

EU-Philippines relations Beyond trade and aid?

SUMMARY

Recent controversial statements by new Philippines President, Rodrigo Duterte are threatening to derail progress towards closer partnership between his country and the EU. Nevertheless, practical cooperation between the two sides, which began with European Community development aid 50 years ago, continues essentially unchanged.

The EU and its Member States are still among the leading donors of aid to the Philippines, and EU-Philippines trade and investment is substantial. However, economic ties still offer considerable untapped potential. A free trade agreement is currently under negotiation.

The two sides have already concluded a partnership and cooperation agreement, now awaiting ratification. Once in force, this will help to strengthen not only economic ties, but also cooperation in the many areas where the EU and the Philippines have shared interests, such as migration, fisheries and maritime labour.

Particularly under Duterte's predecessor, the pro-Western Benigno Aquino (2010-2016), EU-Philippines relations were based not only on shared interests but also values. The Philippines is a democracy and, due to its history, one of the most westernised countries in Asia. Shared values have helped to make the country one of the EU's closest allies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

While Duterte's anti-EU statements have not ended such cooperation, they have created uncertainty over future developments. The EU has adopted a wait-and-see approach; less cordial relations are likely to result.



EU High Representative Federica Mogherini meets Philippines Foreign Minister Perfecto Yasay in July 2016.

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- Milestones in EU-Philippines relations
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Milestones in EU-Philippines relations

1964: appointment of the Philippines ambassador to the European Economic Community

1976: European Community development aid to the Philippines begins with the launch of an aid programme for developing countries in Asia and Latin America

1979: the European Commission opens a delegation in Bangkok (Thailand), and enters into diplomatic relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which the Philippines is a founder member

1980: the European Economic Community and ASEAN sign a [cooperation agreement](#)

1984: the European Commission and the Philippines sign a [framework agreement on development cooperation](#)

1986: after 20 years of rule by dictator Ferdinand Marcos, the [People Power Revolution](#) restores multiparty democracy; in response, the European Communities step up development aid to the Philippines

1991: the European Commission opens a delegation in Philippine capital Manila

January 2011: the EU and the Philippines sign a [partnership and cooperation agreement](#)

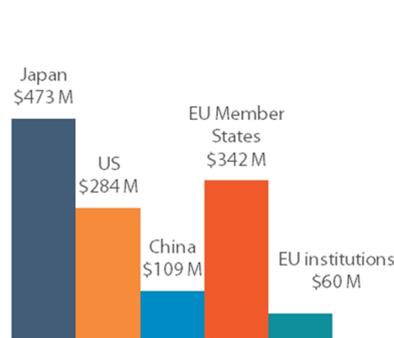
December 2015: the EU and the Philippines begin talks on a free trade agreement

May 2016: Rodrigo Duterte is elected president of the Philippines

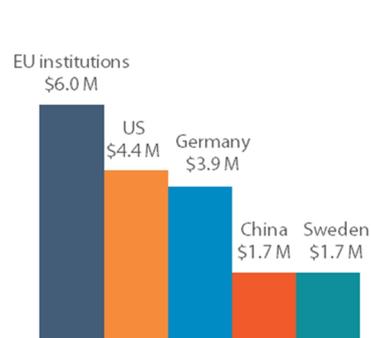
EU development and humanitarian aid to the Philippines

Main aid donors to the Philippines (US\$ million)

Development aid



Humanitarian aid



Development aid data: for 2014, except EU institutions (annual average commitments 2014-2020); China, annual average disbursements 2002-2010; sources: [OECD, Philippines Embassy in Beijing, Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines](#); **humanitarian aid:** 2016 commitments and contributions, as of 14 December 2016, UN OCHA [Financial Tracking Service](#).

The EU is a major donor of development aid to the Philippines

EU relations with the Philippines began with development aid, which has remained a very important aspect ever since. Aid from the EU budget for the current seven-year programming period (2014-2020) has more than doubled compared to 2007-2013, from €130 million to €325 million. On top of EU aid, in 2014 Member States also donated a total of [€342 million](#) from national programmes, most of it from France (€151 million), the United Kingdom (€95 million) and Germany (€50 million). However, Japan, China and the United States are still bigger donors.

