

Brussels, 3 December 2025
(OR. en)

16386/25

DEVGEN 227	COEST 875
ACP 125	SAN 811
RELEX 1621	GENDER 210
MIGR 460	CLIMA 582
SUSTDEV 93	ENER 648
COHOM 187	MAMA 278
COAFR 337	MOG 142
COASI 161	NDICI 13
DIGIT 261	COWEB 166
COLAC 211	

COVER NOTE

From: Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director

date of receipt: 3 December 2025

To: Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union

No. Cion doc.: COM(2025) 741 final

Subject: REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL 2025 Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's External Action Instruments in 2024

Delegations will find attached document COM(2025) 741 final.

Encl.: COM(2025) 741 final



Brussels, 3.12.2025
COM(2025) 741 final

**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND
THE COUNCIL**

**2025 Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's External Action
Instruments in 2024**

{SWD(2025) 390 final}

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FOREWORD

2024 was a significant year for the European Union's external action. Throughout the year, the EU remained committed to addressing global challenges, promoting its interests and values and advocating for democracy, human rights and multilateralism on the world stage. This commitment extends across several key areas, including cooperation on international partnerships, trade, security and defence, neighbourhood policy, humanitarian aid and civil protection.

We live in a world that is redefining itself. Some nations are seeking to impose their influence through force, while others look to leverage their burgeoning or established economic power to reshape global dynamics. Many emerging powers are asserting themselves on the world stage with increasing confidence.

This shifting landscape marks a potential generational transition from cooperation to competition, with the possible proliferation of conflicts and use of brute force to achieve political objectives. From Russia's continued war of aggression against Ukraine to conflicts in the Middle East, in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere, 2024 saw an erosion of peace and security.

In this context, the EU has started to reposition itself on the global stage. The focus has been on supporting Ukraine, strengthening European defence and security, and reinforcing international partnerships.

The EU increasingly stands out as the main supporter of multilateralism and the rules-based international order to advance a positive global agenda that leaves no one behind. The EU engaged in discussions on reform of the multilateral system to turn it into a modern and efficient system. The successful adoption of the United Nations (UN) Pact for the Future at the UN General Assembly in September 2024 was a landmark.

Our unity is our strength. Together, the EU and its Member States are investing in our alliances and international partnerships. We are establishing a new economic foreign policy that focuses on economic security, trade and investment, to boost EU competitiveness; expanding our defence and security partnerships; and using the Global Gateway sustainable investment strategy to deliver tangible benefits to people around the world, and at home. The Global Gateway strategy's aim is to narrow the global investment gap for sustainable development by supporting green energy, transport, and digitalisation projects, but also by strengthening health, education and research systems across partner countries worldwide.

This report outlines the amount of work that the EU institutions, Member States, and development finance institutions carry out in a 'Team Europe' spirit to achieve these objectives. It documents our efforts towards sustainable and equitable solutions in partner countries that are in line with our values. These actions cover poverty eradication, sustainable development, humanitarian assistance, civil protection, free and fair trade, security, peace and stability, promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law, gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as addressing other inequalities. A full range of initiatives also support partner countries tackling climate change and protecting biodiversity.

2024 was a challenging year, but the EU and its Member States worked with our international partners to build stronger and more resilient partnerships. We are creating momentum as we roll out the Global Gateway initiatives, our Economic and Investment Plans with the Eastern Partnership, Southern Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans, and our full portfolio of projects. Through our Team Europe approach, the EU continues to deliver solid and sustainable results that benefit people and the planet.



High Representative
/Vice-President
KAJA KALLAS
Foreign Affairs &
Security Policy



Commissioner
DUBRAVKA ŠUICA
Mediterranean



Commissioner
MARTA KOS
Enlargement



Commissioner
JOZEF SÍKELA
International
Partnerships



Commissioner
HADJA LAHBIB
Equality,
Preparedness and
Crisis Management

GLOBAL COMMITMENTS

The EU response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

Throughout 2024, the EU continued to provide Ukraine with unprecedented political, financial, economic, humanitarian, legal and military support while deploying sanctions to weaken Russia's war machine. The EU's new Ukraine Facility will provide Ukraine with up to EUR 50 billion of predictable support for 2024-2027 to assist its recovery, reconstruction and modernisation.

