

## European Year for Development 2015

### What is the European Year?

The year 2015 will be the European Year for Development. Every year since 1983 – when the focus topic was small business and the craft industry – the European Union (EU) has chosen a theme that gains high publicity and focus. The aim of the European years is to raise awareness about the issue, organise cross-border events and actions, and to bring the specific topic closer to **European citizens**. Generating debate and dialogue on the topic across borders, on international, national and local levels is often the main goal.

2015 is the first EU year where the topic has gone beyond the EU's internal policies and brought external policy issues to the fore. The European Year for Development (EYD) will take place at a crucial time for development cooperation: the UN Millennium Development Goals will expire at the end of 2015 and during 2015 the international community has to agree on a new framework that will define the next 15 years of development cooperation globally.

The world is facing multiple global challenges – from prevailing hunger crises and climate change to gender-based discrimination – and new efficient and sustainable solutions are needed. To address these and other complex challenges, engagement and understanding is needed from governments and

decision-makers, but also from citizens and civil society as each has a role to play in bringing solutions.

This policy digest will look at various aspects of the European Year for Development 2015. Firstly, the main issues to be discussed during the EYD will be outlined. Secondly, the messages civil society actors and EU hope to get across the union will be explored. Thirdly, civil society action plans for the year on European level will be addressed. Fourthly, practical info about EYD plans in some of the Central, Eastern and Southern European EU member states – the so called EU13 counties – will be presented.

### What are EU's main objectives for EYD?

The official motto of the EYD2015 is '**Our world, our dignity, our future**'. The motto focuses on the dignity of every person on the planet, including people living in extreme poverty in the world more than 100 million of which live in EU countries<sup>1</sup>. The EU hopes during the year to:

- **inform** EU citizens about the EU's and the Member States' development cooperation;
- foster direct involvement, **critical thinking** and active interest of EU citizens and stakeholders in

<sup>1</sup> <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/eyd2015/minisite/general-questions-ed2015/what-are-priorities-eyd-2015-why-these-ones>

development cooperation;

- **raise awareness** of the benefits of EU development cooperation not only for beneficiaries of the union's development assistance but also for EU citizens and to achieve a broader understanding of **policy coherence for development**.<sup>2</sup>

The goals of the year can only be achieved if the EU fully involves its citizens and civil society in the year's activities in a participatory manner.

### What are the messages of CONCORD for the EYD?

Civil society actors were behind the idea of the EYD and participated in the formulation of the concept of the year, namely the Latvian development CSO platform LAPAS and CONCORD, together with the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament. The members of CONCORD – the European confederation for relief and development NGOs – have come up with messages and values that are essential to realize the above mentioned goals for the EYD.

- **Universality**
- **Solidarity**
- **Engagement**
- **Support**
- **Responsibility**

*Universality, solidarity and engagement* go hand in hand with each other. In order to generate real and sustainable changes one has to think globally but act locally because everybody and everything is connected; we can only defeat global challenges when acting not only *for* others, but *with* others. So it is important to establish a strong engagement and commitment among citizens, civil society and decision-makers that is built on solidarity and is driven by *responsibility* that is not about “what we give” but about “how we live”. *Responsibility* is very important, because our everyday choices are those that determine our life, our future, but also our wider community, so it has an effect on the global level too. CONCORD will Support every actor in its work towards the goal of shaping of our world, our dignity, our future.

<sup>2</sup> <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/eyd2015/minisite/eyd-keyfacts>

### Citizens' engagement – making development sustainable for the future

Tackling problems at the global level demands new resources and partnerships – development cooperation policy remains an important instrument of the EU and its member states to eradicate extreme poverty globally. While governments and politicians are often “trapped” in bureaucratic issues and lack the political will to engage in this policy, worldwide millions of people are victims of war, poverty and hunger.

