligence and addressing negative impacts of business activities are the essence of this approach and constitute the expectations of what constitutes responsible business behaviour.

Adherence and implementation of internationally recognised guidelines and principles concerning business behaviour and their accountability instruments (namely the ILO Conventions and standards, including the ILO Declaration on Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the UN Global Compact and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights) should become key conditions to grant private sector support in development cooperation. Compliance should

be linked to eligibility and an adequate monitoring system should lead to suspension of financial support in case of violations. To ensure policy coherence, the EU should also include these accountability mechanisms in the policies of investments banks such as the EIB.

This should be applicable to companies themselves, but also to development finance institutions (DFIs) that channel public money for private investment in developing countries. Special attention should be paid to the assessment and reporting related to new instruments on 'leveraging' aid modalities such as blending, guarantees, equity investments and PPPs. Blending and PPPs are often used for implicit support to public subsidy of European/international businesses operating in developing countries, risking undermining country ownership and untied aid commitments.

Both private sector/employers and trade unions are social partners, therefore trade unions would like to see that efforts to boost the private sector as an actor in development cooperation are equally addressed to include trade unions in development processes by the EU.

4.4 In which areas highlighted above would you expect to see greater consistency between development policy and other areas of the EU external action in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

A new EU development policy should ensure coherence with other instruments and EU external policies, such as trade, climate, human rights, gender and agriculture, to ensure development actions are not hindered by other uncoordinated action at headquarter level.

All EU trade instruments should be aligned with the SDGs, including Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). The labour chapter of these trade agreements should be aligned with SDG8. All countries must avoid giving up, via trade agreements, national tools for structural transformation and their capacities to define policies that would generate state revenues, create decent work and promote investment—both public and private—in different economic sectors.

Labour standards are gravely affected by global trade and investment patterns. Therefore, seeking to create fair trade, international trade and investment treaties and agreements should guarantee the enforceability of national labour laws and internationally recognized core labour standards based on stronger follow up and sanction mechanisms in the case of violations of ILO standards.

Active as promoter of multilateralism and global governance, the EU could make a significant contribution in trade agreements by requiring the ratification of core labour standards and ILO conventions by partner countries, prior to the signing of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements.

Development policy should be at the core of the next steps in asserting EU diplomacy through the EU Global Strategy. Development policy has a role to play in enhancing the EU's operational capacities to prevent conflict, support democracy and peace, manage crises and build alliances through mediation and dialogue, and promote and empower civil society.

4.5 In which areas does the EU have greatest value-added as a development partner (e.g. which aspects of its development policy, dialogue or implementation arrangements or in which category of countries)?

The EU has 3 main value-added benefits as a development actor: 1) the EU and its member states are the biggest donors in the world; 2) the EU's diplomatic reach covers the entire developing world; 3) EU development policy supports non-state actors, including social partners; 4) EU global role and its multilateral diplomacy at the UN and regional integration bodies, including the development effectiveness agenda.

Regarding development aid, the EU and its member states are the biggest donors in the world, which confers a big responsibility for the advancement of

economic, social and environmental progress in developing countries. That is why development finance, particularly in the SDG era, must primarily benefit developing countries. This includes assisting developing countries in domestic resource mobilisation, such as the establishment and/or enforcement of tax capacity and the fight against tax evasion and tax dodging by multinational companies that operate in their territory. Also, the EU should do more to make sure that private sector benefiting from ODA respects labour, social and environmental standards.

Regarding the EU's diplomatic reach, a vast network of EU delegations ensures in-the-field liaison with local communities in almost all partner countries, which proves useful to understand development needs and also report to headquarters in order to increase coherence with other EU external policies (e.g. trade, human rights, gender, climate). Trade unions believe EU delegations could play a bigger role in mediating and providing capacity-building to social partners to engage in social dialogue, which has the potential to address social tensions and mediate conflict in conflict-affected communities, based on a rights-framework, and to improve conditions for workers and their families, while ensuring economic stability.