EU development aid for 2014-2020 focuses on [two objectives](#).

Inclusive growth: although the Philippines has enjoyed economic growth averaging [nearly 6%](#) over the last five years, the country is still by far the poorest of the six ASEAN founding countries. Moreover, wealth is spread very unevenly, with [24 million Filipinos](#) living below the national poverty line. EU aid will focus on access to electricity for the poor, among other things by developing renewable sources.

Strengthening the rule of law: widespread violence, impunity, violations of fundamental rights and the lack of an independent judiciary are serious threats to the

rule of law, reflected in the country's poor performance in the [World Justice Project Rule of Law Index](#). Although its score has improved recently, the Philippines still comes only 70th out of 113 countries, and fourth from bottom among 15 countries from its regions. EU funding will support judicial reforms, including through the [EPJUST II programme](#), which aims to provide better access for the poor to the legal system through improved free legal services, and to help police investigate crimes more effectively by training them to collect and use evidence.

A third priority carried over from the 2007-2013 programming period is [budget support for government health spending](#) (€3.5 million in 2016); however, this is due to end in 2017.

The EU and its Member States are the world's leading donors of humanitarian aid to the Philippines

Situated at the edge of the Pacific Ocean on the Ring of Fire, the Philippines experiences [regular earthquakes](#) and [volcanic eruptions](#). However, most recent humanitarian disasters have been weather-related, including some [20 tropical cyclones](#) a year, which make the archipelago the [fourth most disaster-prone](#) country in the world.

The EU and its Member States are the leading donors of humanitarian aid to the Philippines, accounting between them for [€12 million](#)¹ — over half of all aid recorded by the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in 2016. EU humanitarian aid peaked in 2013: after Typhoon Haiyan left thousands dead and millions homeless, the United Kingdom was the [world's largest donor](#) (€118 million), while another €38 million came from the EU budget.

EU-Philippines trade and investment

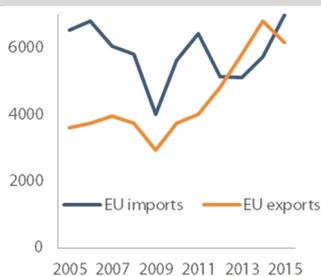
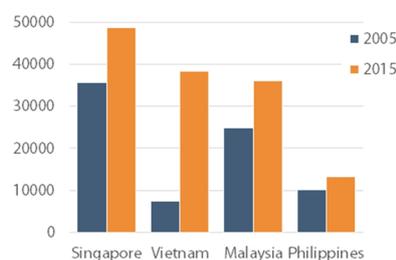
EU trade with the Philippines

Trade in goods is growing, but the Philippines still punches below its weight

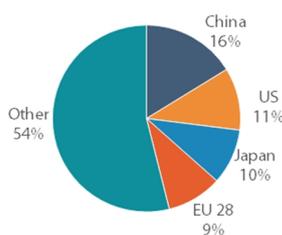
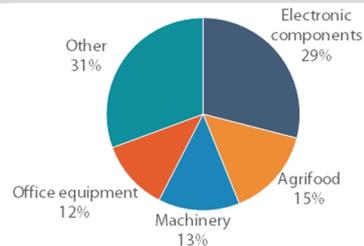
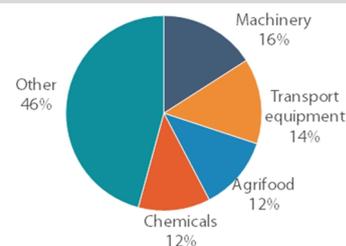
Over the past ten years, EU exports to the Philippines ([€6.2 billion](#) in 2015) have grown much faster than imports (€7 billion); as a result, the EU's formerly large trade deficit has shrunk considerably. Total trade in goods has grown at an average rate of 3 %. The Philippines is the EU's [42nd trading partner](#) (0.4 % of total EU trade with the world), whereas for the Philippines, the EU comes in fourth place (9.5 %). Within the EU, Germany, France and the Netherlands are by far [the Philippines' largest partners](#).