In 2024, the EU mobilised a total of EUR 19.6 billion under the three pillars of the facility and EUR 16.4 billion were disbursed. The Ukraine Investment Framework saw the first EUR 1.4 billion in grants and guarantee agreements signed in June at the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Berlin. In July, EUR 1.5 billion generated by immobilised Russian assets was made available to Ukraine.

Since 2022, the EU and its Member States have also provided over EUR 47.3 billion of military support to Ukraine, of which EUR 6.1 billion were via the European Peace Facility. Additionally, over EUR 2 billion have been mobilised via the Solidarity Lanes, of which EUR 1.5 billion originated from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Transport⁽¹⁾.

During 2024, the Commission allocated EUR 165 million in humanitarian assistance for Ukraine. Ukraine continues to benefit from the largest, longest and most complex Union Civil Protection Mechanism operation in the EU's history. The Temporary Protection Directive for people fleeing the war was extended until March 2026.

In 2024, the EU adopted three additional packages of sanctions against Russia. By the end of the year, a total of 15 packages of sanctions had been adopted listing over 2 300 individuals and entities.

The Autonomous Trade Measures, fully liberalising trade between the EU and Ukraine, were extended until June 2025, supporting Ukraine's economy to the tune of EUR 2 billion per year in additional export revenue.

Via the European Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation, the EU continued nuclear safety-related activities, rebuilding and restoring Ukraine's nuclear and radiation protection infrastructure including at the Chernobyl site.

The EU: a strong global actor

In 2024, amid multiple overlapping crises, geopolitical shifts and further strains on multilateralism, the EU redoubled its efforts to strengthen its international partnerships – particularly through the Global Gateway strategy.

The EU worked to strengthen its defence and security. The EU also worked with candidate countries, including Ukraine, on necessary reforms, and with potential candidates to prepare for their future accession to the EU.

During the year, the EU assisted people in need and responded to natural hazards and human-made disasters around the world, consolidating its leading role in global assistance. The EU is providing humanitarian aid for, and remains committed to finding solutions to the various crises in the Middle East.

¹ Supports the development of transport infrastructure in response to critical connectivity needs with Ukraine and Moldova.

In 2024, the EU and its Member States collectively remained the largest provider of official development assistance (ODA) with EUR 88.7 billion representing 42% of global ODA⁽²⁾ based on preliminary OECD data. Latest figures also show that in 2022 the EU was the world's biggest contributor of Aid for Trade with EUR 22.2 billion – 36% of all Aid for Trade given globally⁽³⁾.

Global Gateway – fostering sustainable development

Through its Global Gateway strategy, the EU, its Member States, and their development banks and financing institutions are set to mobilise some EUR 300 billion by 2027 to shape a fairer, more resilient, and sustainable world. Between 2021 and 2023, the EU, Member States, EIB and EBRD mobilised investments worth EUR 179 billion in support of Global Gateway implementation. Out of these, EUR 50 billion were supported by the EU and EUR 129 billion were mobilised by EU Member States, EIB and EBRD.

Considerable progress has already been achieved with over 250 flagship projects deployed around the world. Thematically, 50% of the projects are in the areas of climate and energy, 20% in transport, 13% in digital, 10% in health, and 7% in education and research. The geographic breakdown shows that 45% of the projects are in Sub-Saharan Africa, 20% in the Americas and the Caribbean, 18% in the Neighbourhood and Enlargement regions, 15% in Asia and the Pacific, and 2% are regional or global.

In 2024, the EU remained at the forefront of efforts to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to meet the Paris Agreement's targets. The Global Gateway strategy is the EU's main contribution to pursue the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs in external action, aiming to mobilise resources to achieve these goals and significantly contribute to the international efforts.

The EU reinforced its Global Gateway investment offer, while also maintaining dedicated resources to engage in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The EU sought to tackle the root causes of fragility and migration by integrating Global Gateway projects with the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus approach.

Humanitarian assistance

In 2024, the EU provided humanitarian aid to people in 116 countries worldwide, aimed to support the most vulnerable populations hit by both human-induced and natural disasters. Together, the EU and its Member States are leading humanitarian aid donors, providing around 27.4% of the global committed humanitarian aid, with an annual budget exceeding EUR 2.48 billion. The EU provided assistance to over 259 million people⁽⁴⁾ in 2024, both in high visibility crises such as Ukraine, Palestine*, and Sudan, as well as in forgotten crises such as in Haiti, Mozambique, or to the Sahrawi crisis.