Regarding support to non-state actors, the EU has great leverage when supporting non-state actors, which play a key role in the development of partner countries' economies and social protection systems. Basic human and labour rights are under threat in many countries, and must be defended with vigour and commitment. Autocratic and repressive regimes are increasingly efficient in undermining human rights, democracy, freedom of association and the development of an active civil society. International actors can play a unique role in providing political and operational support for the independence and autonomy of CSOs in the partner country, in fostering their right to participate and be included and consulted in governance and policy processes, and in promoting social dialogue and other mechanisms for democratic participation. The inclusion of diverse stakeholders in the shaping of EU development policy also serves as an example of multi-stakeholder inclusion to partner countries.

Regarding its global and diplomatic role, the EU has been promoting a human rights-based approach (HRBA) in international arenas and processes, for the promotion of human rights, democracy, rule of law and good governance. This is crucial for the realisation of the SDGs, particularly in fragile contexts. The respect of basic human rights also is a pre-condition for the creation and sustainment of decent work, social dialogue and social protection. The active participation of the EU and its member states in the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) also ensures that HRBA cuts through global development cooperation, while promoting the development effective principles in EU development actions.

4.6 How can the EU refine its development policy to better address inequalities – including gender inequality – in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

Our world is experiencing increasing inequalities. The richer are becoming richer, and the poor are becoming poorer. Inequality has an important impact in the empowerment of people, increasing vulnerability and situations of slavery. That triggers instability, forced migration, modern slavery and many other repercussions in segments of society which are not responsible for their own fate. By promoting decent work and the Decent Work agenda in development policy and other external tools of the EU (e.g. trade policy, humanitarian aid, human rights), basic requirements are set for peoples to enjoy a decent life and also to ensure more resilient societies.

Trade unions ask the EU to live up to its commitment to champion decent work opportunities, fight poverty and inequality and widen access to public services and social security. As much as sustainable development relies on secure and resilient countries, efforts by EU external action including development policy should focus on security and defence as much as on human development, job opportunities, inclusive societies and human rights. Where it supports human security and social protection, the promotion of an enabling environment for new economic endeavours, employment and the inclusion of marginalised groups by the EU is a step in the right direction.

The EU recognises the role of civil society and social partners in helping ensuring societal resilience, particularly in a global context of shrinking space for these actors, including through violations of the freedoms of speech and association. The EU should commit for long-term support to global and local civil society, also through their involvement in early warning and conflict prevention. The role of civil society and social partners is critical to tackling inequalities, but their participation is quite often dwarfed as basic human and labour rights are consistently violated or not respected or enacted. In line with SDG16 on transparent, participatory and accountable governance, the EU should promote greater participation of civil society and social partners in all aspects of governance in developing countries, and ensure this participation is institutionalised, as in the case of social dialogue.

The EU should promote a rules-based global order with multilateralism as its key principle and the United Nations at its core, including the rules governing global value chains. Trade Unions demand labour standards and more binding mechanisms for private sector accountability in development are part of these efforts. Same goes to the emergence of private development cooperation, in the form of public-private partnerships and blended finance. This should apply to EU trade agreements, which are a key tool for the development of partner countries.

To realise all this, raising the overall amount dedicated to EU development cooperation is needed, and trade unions reiterate the EU's commitment to achieve the 0.7% ODA/GNI target in line with DAC principles. In this sense, EU development policy should become more flexible, with stable funds but shorter

programming cycles, and more flexibility in making limited sums available for civil society support.

As much as it is plausible to raise the EU development envelope, trade unions remain vigilant on how these funds are used to address the refugee crisis and security challenges. There should be a clear separation between envelopes, never at the detriment of EU development policy.

4.7 How can the EU development policy make a stronger contribution to the security of people? How can EU development policy contribute to addressing the root causes of conflict and fragility and contribute to security and resilience in all the countries where we work?

Extreme inequalities and lack of empowerment are also at the root of fragility and conflicts. Unemployment, especially among youth, has been recognised as a core source of increasing inequality, also driven by the expanding negative impact on economic and social development of the growing informal sector, particularly for women.

As an instrument of social and economic governance for development, social dialogue can contribute effectively to the development effectiveness agenda. It provides more ownership to people, in particular workers, helps to increase accountability and strengthen domestic policies, and contributes to the design and implementation of better redistribution policies. Social dialogue also facilitates social peace and is a forceful instrument for reconciliation and reconstruction.

