

THE ROAD TO EQUALITY: How do EU Member States address inequalities in their international cooperation?

EU Member States still have a long way to go to tackle inequalities decisively in their cooperation with partner countries



There is some political commitment, but action is insufficient

The political commitment of EU Member States to tackling inequalities as a multidimensional concept, through their international cooperation, has been **insufficiently translated into practice**. We find very limited guidance and even less training, data gathering, analysis, monitoring, evaluation or human resource allocation to support partner countries to reduce inequalities.



Coherence across policies is the missing link

Even when there is clear political commitment from development ministers, we observe a **lack of policy coherence for sustainable and inclusive development** which demonstrates that this commitment is often not shared by other ministries, such as those responsible for trade, taxation, justice or climate policies.



Half-hearted Europe? EU Member States fail to redistribute wealth

A majority of Member States **fail to meet either their overall Official Development Assistance (ODA) target** or their target for ODA to Least Developed Countries (LDCs). They have not systematically supported LDCs in their efforts to increase their fiscal space, and they pay insufficient attention to fair taxation. Moreover, Member States' **financial services and corporate tax practices increase opportunities for tax avoidance in partner countries**.



Inspiring good practices exist and show that Member States can make progress

Several MS are doing well in specific areas, so they could all benefit from **peer learning and guidance**.

Stepping up efforts to put words into action: our recommendations

EU Member States should:

- **Demonstrate their political commitment more unanimously and explicitly**, including by translating that commitment into realistic, measurable objectives set out clearly in their cooperation strategies with partner countries.
- **Ensure that all international cooperation efforts help to reduce inequalities**, including designing and implementing practical tools for addressing multidimensional inequalities in partner countries. This should include actively promoting peer learning among Member States on how to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and programmes for the reduction of inequalities.
- **Redistribute wealth between countries more consistently**, including by increasing ODA to 0.7% of GNI and giving 0.2% of GNI to LDCs, and by focusing ODA resources on supporting the efforts by partner regions and countries to achieve the SDGs. Efforts should include promoting fair taxation and fair global corporate tax practices.
- **Promote more targeted actions to address inequalities within partner countries**, including by reaching out to those most at risk of being left behind, paying attention to intersectionality and establishing clear, measurable targets to tackle inequalities in programmes and projects.
- **Ensure that Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development is mainstreamed across all sectors**, including by enforcing regulations requiring companies to conduct human rights and environmental due diligence and halting the export of arms to LDCs that are in conflict.

Willing to hit the road to equality?

- Read our full report and country-per-country dashboards with our findings.
- Discover how we define and approach inequalities.
- Reach out and work with us and our members across Europe to make Member States deliver on their promises:
www.concordeurope.org