

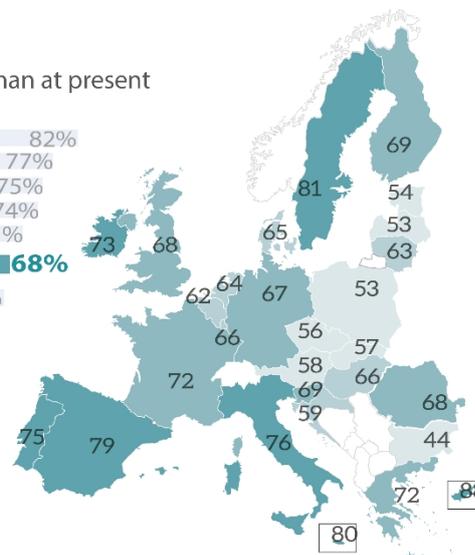
Promotion of democracy and peace in the world

OVERVIEW

According to a new Eurobarometer survey, two thirds of European Union citizens would like to see even stronger EU involvement in the promotion of democracy and peace in the world. Democracy and peace are the fundamental values on which the EU is based and the guiding principles for its external action. The EU has at its disposal a vast array of tools to promote democracy and peace in the world, including its own diplomatic body, development aid and trade conditionality that it can leverage to this purpose. The EU finances a variety of actions that directly or indirectly promote democracy, such as support for governance, elections, civil society and free media, while a specific instrument is dedicated to peace and stability.

Public expectations and EU commitment regarding the promotion of democracy and peace in the world – is there a gap?

Percentage of respondents who would like the EU to intervene more than at present



Women demonstrate stronger support for increased EU action in the promotion of democracy and peace in the world than men. Older generations are more likely than younger generations to evaluate current involvement in this policy area as insufficient.

Legal framework

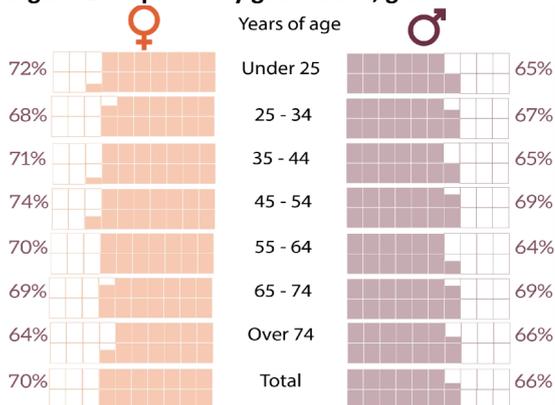
Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) includes democracy among the EU's fundamental values, while Article 21 TEU puts it at the core of the EU's external action, an approach reinforced by Article 205 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Article 3 TEU includes peace as one of the EU's primary aims and, according to Article 21, the EU is to contribute to peace, security and prevention of conflict in its external action. Historically, the [Maastricht Treaty](#) (which entered into force in 1993) introduced the advancement of democracy as a fundamental principle of EU common foreign and security policy and of EU development cooperation. The [1993 Copenhagen political criteria](#) adopted by the Council made democracy and human rights a cornerstone of EU enlargement policy. Since the 1990s, the cooperation and free trade agreements signed by the EU have systematically included democracy and human rights as 'essential elements', allowing for restrictive measures or even suspension of agreements if they are not upheld. The promotion of peace is also closely linked with the EU's common security and defence policy (CSDP).

Current implementation and EU action

Democracy support is built into other components of EU external policy. The 2009 [Council Conclusions](#) on 'Increased coherence in the EU's support to democracy' and its Agenda for Action provide a unifying framework within which to increase the consistency and effectiveness of EU efforts. The conclusions state that 'there is no single model of democracy', and that 'democratic systems may vary in forms and shape' in the world; democracy support has to be adapted to country-specific conditions, and ownership for democratisation has to be borne by domestic players, including state institutions, political actors and civil society organisations, with the EU playing an assisting role. The [EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy](#) adopted in 2012 reaffirms EU's commitment to democracy support, and the [Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy \(2015-2019\)](#) proposes several practical measures.

Democracy features on the agenda of political dialogue with third countries. The upholding of democratic standards is an essential prerequisite for enlargement in accordance with the TEU and the Copenhagen criteria. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) introduced a commitment to promote 'deep democracy' in the EU's neighbourhood as part of [its reframing](#) following the 'Arab Spring' in 2011. Deep democracy includes free and fair elections, freedom of association, expression and assembly, the rule of law, the fight against corruption, security and law enforcement reform, and democratic control over armed and security forces, civil society, gender equality and anti-discrimination. The 'more for more' principle introduced by the [2011 Partnership with the Southern Mediterranean](#) under the ENP commits to more partnership with the EU for those countries that make progress towards higher standards of human rights and governance, while free and fair elections are considered a prerequisite of this partnership with the EU. The last ENP [review](#) admitted, however, that the effectiveness of this approach depended on the readiness of third country governments to cooperate. The [2011 Agenda for change](#) of the European Commission declares support for democratic governance to be a central priority of development policy and states that if third countries' governments are not sufficiently committed to democracy, EU cooperation should target non-state actors and local authorities. The EU is the leading international organisation in the field of election observation, having deployed 165 electoral observation missions (EOMs) since 1993. EOMs [aim](#) to strengthen respect for

Figure 1 – Opinion by generation, gender



Data source: EuroBarometer 85.1

fundamental freedoms and political rights, to assess the electoral process in accordance with international standards, to enhance public confidence in the electoral and democratic process, and to contribute to the prevention or resolution of conflicts. The European Parliament (EP) plays a prominent role in EOMs, one of its Members is always head of mission and [EP observer delegations](#) are always involved. One outstanding initiative taken by the EP to promote democratisation is its [Sakharov prize](#), which rewards efforts to develop democracy in the world.