Because social and economic governance are critical when defining and implementing development strategies, social dialogue has been identified as one of the strongest and most effective instruments to deliver on these principles, by directly involving the institutions, and actors within these institutions, governing the economic and social spheres. Development policies should be based on genuine democratic ownership, inclusiveness, accountability and oriented towards results.

Social dialogue is not pre-ordained and requires both the political will and an environment that welcomes it. As a prerequisite, it has to allow both workers and employers representations to exist and function equally and effectively. This begins with respect for fundamental freedoms of right to association and right to collective bargaining, representative and independent employers and workers' organizations, sound industrial relations practices, functioning labour administrations, including labour inspection, and respect for the "social partners" (understood as workers and employers' organizations) as the other building blocks of social dialogue.

Effective social dialogue can strengthen economic and social governance, stimulate inclusive growth and combat inequality. It can foster stable and peaceful societies through social cohesion and dispute resolution, while also

enhancing accountability and democratic ownership.

In many conflict-afflicted areas, reconstruction and reconciliation are key to community and state building. In many post conflict situations and countries transitioning to democracy, social dialogue has proven to be a powerful tool to stabilise social relationships. It can pave a way forward by bringing around the table economic and social actors and governments. Examples of South Africa, Tunisia, Indonesia and many countries in the post-Soviet Eastern Europe show how social dialogue has been at the heart of transitions to democratic and free societies.

This is why the EU should help, through development policy and other EU external instruments, to build strong, resilient and flourishing civil societies and social partners, which can help reducing inequalities, provide services and welfare and reduce poverty. The EU can offer financial support for these organisations to avoid relying on national government funding, at least until these governments can guarantee non-intervention in CSO matters.

4.8 How can a revised Consensus on Development better harness the opportunities presented by migration, minimise the negative aspects of irregular migration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and better address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement?

Trade unions believe that opportunities offered by migration should be matched with greater observance and respect of human rights for migrants, particularly those in a situation of forced and slave labour. The new Consensus should highlight the positive aspects of labour migration, but also the negative aspects which force people to migrate, including global inequalities, economic disparities and systemic issues. Moreover, forced displacement should be clearly distinguished from migration issues. Whereas migration has in most cases an economic motivation, forced displacement can be motivated by climate disaster, humanitarian need and conflicts like war, as well as human trafficking and forced and slave labour.

That is why the new Consensus should clearly state the importance of development policy in triggering economic, social and environmental progress in partner countries. The EU and its stakeholders should launch specific campaigns to put forward the benefits of labour migration, while informing on the causes of this migration (climate, conflict, crisis) and the challenges that migrant workers face.

Migration is recognised in the 2030 Agenda as potential development enabler. For this to work, migration has to be addressed through a human rights-based approach, targeting the root causes of migration flows, ensuring the respect for fundamental rights of migrants and deconstructing the discourse of the securitisation of borders.

ODA should not be made conditional to borders control or to increase national security borders. Using development funds to build the capacities of military actors and to provide them with equipment to manage migration raises the concern that donor interests are being prioritised over those of people in partner countries.

(5) Means of implementation: how do we get there?

The principle of universality underpinning the 2030 Agenda will require a differentiated approach to engagement with countries at all levels of development. Official Development Assistance will continue to play an important role in the overall financing mix for those countries most in need (particularly the Least Developed Countries). The EU and its Member States should continue to progress towards achieving their commitments. However, in all countries our development cooperation will need to take account of other sources of finance, including by leveraging other (non-Official Development Assistance) sources of finance for poverty eradication and sustainable development. The delivery of the 2030 Agenda means that our work helping countries raise their own resources (domestic resource mobilisation), the provision of aid for trade, blending* and partnering with the private sector should be priority areas of focus. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, provides a framework for our efforts, including for our work supporting the right enabling policy environment for sustainable development in our partner countries. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should be closely coordinated given the strong interlinkages. Engagement with middle income countries, notably the emerging economies, will be important to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, considering the role they can play in promoting global public goods, what they can achieve within their respective countries on poverty eradication and sustainable development, and the example they can set within their regions as well as their role in regional processes. Here differentiated partnerships can play an important role (examples include different forms of political, economic, and financial investment as well as cooperation in science, technology and innovation). Specific attention and focus should also be given to Least Developed Countries, as acknowledged by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

The EU's implementation of the 2030 Agenda provides an opportunity for enhancing consistency between the different areas of the EU's external action and between these and other EU policies (as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and in [EU's Comprehensive Approach to external conflict and crises](#)). The EU will continue to pursue [Policy Coherence for Development](#) as a key contribution to the collective effort towards broader policy coherence for sustainable development. In our external action, the EU needs to consider how we can use all policies, tools, instruments at our disposal coherently in line with the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda.