These figures are quite modest compared with southeast Asian tigers such as Vietnam, whose trade with the EU has grown at an annual rate of 20 % to €48 billion — eight times bigger than the Philippines', even though the latter is the larger country in terms of population and GDP (Philippines: [101 million](#), [US\\$290 bn](#); Vietnam: 92 million, [US\\$194 bn](#)). The Philippines is only the EU's sixth-largest partner in southeast Asia, accounting for [6.5 %](#) of EU-ASEAN trade, despite representing 11.5 % of ASEAN GDP. All this suggests that EU-Philippines trade offers considerable untapped potential.

Trade in both directions is a mix of primary and manufactured products, including agrifood (from the Philippines, mostly fish), cars, electronic components and chemicals.

EU imports from/exports to the Philippines (€ million)**Total trade with EU in goods, 2005 and 2015 (€ million)****The Philippines ranked among other EU trading partners**

	Total trade in goods, € bn	Rank, EU trade partner in world	Rank, EU trade partner in ASEAN
Singapore	48.7	16th	1st
Vietnam	38.4	21st	2nd
Malaysia	36.1	22nd	3rd
Philippines	13.1	42nd	6th

Philippines trade partners (% total trade)**Philippines exports to the EU (% total value = €6 984 million)****Philippines imports from the EU (% total value = €6 159 million)**

Data for 2015, unless otherwise stated; source: European Commission, [DG Trade](#).

EU-Philippines trade in services is also relatively modest

In 2014, trade in services was worth **€3.3 billion**, 6 % up on the previous year and with the balance (€0.4 billion) in favour of the Philippines. This is comparable with Vietnam (€3.5 billion), but much less than the EU's services trade with the more developed economies of Malaysia (€8 billion), Thailand (€9 billion) and Singapore (€36 billion).

Current and future EU-Philippines trading arrangements

Countries [classified](#) by the World Bank as lower-middle income can qualify for the EU's [generalised scheme of preferences](#) (GSP), giving them reduced tariffs on about two-thirds of their exports to the EU. Under the [GSP+ scheme](#), those same countries can benefit from zero tariffs, again on two-thirds of exports, in exchange for ratifying and implementing 27 international conventions on human and labour rights, the environment and good governance. In December 2014, the Philippines, which was already participating in the GSP, acquired GSP+ status. Lower tariffs contributed to substantial (+22 %) year-on-year increase in the country's exports to the EU in 2015.

The European Commission closely monitors the situation in the Philippines, and in the event of serious human rights violations it can withdraw the country's preferential status. A GSP+ monitoring mission from DG Trade was originally scheduled for November 2016, but is now likely to take place in early 2017.

In December 2015, the EU and the Philippines [launched negotiations](#) on a free trade agreement, potentially eliminating all tariffs on trade in both directions, at the same time as facilitating services trade and investment between the two countries. A first round of negotiations was held in May 2016; the date for the second round is currently under negotiation, but is likely to be in early 2017.

EU investment in the Philippines

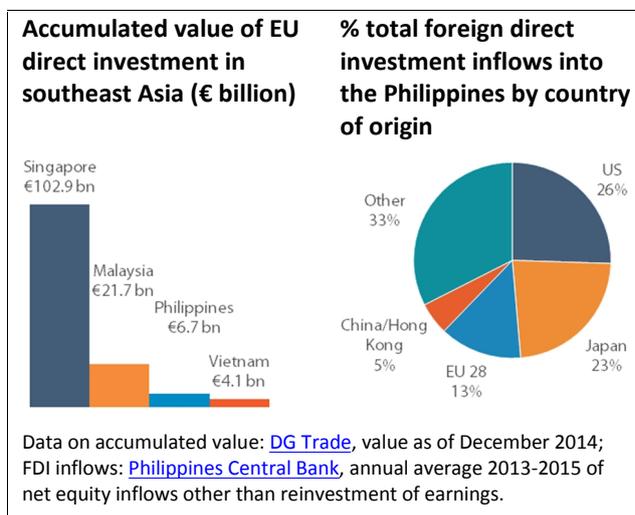
The Philippines attracts much less foreign investment from the EU and the world in general than its south-east Asian neighbours; as of 2012, just **4 %** of EU direct investments in southeast Asia were located in the country. Nevertheless, EU Member

States are still major investors, compared to other countries. Between 2013 and 2015, an average [€178 million](#) a year of direct investment flowed from EU countries (mostly the Netherlands and the UK) into the Philippines, putting the EU in third place behind the USA and Japan. Chinese investment remains relatively modest, though this will change if China follows through on its October 2016 [promise](#) to invest US\$15 billion (€14 billion).