The EU is one of the world's biggest donors when it comes to conflict prevention and peace building. The EU has carried out 21 civilian and 11 military [missions and operations](#). It has lent operational, financial and political support to the peacekeeping efforts of the UN and the African Union. In line with [the 2011 Council Conclusions on Conflict Prevention](#), the EEAS has developed a [comprehensive approach](#) for early identification and prevention of conflicts. The EU is involved in conflict mediation and dialogue efforts. The EP is also involved, contributing to conflict prevention, mediation, facilitation and dialogue initiatives.

Potential for better implementation and further EU action

In order to reach its full potential, democracy support should be mainstreamed across all EU policies with an external dimension, as [recommended](#) by the EP. Coherence between EU's external and internal policies with respect to democratic values should be increased, as should cooperation between EU institutions. Member States should speak with one voice in support of democracy. At the same time, the EU needs to [step up](#) its efforts to develop a more comprehensive approach to democratisation processes, going beyond free and fair elections. In the increasingly tense security context, it is also important to always remember that security versus democracy is a false dilemma since there can be no human security in a society without a democratic and accountable government, as pointed out in a 2011 [EP resolution](#).

Where partner countries do not show enough will to drive democratic reforms, EU incentives may fail to produce results, as acknowledged in the [2015 ENP review](#). As stressed in various documents by the Council, the EC and the EP, since democracy being home-grown and driven by domestic players cannot be imposed from outside, the EU can play an assisting role only. Its efforts to promote democracy should be based on a realistic assessment of the scope for reform in third countries and its strategies better adapted to local circumstances.

In situations of crisis or severe breaches of democracy, trade and development conditionality could be used more effectively, if other methods fail. In its urgency resolutions, the EP has repeatedly asked for such conditionality to be applied. Moreover, as many authoritarian regimes pretend to abide by the formal rules of democracy while severely limiting freedoms and [shrinking](#) the space for civil society, the EU needs to adapt its strategies for democracy support. There is further scope for increasing support for civil society organisations and more systematically involving them in EU policies towards the countries concerned.

Conflict prevention should be a [priority](#) of EU external action, and drivers of conflict, such as political and religious radicalisation, election-related violence, population displacements and climate change, should be [addressed](#). Mediation and dialogue play an important role in preventing and resolving conflicts peacefully. The European Parliament, which contributes to conflict mediation, [is in favour of](#) further enhancing the EU's capacities in this field.

The EU budget and the promotion of democracy and peace in the world

In the EU budget the main programme aimed at promoting democracy is the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights ([EIDHR](#)). In the same area, albeit not entirely devoted to democracy promotion, are two other programmes: the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace ([IcSP](#)) and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument ([ENPI](#)). The EIDHR's main aim is, first, to support projects in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms and, second, to strengthen the rule of law and democratic reform in countries outside the EU. The IcSP is focused on crisis response, crisis preparedness and conflict prevention. The

EIDHR, the IcSP and the ENPI (which is linked to the European Neighbourhood Policy) are all financed under EU budget heading 4 – 'Global Europe'.

In the **2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)** a total of **€66 262 million** is allocated to the Global Europe heading (nearly **6%** of the total EU budget). Within this heading, a total of **€3 671.47 million** is allocated to the EIDHR and IcSP. The EIDHR alone accounts for **€1 332.75 million**. In **2015**, the EU earmarked **€181.83 million** in commitments for the EIDHR and **€320.15 million** in commitments for the IcSP – together amounting to **0.3%** of the EU budget. In **2016** the respective amounts were slightly greater, forming **0.33%** of the budget. The EIDHR finances a wide variety of measures concerning democracy. In 2015 the most important were support for local civil society (amounting to **€82.75 million**), support for human rights priorities (**€26.87 million**), and support for media and freedom of expression programmes (**€4.55 million** in 2015). The ENPI, meanwhile, has **€2 186 million** in commitments for 2016 (a slight decrease from the **€2 336 million** of 2015) and its total in the 2014-2020 MFF amounts to **€15 432.63 million**.

Financial instruments outside the EU budget

The main programme outside the EU budget contributing to democracy promotion is the **European Development Fund (EDF)**. Launched in 1959, the EDF is aimed at providing development aid for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, and other overseas countries and territories. The EDF is financed by direct voluntary contributions from the EU's Member States. Its financial resources for the 2014-20 MFF total **€30.5 billion**. Roughly **one third** of EDF funds are directed towards supporting governance. Also relevant is the **European Endowment for Democracy (EED)**. The aim of the EED is to foster sustainable democratisation in transition countries and to provide support with maximum flexibility and simplified procedures. The EED is co-funded by the Commission and voluntary contributions from Member States. For the 2016-18 period the Commission granted **€12 million**, doubling its current budget.

Potential for additional financing at EU level

The EP has emphasised the need for long-term, stable and predictable funding for democracy promotion. At present, however, the main areas of potential expansion of financing fall outside the EU budget. The first and most important one concerns the EED. An [EP resolution](#) of 9 July 2015 called on the EED founding parties to contribute or increase their contributions and encouraged other EU partners to join the programme (at present 16 Member States – and Switzerland – contribute to the programme). The second potential area of expansion of EU funding concerns the EDF (there have been [several calls](#) from the EP for it to be integrated into the EU budget). As far as peace promotion is concerned, in 2015 the EP adopted a [resolution](#) to implement the CSDP. The EP stressed the need for more flexible rules to respond to crisis situations, called for a start-up fund for the urgent financing of the initial phases of military operations and recommended a long-term approach to financing CSDP missions.

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