* Combining EU grants with loans or with equity from other public and private financiers with a view to leveraging additional resources.

5.1 How can EU policies, and EU development policy in particular, help to mobilise and maximise the impact of the increasing variety of sustainable development finance, including in particular from the private sector?

The EU can help mobilising and maximising development finance by: 1) preventing the reduction of ODA and achieving the 0.7% target; 2) fighting tax dodging and tax evasion by EU multinational enterprises operating in developing countries and by assisting the taxing capacities of national authorities in those partner countries. This is done both by private sector in developing countries paying their tax share, but also by the EU helping in the fight against illicit financial flows.

Concerning the role of ODA, financial additionality should be ensured by establishing indicators that assess financial needs as well as opportunity costs in relation to other development concerns, and by creating eligibility criteria that favours the domestic private sector that abides to ILO standards and takes into account track records of the private sector actor in delivering development results.

Given the problems in measuring additionality, intended development outcomes need to be clarified and ensure that public investments to the private sector translate to sustainable livelihoods, observance of labour rights, generation of quality employment, and improvement of social and environmental outcomes. Aid resources should primarily be used to reduce poverty and inequality and achieve development goals. The goal of any private sector engagement in development should be producing positive development outcomes and this should not be obscured by the drive to create and increase profit.

The EU should promote a global framework, modelled on the development effectiveness principles that can also be applied to all forms of support to the private sector. This should particularly include, alignment with the country's development priorities and an inclusive approach to citizen engagement (i.e. CSOs, trade unions (through social dialogue) and local communities, in addition to private sector actors). These principles must be consistent with democratic ownership and the use of country systems including in public procurement including fully untying aid to ensure that aid resources can be used most effectively and efficiently and can target strategic partners in the private sector, namely those contributing to sustainable development and more specifically respecting ILO standards.

The tools used to record and monitor ODA support to the private sector should be improved. Special attention should be paid to assessment and reporting related to new instruments on 'leveraging' aid modalities such as blending, guarantees, equity investments and PPPs. Blending and PPPs are often used for implicit support to public subsidy of European/international businesses operating in developing countries, risking undermining country ownership and untied aid commitments.

5.2 Given the evolving availability of other sources of finance and bearing in mind the EU's commitments on Official Development Assistance (e.g. [Council Conclusions from 26 May 2015 on "A New Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015"](#), and inter alia, paragraphs 32 and 33), how and where should the EU use its Official Development Assistance strategically and to maximise its impact?

ODA should primarily be addressed to reducing and eliminating poverty, including through the creation and promotion of decent work and social dialogue.

Private sector has been upgraded as a main actor for development finance. While trade unions acknowledge the role of private sector in creating jobs and growth, we denounce the privatisation of the development agenda, and the uncritical approach taken by international organisations and development finance institutions of mechanisms such as blending and public-private partnerships (PPPs).

Trade unions insist on greater transparency and accountability for blending mechanisms, which can become instruments for tied aid. Furthermore, the often blind support for PPPs in developing countries - as opposed to traditional public procurement and public services - is irresponsible in the view of trade unions.

The labour movement has serious concerns about PPPs schemes for financing infrastructure and services because of the complexity of the contractual arrangements (as compared to traditional public procurement), the unequal and uncertain distribution of risks between government and private investors and, importantly, because of the threats to public services. In practice, PPPs have often proven to lead to over-priced public services as well as to situations, where gains are privatised, while losses are socialised.

Business compliance to binding social and environmental standards must be granted if we want to achieve sustainable development. Compliance with ILO labour standards and environmental commitments, social dialogue, corporate accountability/transparency, country ownership, and development effectiveness principles must be the key compulsory criteria for any participation of private-sector actors in poverty eradication efforts and transition to sustainable production. Responsibility cannot be a voluntary concept as it concerns accountability for the consequences of one's actions. Moreover, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are clear that business enterprises must respect all of the recognised human rights. Operationalizing UN Guiding Principles are essential to any private sector role in rights-based development programs. Due diligence and addressing negative impacts of business activities are the essence of this approach and constitute the expectations of what constitutes responsible business behaviour.