Global solidarity can only be achieved by active citizens' involvement and commitment to development. Despite the economic downturn and other domestic challenges, EU citizens show their support for the developing countries, with more than 80% saying that Europe should continue to offer assistance to poorer countries<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, people acknowledge they can play a role as an individual in global responsibility for poverty in developing countries. Citizens have the power to promote sustainable development and to make a difference in the lives of communities throughout the world by:

- getting involved as volunteers/facilitators in developing countries;
- signing petitions, letters and influencing decision-makers, politicians, local and national authorities – those who have the power to make a change (e.g. My World 2015<sup>4</sup>, Beyond 2015 Campaign<sup>5</sup>);
- campaigning and promoting global issues and having a sustainable lifestyle at home – “think global, act local”;
- educating children to respect such values as solidarity, equality, democracy, responsibility, etc.

The European Year for Development is a great opportunity for civil society organisations (CSOs) from EU13 countries to engage their citizens, governments and organisations from different sectors in discussion about the role EU13 countries play as donors and the impact they have in the partner countries. Moreover, this is a great opportunity to link development issues with national and European policies that affect partner countries and their development, such as trade, education, security and migration, and organize discussion addressing policy coherence for development<sup>6</sup>. Many CSOs have already started to

<sup>3</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-1131\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1131_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup> <http://vote.myworld2015.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.beyond2015.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Read TRIALOG Policy Digest on Policy Coherence for Development to find out more about this concept.

design activities which involve citizens, aiming at increasing their involvement in development education campaigns and the new Sustainable Development Goals.

### What are the coordinated pan-European CSO activities during EYD?

CONCORD will create a **Civil Society Alliance for EYD2015**. It will be an open network of European and national CSOs willing to promote the messages of the EYD and engage in joint activities. The stakeholders of the alliance will include mainly European CSOs working in different sectors, such as development cooperation, youth, environment, gender equality, social and humanitarian affairs. Some of the organizations that will soon sign up to the alliance are Fair Trade Advocacy Office, European Women's Lobby and European Youth Forum.

There are some **pan-European activities** that the Civil Society Alliance for EYD2015 (CSA) will undertake and participate in. Keep checking the EYD2015 website which will most likely be [www.europa.eu/eyd2015](http://www.europa.eu/eyd2015) for more updates and info about these events, but they include among others: the EYD2015 opening event in Latvia on 9 January 2015; NGO standpoint and side events in Expo2015 in May 2015 in Milan, Italy; activities during the European Development Days on 3-4 June 2015 in Brussels; two civil society conferences in Brussels; and EYD2015 closing event in Luxembourg in December.

CSOs from different countries also have the opportunity to join up and organise joint activities through the pan-European CSO project during the EYD. The aim of these projects would be to foster critical discussions on and engagement for global justice among the European population. These activities will have a cross-sectoral approach where organisations from the development sector join up with CSOs from different fields. The nature of the activities can be from local and regional to national and international. The CONCORD-led EYD project will allow CSOs to **apply for different sized grants** from 7000 EUR to 60 000 EUR for such activities. The call for applications is likely to be launched in December 2014 with the deadline for the presentation of the projects in January 2015. More info will be posted soon on [www.concordeurope.org](http://www.concordeurope.org).

During the EYD2015, the CSA will cooperate with the global and European **Action/2015 campaign**. Action/2015 campaign wants to influence two processes that culminate in 2015, namely the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP-UNFCCC) and the finalisation of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. The CSO campaign will work towards inspiring actions that empower the marginalised and collectively tackle the root causes of inequality, injustice, poverty and climate change. The CSA for EYD2015 will create linkages with the campaign, especially by creating opportunities for interaction with **non-European voices** for the EYD2015.

The CSA also plans to gather input from citizens on development cooperation policy and formulate them into **policy recommendations**. Also, a **video about responsible consumption** will be developed, that can be used as a campaigning material by numerous CSOs.