In addition, the Commission also deploys its own emergency humanitarian response tools. The European Humanitarian Response Capacity responded to 16 crises affecting 17 countries, delivering more than 5 300 metric tonnes of humanitarian aid. The EU mobilised some EUR 38.9 million from the Emergency Toolbox to respond to sudden onset disasters.

² Global ODA is defined here as including the ODA reported by the EU collectively and all other donor countries.

³ These are collected from OECD sources that have a 2-year lag.

⁴ Estimated number of people reached by EU funded humanitarian assistance as reported by partners and calculated in EVA Actions.

* This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

The EU's Emergency Response Coordination Centre responded to 23 requests from third countries. In 2024, the Union Civil Protection Mechanism responded to major crises in the Middle East, the Marburg virus outbreak in Rwanda, and evacuation and repatriations from Haiti and Vanuatu.

Multilateralism and global challenges

In 2024, the EU continued to stand up for the rules-based international order, multilateralism, international law including international humanitarian law, accountability, human rights, and democracy. In September, world leaders adopted the UN Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations. These aim to make the multilateral system – with the UN at its core – more effective and inclusive and better equipped to meet current and future challenges.

The Pact is a major achievement for multilateralism. The EU contributed substantially to it by pushing for an ambitious outcome reflecting EU values and priorities.

The global energy transition, tackling climate change, and protecting biodiversity continued to be key priorities in 2024. The EU and its Member States are the world's largest provider of public international climate finance⁵. Three major multilateral negotiations took place during 2024: the UN Climate Change Conference in Azerbaijan, the UN Desertification Conference in Saudi Arabia, and the UN Biodiversity Conference in Colombia. At the UN Biodiversity Conference, the EU unveiled new initiatives worth almost EUR 160 million to support partner countries in safeguarding biodiversity.

The EU sustained its ocean diplomacy efforts and maintained a high level of commitment towards the BBNJ Agreement⁶. The EU committed EUR 40 million as part of a global ocean programme to support African, Caribbean and Pacific partners in their efforts to ratify and implement the Agreement – making the EU the largest donor in support of High Seas protection globally.

The EU played a major role in the launch of the Global Alliance against hunger and poverty at the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro in November 2024. The G7 Summit in June hosted in Italy launched the Apulia Food Security initiative and showcased the ongoing work on the Partnership on Global Infrastructure and Investment.

⁵ Latest available data. Next figures will be available as of end of the year 2025.

⁶ Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine Biodiversity of areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), adopted in June 2023.

THEMATIC OVERVIEW

Human development

Poverty eradication remains at the heart of the Commission's international partnerships. Currently, 8.5% of the world's population (nearly 700 million people) live below the extreme poverty line of USD 2.15 per day. Two regional Team Europe initiatives directly focus on poverty reduction: 'Social Protection in Sub-Saharan Africa', launched in 2024, and 'Inclusive and Equal Societies' in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Food security and nutrition have been at the centre of geopolitical and geo-economics agendas since the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. With 294 million experiencing acute food insecurity⁽⁷⁾ across 59 countries and territories, and famine being declared for the first time since 2017 in five areas of Sudan. The EU spent around EUR 730 million in humanitarian food and nutrition assistance in 2024, while Global Gateway spearheaded investments in more resilient and sustainable agriculture and food value chains.

In 2024, the EU's humanitarian health assistance accounted for EUR 357 million worldwide, following a cross-sectoral, needs-based and integrated approach. This includes fostering people's access to primary healthcare, reproductive health and medical responses to gender-based violence, mental health and psychosocial support, trauma care, and rehabilitation.

Education is key enabler of all SDGs. In 2024, EU investments focused on teachers and learning, as well as on equitable and inclusive education systems that contribute to partner countries' digital and green transitions, including through the international dimension of Erasmus+. The EU and its Member States helped reinforced these objectives in 80 partner countries by investing in the 'Global Partnership for Education' and 'Education Cannot Wait' funds. Additionally, 10% of the annual initial EU humanitarian aid budget was spent on education in emergencies.

In April 2024, the EU organised a Global Gateway High-Level Education Event, highlighting the EU's role in transforming global education and bridging skills gaps.

The EU continued to support global efforts to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence, including through new 'Spotlight Initiative' country programmes in Ecuador, Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, and through a regional programme in Africa.