Adherence and implementation of internationally recognised guidelines and principles concerning business behaviour and their accountability instruments (namely the ILO Conventions and standards, including the ILO Declaration on Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, the OECD

Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the UN Global Compact and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights) should become key conditions to grant private sector support in development cooperation. Compliance should be linked to eligibility and an adequate monitoring system should lead to suspension of financial support in case of violations. To ensure policy coherence, the EU should also include these accountability mechanisms in the policies of investments banks such as the EIB.

Trade Unions demand that social partners are included on an equal footing in policy-making processes around private sector support in development, at global, regional and national levels. Social dialogue constitutes not only a means to improve socio-economic conditions (mode of implementation of sustainable development), but it is also a concrete tool to grant accountability of business as opposed to voluntary approaches and to achieve local ownership of development policies. Social dialogue constitutes not only a means to improve socio-economic conditions (mode of implementation of sustainable development), but it is also a concrete tool to grant accountability of business as opposed to voluntary approaches and to achieve ownership of development policies.

5.3 How can the EU better support partner countries in mobilising their own resources for poverty eradication and sustainable development?

The EU should support partner countries in claiming what is theirs, primarily uncollected tax due to tax evasion, tax dodging and illicit financial flows. Partner countries could benefit from assistance in domestic resource mobilisation, such as the establishment and/or enforcement of tax capacity and the fight against tax evasion and tax dodging by multinational companies that operate in their territory. Also, the EU should do more to make sure that private sector benefiting from ODA respects labour, social and environmental standards.

It is well understood that achieving the Agenda 2030 will require the mobilization of significant financial resources, and it will also require significant support through non-financial means. Without active and strong labour market institutions, social dialogue and collective bargaining, meeting the decent work related goals and targets will prove very difficult. The evidence presented at the outset draws a strong correlation between weakened labour market institutions and increased inequality. Consequently, social dialogue will be a critical means of implementation in the coming years if the SDGs are to be realized. However, this requires an enabling environment and an effective institutional framework underpinned first and foremost for the respect and protection of the fundamental freedoms and rights at work.

5.4 Given the importance of middle income countries to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, what form could differentiated partnerships take?

Poverty anywhere is a danger to prosperity everywhere. The EU approach to middle-income countries (MICs) should be holistic and be based beyond macroeconomic indicators, which hide fundamental internal inequalities. The EU should take into account other indicators of economic performance, notably informal labour, social protection ratio, safety nets, wage policies, etc. MICs cannot be singled out as a homogeneous group of countries. They differ in terms of economic and social development, infrastructure and access to markets.

As research by trade unions has shown, a country 'graduating' as MIC does not ensure a sound and open participation of civil society and social partners in governance and policy processes. Therefore, support from the EU should focus on addressing this situation and promoting social dialogue and other multi-stakeholder frameworks to ensure inclusiveness and transparency of policy processes in MIC countries.

In the process of reducing ODA to MICs, aid to CSOs and social partners should be maintained to ensure their participation and influence in public life. As MICs progress economically, strategic aid should be channelled to address issues like social dialogue and collective bargaining, social protection and social security, upskilling and training for workers, fight against corruption, strengthening of institutions and of tax authorities, fight against tax evasion and illicit financial flows, regional integration efforts, conflict resolution, education, gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities, youth policy and provision of public services.

5.5 Given experience so far in taking into account the objectives of development cooperation in the implementation of EU policies which are likely to affect developing countries (e.g. [Policy Coherence for Development: 2015 EU Report](#)), how should the EU step up its efforts to achieve Policy Coherence for Development, as a key contribution to the collective effort towards policy coherence for sustainable development? How can we help ensure that policies in developing countries, and internationally contribute coherently to sustainable development priorities?

The key to ensuring policy coherence lies in the thorough analysis of underlying causes (including systemic and institutional failures) that result in poverty, inequality and environmental degradation. Ensuring that the new development framework properly addresses these issues will automatically require improving policy coherence between sectors on national and international level.