### What is happening in EU13 countries during EYD?

During the EYD, European Commission will allocate grants for each EU member state to engage in national activities specially designed for the year. Each country will decide what activities exactly they will organise and who is involved in organising them. Although each country will focus on awareness raising about development issues, there are some differences in the focus in each member state. In most EU13 countries the development CSO platforms will play an active role in implementing activities for the EYD. Find out more details about EYD in each EU13 country in the table on the next page. Also, keep visiting the link **capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu** as each member state, civil society and CONCORD will have a separate page there informing about their EYD activities.



### What can I do?

- Include activities connected to EYD in your work plan and brand them EYD2015.
- Advertise your actions, events, initiatives on the general EC EYD2015 website sending articles, blogs through CONCORD.
- Engage citizens in critical thinking about development cooperation and Europe's role in it.
- Cooperate with a diverse group of actors from different sectors in activities connected to the EYD.
- Apply for CONCORD EYD project grants in cooperation with other civil society actors.

Country	Main national implementer of EYD activities	Important focus topic during the EYD / Where to find more info?
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Diplomatic Institute	<a href="http://www.bdi.mfa.government.bg">www.bdi.mfa.government.bg</a>
<b>Croatia</b>	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia	<a href="http://www.mvep.hr">www.mvep.hr</a>
<b>Cyprus</b>	Cyprus Islandwide Development NGO Platform (CYINDEP)	Discrimination faced by women & girls, especially in terms of access to education & labour <a href="http://www.facebook.com/Cyindep">www.facebook.com/Cyindep</a>
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Czech Development Agency	Partnerships of nongovernmental – private & public sectors; climate change and human rights <a href="http://www.mzv.cz">www.mzv.cz</a> <a href="http://www.rozvojevka.cz/evropsky-rok-rozvoje-2015">www.rozvojevka.cz/evropsky-rok-rozvoje-2015</a>
<b>Estonia</b>	Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation - AKÜ	People's connections with developing countries through consumption, food & environment <a href="http://www.terveilm.net">www.terveilm.net</a>
<b>Hungary</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary	Youth involvement & local engagement <a href="http://nefe.kormany.hu/rovid-ismerteto-a-fejleszt-es-europai-eve-eyd-2015">http://nefe.kormany.hu/rovid-ismerteto-a-fejleszt-es-europai-eve-eyd-2015</a>
<b>Latvia</b>	Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation – LAPAS	Food security and glocalization <a href="http://www.lapas.lv">www.lapas.lv</a>
<b>Lithuania</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<a href="http://www.orangeprojects.lt">www.orangeprojects.lt</a>
<b>Malta</b>	Malta EU Steering and Action Committee - MEUSAC	<a href="http://www.skopmalta.eu.pn">www.skopmalta.eu.pn</a>
<b>Poland</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Centres for International Debates, Centre for Education Development	<a href="http://www.polskapomoc.gov.pl">www.polskapomoc.gov.pl</a>
<b>Romania</b>	The United Nations Development Programme- Regional Center for Europe and Central Asia	<a href="http://www.aod.ro">www.aod.ro</a> <a href="http://www.fondromania.org">www.fondromania.org</a>
<b>Slovakia</b>	Slovak Non-governmental Development Platform (MVRO)	Fair and just individual and societal lifestyles <a href="http://www.mvro.sk">www.mvro.sk</a>
<b>Slovenia</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia	<a href="http://www.mzz.gov.si">www.mzz.gov.si</a> <a href="http://www.sloga-platform.org">www.sloga-platform.org</a>

*AUTHORS: Gyöngyi Laufer (HAND), Adriana Zaharia (FOND) and Mirjam Sutrop (TRIALOG)*

#### TRIALOG Partners: EU13 Development CSO Platforms



#### Other Consortium Partners



This project is funded by the European Union.

With funding from

Austrian  
Development Cooperation

Lead Agency

HORIZONT3000  
[www.horizont3000.at](http://www.horizont3000.at)