In 2024, the EU stepped up its commitment to support improved water access, sanitation and hygiene with Global Gateway projects implemented in some 50 countries.

Green transition

In line with the European Green Deal, the Commission continued to support partner countries to increase sustainable energy access and decarbonise the energy sector while creating local jobs.

In November 2024, European Commission President von der Leyen and South African President Ramaphosa launched the campaign 'Scaling up Renewables in Africa'. Other examples of EU action include the regional initiative in Latin America for electricity integration, the Peru-Ecuador

⁷ [Global Report on Food Crises 2024](#)

interconnection, a European Investment Bank financing facility for Central America, and the launch of the Clean Energy Ministerial on promoting sustainable lifestyles, fairness and access to clean energy technologies⁸.

The EU is committed to promoting sustainable consumption and production. At the global level, the EU has supported activities to pilot circularity in global value chains, including through the UN Partnership on Green Economy, the Green Economy Coalition, the Green Growth Knowledge Platform, and the Switch to Circular Value Chains programme. In 2024, the EU provided support to over 100 countries worldwide for sustainable consumption and production and the circular economy.

In 2024, the EU continued to be a global leader in the green transition. By participating at COP29 of the UN Climate Change Conference, parties agreed to a new collective quantified goal for climate finance to support developing countries. In addition to these efforts, the EU is also actively involved in the negotiations on the implementation of the UNFCCC Just Transition Work programme.

Ahead of the third UN Ocean Conference, it also adopted additional programmes to strengthen ocean governance, sustainable blue economy and conservation in the Pacific (EUR 20 million), the Western Indian Ocean (EUR 58 million) and Central Africa (EUR 42 million).

In 2024, the Commission mobilised almost EUR 1 300 million for biodiversity, and the Team Europe initiative on Deforestation-free Value Chains was scaled up to EUR 86 million.

Digitalisation, science, technology, innovation and infrastructure

The EU continued to support research and innovation ecosystems in developing countries. This support focused on building capacity and policy frameworks, as well as innovation and research to take informed investment decisions while reinforcing EU tech competitiveness. For example, a Centre of Excellence for Pharmacovigilance was established at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa to offer training to regulators and researchers in the region.

In 2024, the EU continued to strengthen its partnerships to boost secure and human-centric digital transformation with partner countries. Under the Global Gateway strategy, the EU promotes the use of trusted suppliers of digital technologies. Regional programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean are helping to create a regional Digital Single Market. The Digital Trade Platform with Central America made progress. Within the Team Europe initiative on Data Governance in Africa, the EU set up a Digital Investment Facility engaging to support promising data centre and Internet Exchange Point projects in Africa.

The EU's Digital for Development (D4D) Hub expanded its role in strengthening the 'Team Europe' approach for digital cooperation and partnerships and continued facilitating joint digital interventions with the private sector, civil society, and academia.

Through the Global Gateway strategy, the EU also supported multi-sectoral investments in road, rail, maritime and air transport, through a 360-degree approach, in all regions of interventions.

Sustainable growth and jobs

In line with the 2024-2029 political guidelines and the increased focus of foreign economic policy on economic security, trade, and investment in partnerships, 2024 was a transition year. The EU scaled

⁸ [Sustainable Lifestyles, Fairness and Access to Clean Energy Technologies | Clean Energy Ministerial](#)

up its action on critical raw materials with the Critical Raw Materials Act entering into force on 23 May. Five new partnerships for sustainable raw materials value chains were concluded with Australia, Norway, Rwanda, Serbia, and Uzbekistan, adding to the existing nine partnerships.

The High-level Expert Group, mandated by the Commission as an independent advisory body, submitted its final report on scaling up sustainable finance in low-and middle-income countries⁽⁹⁾. The HLEG identified challenges and opportunities in sustainable finance and provided recommendations for the Commission's work with partner countries.

Creating decent jobs and improving working conditions remained a cross-cutting priority. The Team Europe initiative 'Investing in Young Businesses in Africa' is a Global Gateway flagship that supports early-stage businesses and young entrepreneurs – especially women – in Africa to launch, consolidate, and grow sustainable and inclusive businesses.