In order to make sure that the analysis is sound and comprehensive, the elaboration of the framework should engage not only development and economy experts, but also experts and policy makers from other domains, incl. labour, social protection, gender, agriculture etc. It is also crucial that in the analysis the voices and perspectives of people most directly affected by the development challenges are fully heard and reflected.

(6) The actors: making it work together

An important feature of the new Agenda is that all governments, developed and developing, will need to work with a wide range of stakeholders (including the private sector, civil society and research institutions) to improve the transparency and inclusivity of decision-making, planning, service delivery, and monitoring and to ensure synergy and complementarity.

The EU must continue to work collaboratively with others and contribute to a coordinated approach. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda puts national plans for implementation (including associated financing and policy frameworks) at the centre. To maximise our impact, EU development policy should be based on a strategic and comprehensive strategy for each country, which also responds to the country-specific context.

Our partner countries' implementation of the 2030 Agenda will inform our overall engagement and our development cooperation dialogue with them and will help shape our support for their national efforts. The EU should also help partner countries put in place the necessary enabling policy frameworks to eradicate poverty, tackle sustainable development challenges and enhance their policy coherence.

There is a need for a renewed emphasis on the quality of development cooperation, including existing commitments on aid and development effectiveness made in Paris, Accra and Busan* and through work with the [Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#).

An updated EU development policy should also provide a shared vision that guides the action of the EU and Member States in development cooperation, putting forward proposals on how to further enhance coordination, complementarity and coherence between EU and Member States. Strengthening [Joint Programming](#) will be an important part of this. Improving the division of labour between the EU and its Member States in order to reduce aid fragmentation will also contribute to increased development effectiveness.

* See [Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action](#) and the [Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)

6.1 How should the EU strengthen its partnerships with civil society, foundations, the business community, parliaments and local authorities and academia to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (including the integral Addis Ababa Action Agenda) and the Paris Agreement on climate change?

Trade Unions reiterate their offer to EU to work closely in alliance so as to identify in each partner country credible, representative and democratic unions, who actively strive to promote and defend workers' rights. These unions deserve support of the EU in capacity building so as to be credible vehicles for development, decent work including social protection and the reduction of inequalities (including wage policies), and first and foremost need to be considered as strategic partners to further the aims of eradication of poverty and sustainable development.

The effective participation of civil society and social partners assume their involvement in decision making. On each of the aspects of the partnership, global involvement of civil society is now essential. But it is up to each society to remind their politicians the importance of civil society participation in the process and to demand its involvement by taking a position on all issues affecting our countries. Whether NGOs, trade unions, farmers or other civil society organisations, they must all mobilize to participate in all negotiations on future agreements.

The EU structured dialogue on development and its successor, the EU Policy Forum on Development, offers an opportunity for the EU to formalize relations with non-state actors of development cooperation. However, for this framework to have a real impact in EU policies and for CSOs to offer guidance in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the multi-stakeholder and inclusive approach needs to break the silos of DG DEVCO and be mainstreamed throughout all EU institutions' departments working on 2030 Agenda.

Trade unions as CSOs and social partners have among the highest degrees of representativeness and outreach, which can be translated into an effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda both inside and outside the EU. Trade unions were and are actively involved in the MDGs, post-2015 and SDGs processes, and will mobilise and engage the trade union globally on the 2030 Agenda, being proactive on advocacy and implementation of the SDGs, and pursuing shadow monitoring on 2030 Agenda implementation, also by EU development policies.

6.2 How can the EU promote private sector investment for sustainable development?

Trade unions would like to see an increased accountability of the private sector as actors in development and development cooperation. While trade unions understand the contribution the private sector can make in job creation and economic growth, this should not prevent greater responsibility and duty from the private sector and multinational enterprises, to ensure their involvement in developing countries truly benefits the societies in which they operate.

With increasing interest in the private sector as a development actor, existing instruments for responsible business conduct should assume additional importance. Adherence and implementation of internationally recognised guidelines and principles concerning business behaviour and their accountability instruments described above should become a key condition to grant private sector support in development cooperation. Compliance should be linked to eligibility and an adequate monitoring system should lead to suspension of financial support in case of violations. This would be crucial to address economic development in an inclusive and multi-stakeholder way, including social dialogue, and to truly integrate rights-based approaches to development.

