



As European Year for Development kicks off, new figures show increased EU citizens' support for development

Brussels, 12 January 2015

Today, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, presented a new Eurobarometer survey to mark the beginning of the European Year for Development. Figures show that **the number of people who are in favour of increasing aid has gone up significantly**, and Europeans continue to feel very positively about development and cooperation. 67% of respondents across Europe think that development aid should be increased – a higher percentage than in recent years, despite the economic situation. 85% believe that it is important to help people in developing countries.

Almost half of respondents would personally be prepared to pay more for groceries or products from those countries, and nearly two thirds say that tackling poverty in developing countries should be a main priority for the EU.

Commissioner Mimica commented: *"The aim of the European Year for Development is to inform EU citizens about development cooperation by highlighting the results that the EU, acting together with Member States, has achieved as the world's largest donor.*

"I feel very encouraged to see that despite economic uncertainty across the EU, our citizens continue to show great support for a strong European role in development. The European Year will give us the chance to build on this and inform citizens of the challenges and events that lie ahead during this key year for development, helping us to engage in a debate with them."

Some key results of the Special Eurobarometer on development:

The number of people who are in favour of increasing aid has gone up significantly: At 67% the share of Europeans who agree with this has increased by 6 percentage points since 2013, and a level this high was last seen in 2010.

One in two Europeans sees a role for individuals in tackling poverty in developing countries (50%). A third of EU citizens are personally active in tackling poverty (34%), mainly through giving money to charity organisations (29%).

Most Europeans believe that Europe itself also benefits from giving aid to others: 69% say that tackling poverty in developing countries also has a positive influence on EU citizens. Around three quarters think that it is in the EU's interest (78%) and contributes to a more peaceful and equitable world (74%).

For Europeans, volunteering is the most effective way of helping to reduce poverty in developing countries (75%). But a large majority also believe that official aid from governments (66%) and donating to organisations (63%) have an impact.

The European Year for Development (EYD 2015)

The EYD2015 was proposed by the European Commission and unanimously adopted by the European Parliament and Council. It is an opportunity to showcase the strong commitment of the EU and its Member States to eradicating poverty worldwide. It is the first ever European Year to focus on external relations.

This year promises to be hugely significant for development, with a vast array of stakeholders involved in crucial decision-making in development, environmental and climate policies. 2015 is the target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the year in which the ongoing global post-2015 debate will converge into a single framework for poverty eradication and sustainable development at September's United Nations General Assembly. 2015 is also the year that a new international climate agreement will be decided, in Paris.

The EYD2015 will bring together young people, policy-makers, civil society, the private sector, academic institutions and individual stakeholders to focus on their common development aims.

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker launched the EYD2015 at a high-level opening ceremony in Riga on 9 January. The EYD 2015 has a packed calendar of events at EU, national, regional and local level – everyone can get involved.

The EYD2015 will feature a wide range of creative opportunities for involvement across the Member States, ranging from art and development projects to activities with schools and universities and large-scale sporting events. Each month of the year will be dedicated to a special theme: January's focus will be on Europe's position in the world, February's on education, March will cover gender issues and April will be the month of health.

For further information

For more information on the event calendar of the European Year for Development 2015, please visit <http://europa.eu/eyd2015>.

The Special Eurobarometer can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_439_420_en.htm#421

The website also includes country-specific fact sheets in national languages for all EU Member States, and fact sheets on the EU overall results and youth as a focus group.

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