Migration and forced displacement

In 2024, irregular border crossings into the EU significantly decreased on the Central Mediterranean route. However, irregular arrivals increased on the Atlantic, Western, and Eastern Mediterranean routes. 2024 saw unprecedented, forced displacement levels, mainly linked to conflicts, including in Sudan, Gaza, and Mali, but also increasingly due to climate-linked disasters, resulting in over 120 million forcibly displaced people by the end of June.

The EU took further steps to enhance its strategy on migration and asylum, with the adoption of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum in May 2024⁽¹⁰⁾. The external dimension of the pact tasks the EU to engage with partner countries through a strategic and comprehensive approach to address areas of concern, with a strong focus on migratory routes towards the Union (whole-of-route approach). Its implementation is closely coordinated in a 'Team Europe' approach with EU Member States. Cooperation with key partner international organisations, such as the International Organisation for Migration and UNHCR, has continued to play an important role in implementing the pact in the EU and along migratory routes towards the EU.

The EU, including through its Justice and Home Affairs agencies, provided tailored support to key partner countries, including in the Western Balkans and Türkiye, the EU Neighbourhood, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia, guided by dedicated EU Action Plans covering the key migratory routes towards Europe in a whole-of-route approach as well as by the relevant operational actions of the policy cycle (EMPACT⁽¹¹⁾).

In 2024, the EU launched the Strategic and Comprehensive partnership with Egypt, and the Commission and Mauritania launched the EU-Mauritania Migration Partnership. The implementation of the EU-Tunisia Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership (signed in 2023) also continued, including in the area of migration. A EUR 1 billion financial support package for Lebanon was announced, of which half has been adopted.

⁹ HLEG final report, 2024.

¹⁰ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/migration-and-asylum/pact-migration-and-asylum_en

¹¹ European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/internal-security/law-enforcement-cooperation/empact-fighting-crime-together_en

Democratic governance and human rights, peace and security

Peaceful, democratic, and resilient societies are a prerequisite for other development objectives and human security. 2024 was a year of turmoil in which new conflicts erupted, existing crises intensified, climate-related disasters multiplied, and human rights were violated with impunity.

In 2024, the EU maintained a strong commitment to promoting peace and security, notably through its 12 Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations. The EU launched a new EU maritime operation ASPIDES in early 2024 providing a swift response to the threat against maritime security in the Red Sea. The EU was engaged in 78 Peace, Security and Defence Dialogues and Consultations with 39 partners and also concluded 6 Security and Defence Partnerships with Republic of Moldova, Norway, Japan, South Korea, Albania, and North Macedonia. The EU also established new and deepened existing peace partnerships with bilateral and regional partners.

In addition, the NDICI-Global Europe thematic programme on peace, stability and conflict prevention continued to address both conflict prevention and peacebuilding as well as global and trans-regional threats priorities in third countries.

The EU was a key provider of electoral assistance globally. The EU has been invited to assess, observe elections or follow up on earlier observation missions in 20 countries. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone, the EU assisted 15 countries in their electoral processes while enhancing the role of the African Union and regional networks of domestic observers.

Beyond elections, through initiatives under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance III and the NDICI-Global Europe and with Team Europe cooperation, the EU remained a key player in supporting democracy globally, promoting women and youth civic and political engagement, strengthening democratic institutions, and supporting independent media and journalists.

Gender equality remained a priority. The EU actively promoted, amongst others, the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. Key initiatives included the adoption of a EUR 6 million action to support the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for implementing the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Chad, as well as a joint Gender-Responsive Conflict Analysis exercise with UNDP in Liberia and the launch of a Gender Country Profile for Afghanistan in partnership with UN Women to inform future programmes and actions.

Civil society organisations and local authorities play a key role in Global Gateway and Team Europe initiatives. The Global Gateway Civil society organisations and Local Authorities Dialogue Platform held 12 consultations in 2024 on various topics like Gender Action Plan III implementation and NDICI-Global Europe's mid-term reviews across different regions.

In 2024, thematic Framework Partnerships for human rights and democracy were concluded to create strategic, longer-term implementing relationships with high-capacity consortia of NGOs. These aim to promote work fighting torture, advocating against the death penalty, empowering young people's enjoyment of freedoms of assembly and association, and promoting independent and pluralistic media and quality journalism.

In 2024, the EU also provided protection support to 10 050 human rights defenders and family members through its emergency fund and the flagship programme [ProtectDefenders.EU](#), managed by a consortium of 12 international NGOs.