The EU and its member states should agree on a coherent narrative about the role of the private sector in development in order to make sure that no areas or countries in need are left behind. Also, agree on a global framework, modelled on the development effectiveness principles that can also be applied to all forms of support to the private sector. This should particularly include, alignment with the country's development priorities and an inclusive approach to citizen engagement (i.e. CSOs, trade unions (through social dialogue) and local communities, in addition to private sector actors). These principles must be consistent with democratic ownership and the use of country systems including in public procurement.

The EU and its member states should align international efforts and resources to improve donor engagement with the private sector with the areas that are more likely to make a significant contribution to achieve international development goals. Given the importance of donor and developing countries' procurement systems in the context of aid delivery and that its impact extends well beyond its realm, more attention should be paid to aid resources used to reduce poverty and inequality and achieve development goals. The goal of any private sector engagement in development should be producing positive development outcomes and this should not be obscured by the drive to create and increase profit. Donors should commit to fully untying aid to ensure that aid resources can be used most effectively and efficiently and can target strategic partners in the private sector. Lastly, private sector should not become a suitable replacement to the state in delivering essential public services, and as a result public finance should continue to be used to strengthen state institutions and strong public services.

6.3 How can the EU strengthen relations on sustainable development with other countries, international financing institutions, multilateral development banks, emerging donors and the UN system?

The EU has been at the forefront of the post-2015 process, and should make the most of its universal character to ensure compliance and achievement of all the goals and targets by traditional and emerging donors, beneficiaries and the UN system.

When it comes to development cooperation by new and emerging donors, the EU should promote the benefits of the development effectiveness principles, including its multi-stakeholder nature and the human rights-based approach.

The EU should focus its efforts in the existing multilateral structures (UN, WTO) and reinforce them. However, new structured relations can be created and take the form of Leaders, Ministers' and officials meetings that are open to unions and civil society. The ASEM is one process of dialogue between Asia and Europe - others exist with Latin America and Africa. The EU could push for these dialogue processes to turn into a solid partnership in the form of a new international organization with a charter, a basis, a secretariat and its own enforcement (soft or hard) mechanisms. The work of such dialogue processes and relationships needs to align with the SDGs and be oriented to action, instead of a series of meetings and conferences whose outcomes are rarely followed-up as they are now. For this, the EU and other partners need to put in resources and also institutions that have the ability to enforce common decisions, leading to more integration globally.

6.4 How can the EU best support partner countries to develop comprehensive and inclusive national plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

The EU should lead the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and promote this spirit in partner countries, encouraging governments to develop comprehensive national plans that include civil society and social partners in all stages of implementation and follow-up.

The EU should support capacity-building and training of non-state actors to keep track of partner countries' performance in SDG implementation, reporting and follow-up, with the goal of civil society and social partners to be sources of information for SDGs indicators. EU delegations could play a more active role in this sense, training trainers and providing capacity-building for local civil society and social partners to be acquainted on the 2030 Agenda and their possible watchdog role vis-à-vis their national governments.

6.5 What are the best ways to strengthen and improve coherence, complementarity and coordination between the EU and the Member States in their support to help partner countries achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development?

The EU should function as a hub for member states to describe and update on the modalities and practicalities of 2030 Agenda implementation and follow-up, including responsible ministries, national action plans and sharing best practices. Moreover, given the regional nature of SDG review and follow-up, the EU and its member states should coordinate their work at UNECE level, in order not to duplicate efforts.

In the case of EU development policy, where the competence is shared with EU member states, there should be a clear coherence in actions of the EU and its member states in monitoring the implementation of 2030 Agenda in development actions.

Civil society including social partners should be included in any effort to improve coherence, complementarity and coordination of EU and member states efforts to implement, monitor and follow up the 2030 Agenda.

6.6 How can EU development cooperation be as effective as possible, and how can we work with all partners to achieve this?

The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) is an already existing framework that offers clear and inclusive development effective principles the EU can apply to their development cooperation actions. The multi-stakeholder nature of the GPEDC and the participation of partner countries in its governance offers a degree of inclusiveness that should be emulated by other global development processes.