GLOBAL REACH

Sub-Saharan Africa

The EU is Africa's leading partner in many areas, from trade, investment and security to the green transition and digital transformation. The EU launched transformational Global Gateway flagship projects across several priority areas in 2024, ranging from education and digitalisation to vaccine production and restoring ecosystems. The *Joint EU-African Union report*¹²⁾ published in October documents many examples of Global Gateway flagship projects. In total, 116 flagship projects were launched on the continent in 2023 and 2024.

The Samoa Agreement between the EU and the members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States was provisionally applied from 1 January 2024.

Relations with West Africa faced increased challenges with crises in the Central Sahel and the weakening of regional frameworks. The EU adapted to the evolving environment. A new EU Special Representative for the Sahel was appointed in November 2024.

The EU continued to implement its renewed Great Lakes Strategy and increased its diplomatic engagement by appointing a new EU Special Representative for the Great Lakes region. The EU supported conflict resolution initiatives, including the Nairobi and Luanda processes, to solve the crisis in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The EU also supported the transition process in Gabon, deploying an Election Expert Mission for the constitutional referendum in November.

The conflict and humanitarian crisis in Sudan has become the world's largest displacement crisis, with 11.5 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) – about 30% of the entire population and 15% of all IDPs worldwide. The EU provided over EUR 147 million in lifesaving assistance to those affected by the crisis, both in Sudan and in neighbouring countries. Additionally, the EU mobilised its European Humanitarian Response Capacity to support the response to the Sudan crisis.

In East Africa, the EU strengthened its economic, political and security partnership with Kenya, with the entry into force of the EU-Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement on 1 July.

The EU committed EUR 20 million to fight the Mpox outbreak in in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in October 2024.

Asia and the Pacific

2024 marked the 20th Anniversary of the EU-India Strategic Partnership. The Political Guidelines 2024-2025 included a commitment to developing a new strategic agenda on India. It will focus on prosperity and sustainability, technology and innovation, security and defence, connectivity and global issues, and deepening people-to-people contacts.

The EU-Thailand Partnership and Cooperation Agreement entered into provisional application on 20 October 2024. Free Trade Agreements negotiations are at an advanced stage with Australia, accelerated with India, Indonesia and Thailand and resumed with the Philippines and Malaysia, while a digital trade agreement with Singapore was finalised.

¹² https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/publications-library/joint-report-european-commission-auda-nepad-implementation-2030-vision_en

Building on the EU-China dialogue, the EU adopted in 2024 a new action supporting international climate goals by facilitating the exchange of expertise between the EU and China and sharing best practices in emissions trading.

In 2024, the Commission deployed EUR 239 million in 'blended' funds through the Asia Pacific Investment Facility. These funds will leverage over EUR 3 billion in additional public and private finance, with projects contributing to sustainable growth across Central Asia, South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific.

In January 2024, the EU successfully hosted the 'Global Gateway Investors Forum for EU-Central Asia Transport Connectivity' in Brussels. The Forum saw EUR 10 billion committed towards investments for Central Asia.

The Coordination Platform for the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor was launched in October to establish fast and efficient routes connecting Europe and Central Asian countries.

The first ever EU-Gulf Cooperation Council Summit was held on 16 October 2024, with discussions reconfirming the commitment to a strategic trade and investment partnership and cooperation on the green and digital transitions.

After 11 years of conflict, Yemen remains one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. It is also the world's third most vulnerable country to climate change. In 2024, the EU allocated EUR 125 million in humanitarian aid to support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

The EU naval operation EUNAVFOR ASPIDES launched in February 2024 protects commercial shipping in the Red Sea from attack escorting over 350 vessels during the year.

The EU is a dialogue partner of the Pacific Islands Forum, the region's main political organisation; in 2024, it participated in its Leaders Meeting in Tonga.

Americas and the Caribbean

Reaching a political agreement on the EU-Mercosur Partnership Agreement on 6 December 2024 was a breakthrough for both regions. This new partnership strengthens geopolitical, economic, sustainability and security cooperation between the EU and the Mercosur countries of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Other key milestones included the EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda and the launch of the EU-CELAC consultative coordination mechanism in Honduras in May. In 2024 the EU-LAC Digital Alliance grew to 51 members, with Grenada, Belize and Guyana joining.