The EU should continue supporting the GPEDC, by increased funding and participation of EU member states, as well as encouraging participation of emerging donors which are not fully engaged with the GPEDC. The multi-stakeholder nature of the GPEDC means many non-state actors, including trade unions, are actively committed to making the development effectiveness principles the how-to for effective development cooperation.

The effectiveness of development also relies on policy coherence. If trade agreements undermine labour standards of partner countries, the developmental nature of it will be hindered. That is why policy coherence lies at the core of effective EU development policy.

6.7 What further progress could be made in EU Joint Programming, and how could this experience be linked with other EU joined-up actions in supporting countries' delivery of the 2030 Agenda?

Joint programming should give greater emphasis to the situation of civil society and social partners in partner countries. This means greater emphasis on promoting an enabling environment and protecting the space for civil society, human right defenders, non-state actors committed with 2030 Agenda implementation. As such, civil society and social partners should be considered as key components and partners in EU Joint Programming, therefore being consulted and included in this mechanism.

The EU should proactively integrate decent work and social dialogue into its own economic development projects and those which it supports through the UN and development banks.

(7) Keeping track of progress

The EU will need to contribute to the global follow-up and review process for the 2030 Agenda. Keeping track of progress in a systematic and transparent way is essential for delivering the 2030 Agenda. The EU is actively contributing to the setting up of a Sustainable Development Goal monitoring system at global, regional and national level. Demonstrating results and impact from our efforts and the promotion of transparency will be important priorities for EU development policy, as part of a wider move to strengthen accountability, follow-up and review at all levels.

7.1 How can the EU strengthen its own use of evidence and analysis, including in the development field, to feed into its regular review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the UN?

The EU should proactively participate in the monitoring and follow-up process of the 2030 Agenda, just as UN member states are expected to do until 2030. This should be done both at regional level (UNECE) and global (HLPF). The EU should encourage its Member States to report their progress in relation to 2030 Agenda implementation.

As the world's biggest donor, the EU and its member states have valuable information that can assist the monitoring of SDGs indicators' realisation. Trade unions believe the EU should also evaluate how its external action policies and tools, particularly EU development policy, contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Trade unions would like the development policy of the EU and its member states to contribute to the achievement of 2030 Agenda targets on decent work, ending inequality, promoting gender equality and just transition.

7.2 How can the EU help to ensure the accountability of all actors involved in implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the private sector? How can the EU encourage a strong and robust approach to the Follow Up and Review of the 2030 Agenda from all actors?

With increasing interest in the private sector as a development actor, existing instruments for business accountability should assume additional importance. Adherence and implementation of internationally recognised guidelines and principles concerning business behaviour and their accountability instruments (namely the ILO Conventions and standards, including the ILO Declaration on Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the UN Global Compact and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights) should become key condition to grant private sector support in development cooperation. Compliance should be linked to eligibility and an adequate monitoring system should lead to suspension of financial support in case of violations. To ensure policy coherence, the EU should also include these accountability mechanisms in the policies of investments banks such as the EIB.

Social dialogue has a function to ensure businesses respect working conditions and consequently serves as a means to ensure accountability of businesses and private sector actors in their operations. Human rights mechanisms should guarantee dedicated and enforceable whistle-blower protection for workers. Unions have an important role to play in exposing and identifying corrupt practices.

Trade Unions demand that social partners are included on an equal footing in policy-making processes around private sector support in development, at global, regional and national levels. Social dialogue constitutes not only a means to improve socio-economic conditions (mode of implementation of sustainable development), but it is also a concrete tool to grant accountability of business as opposed to voluntary approaches and to achieve ownership of development policies.

7.3 How should EU development cooperation respond to the regular reviews on progress of the partner countries towards the 2030 Agenda goals?

EU development cooperation plays a big role in the realisation of the 2030 Agenda, considering the weight of aid by the EU and its members states worldwide. The amount of data gathered by EU development actions and projects surely constitutes valuable data to measure the progress of partner countries, but also of EU institutions, EU member states and their development policies vis-à-vis SDG implementation.

The EU should coordinate with the UN and UNECE and other regional bodies to pursue a coherent and sound review and follow up process.

Within the EU, there should be a hub of information between the different directorates-general dealing with the external aspect of SDG implementation, particularly related to development, trade, human rights, and climate, in order to assess the adequacy of EU policies in general and EU development policy in particular for the realisation of SDGs.

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