Efforts to more closely coordinate EU external and cohesion funding took a significant step forward with a first ever call for projects to tackle challenges, such as the sargassum threat, shared by EU outermost regions, OCTs and non-EU countries.

As part of the EU-LAC Health Resilience Initiative, the EU launched the EUR 8.9 million PharmaNext programme to strengthen the Caribbean pharmaceutical sector. It focuses on modernising health regulatory frameworks, promoting skills transfer, and boosting investment.

The Samoa Agreement between the EU and the members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States was provisionally applied from 1 January 2024.

In Haiti, more than 1 million people (9% of the population) were internally displaced by the end of 2024. The EU launched three initiatives totalling EUR 40 million to support Haiti's education sector, improve customs administration, and foster local development in the North-East. These projects are part of a broader strategy addressing the crisis and to strengthen local communities' resilience. The EU provided also EUR 36.5 million in humanitarian aid.

EU Enlargement (Western Balkans, Türkiye, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Georgia)

The enlargement process gathered fresh momentum in 2024 with the first intergovernmental conferences opening accession negotiations with Ukraine and Republic of Moldova (hereafter Moldova) on 25 June. In March 2024, the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. By contrast, the actions of the Georgian authorities since spring 2024 have effectively halted that country's accession process.

The EUR 6 billion Reform and Growth Facility, an integral element of the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans, entered into force in May 2024. This complements the Economic and Investment Plan for the region to help increase its economic convergence with the EU and accelerate reform.

In 2024, the EU continued to support Türkiye in its efforts to host some three million refugees, allocating an additional EUR 1 billion to provide basic needs, healthcare, educational support, and social cohesion assistance. Support also included a substantial allocation to strengthen Türkiye's capacity to manage migration and control its borders.

European Neighbourhood

European Neighbourhood East (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Belarus)

In 2024, the Eastern Partnership remained a flexible, incentive-based cooperation framework tailored to the needs of partner countries. The Partnership has continued to deliver tangible results, positively impacting people's lives and supporting critical reforms.

In Belarus notably, assistance to democratic civic engagement and leadership was stepped up amid a further deteriorating human rights situation and the regime's support to Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine.

During 2024, the EU continued to support finding peaceful solutions to conflicts in the South Caucasus, including the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. In 2024, the EU Mission in Armenia contributed to stability and human security along the border with Azerbaijan.

European Neighbourhood South

In Gaza, the EU worked to secure access for humanitarian assistance and support to mediators in the ceasefire negotiations. The EU increased its humanitarian assistance in 2024 to EUR 237 million. To complement the funding effort, the EU continued the operational support, launching 32 EU Humanitarian Air Bridge flights, which transported more than 2 700 metric tonnes of aid. The EU also provided a EUR 382.5 million emergency aid package to support the Palestinian Authority, linking payments to implementation of far-reaching reforms.

In 2024, the EU continued to provide strong support to Syrians and neighbouring countries hosting Syrian refugees. The EU maintained its efforts to find a lasting solution to the conflict including by

supporting the work of the UN Special Envoy for Syria and maintaining restrictive measures on the Assad regime. The EU and its Member States remained the largest donors to Syria, having mobilised more than EUR 37 billion since 2011. Support also included access to basic services to refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries, internally displaced people in Syria and their hosting communities in the region. The sudden fall of the Assad regime at the end of 2024 will hopefully herald a brighter future for the Syrian people.

The 9th Union for the Mediterranean Regional Forum was held in Barcelona on 28 October 2024, focusing on the situation in the Middle East as well as on ongoing organisational reform efforts.

Overseas countries and territories (OCTs)

The 13 Overseas Countries and Territories are non-sovereign entities that maintain special constitutional links to Denmark, France, and the Netherlands. Together with EU outermost regions, these territories play a strategic role for the EU as regional ambassadors of European values. They hold strategic assets, including vast exclusive economic zones, the potential to host strategic infrastructure (such as Galileo), and access to critical raw materials resources.

In 2024, the regular institutional EU-OCTs dialogue included three tripartite meetings and the OCTs-EU Forum. Relations with Greenland were particularly active, with the opening of an EU Office in Nuuk as part of the EU's Arctic strategy. The EU and Greenland broadened their cooperation from education to the area of green growth, including the development of the critical raw materials sector. A first-ever EU business mission took place in October.