Factors encouraging and deterring EU investment in the Philippines

Investors in the Philippines are encouraged by a fast-growing economy and a well-educated, English-speaking workforce. These strengths have led to growing interest in the country's booming [manufacturing sector](#), but also in business support services. Between 2005 and 2015, the annual value of new ('greenfield') investment projects more than doubled.

On the other hand, considerable obstacles remain. Poor infrastructure, [limits](#) on foreign ownership of Philippine companies, legal uncertainty and political instability are some of the [factors](#) deterring investment. On top of this, provocative statements by new President Rodrigo Duterte are likely to [frighten off](#) some EU investors. A [Belgian trade mission](#) to the Philippines led by Princess Astrid, scheduled for May 2017, was postponed indefinitely after Duterte compared himself to Hitler.



Other areas of practical cooperation between the EU and the Philippines

In January 2011, the EU and the Philippines signed a [partnership and cooperation agreement](#) (the European Parliament gave its [consent](#) in June 2016; as of January 2017, the agreement is still [awaiting ratification](#) by Greece, Ireland, and the Philippines itself). This agreement sets out areas of shared interests: trade, investment and development aid, but also (among others) human rights, counter-terrorism, combating illicit drugs and organised crime, migration, maritime labour and energy.

Defence cooperation

Unlike the United States, EU armed forces neither have bases in the Philippines, nor do they participate in joint exercises. However, nearly [one-quarter](#) of Philippines arms imports over the last ten years have been sourced from the EU (the USA, which provides 57 % of the Philippines' weapons, is by far its biggest supplier). In May 2016, [France](#) signed a defence cooperation agreement, aimed at helping the Philippines to modernise its armed forces, for example through exchanges of military personnel, training, and cooperation on equipment and the defence industry. A similar agreement with the [United Kingdom](#) is currently under discussion, and is expected to be concluded in 2017.²

EU support for the Mindanao peace process

The southern island of Mindanao is the scene of a long-running conflict between the central government and the island's Muslims, the Moros, which has claimed [120 000 lives](#) since the 1970s and displaced millions. In 2014, the government of President Benigno Aquino III³ signed a peace agreement with the main rebel group, the Moro

Islamic Liberation Front. However, the peace process has stalled since then, after a [clash](#) between police and rebels in January 2015 left over 60 dead, and the subsequent [refusal](#) of the Philippines Congress to pass legislation granting rebel regions greater autonomy. Since then, new President Rodrigo Duterte, who is himself from Mindanao, has made efforts to revive the peace process. Many obstacles still remain, but the strong popular and parliamentary support he currently enjoys [could help](#) him to make progress.

Over the years, the EU has [supported](#) the peace process through development aid. The two objectives of improved access to energy and strengthening the rule of law in the EU's 2014-2020 development aid [programme](#) are particularly relevant to Mindanao, the Philippine island most severely affected by [energy shortages](#) and lawlessness. EU aid also goes to NGO projects aimed at promoting dialogue between the parties to the conflict or at [clearing landmines](#) and other unexploded weapons. Apart from its own programmes, the EU also contributes to multilateral programmes such as the World Bank-led [Mindanao Trust Fund](#).

Moreover, benefiting from its credibility as a neutral player, the EU is directly involved in the peace process: EU conflict-resolution experts participate in the [International Monitoring Team](#), which monitors the ceasefire in the region and makes recommendations to both sides.

Migration

A large Filipino diaspora in Europe

Around 800 000 Filipinos live in Europe, making it a less popular destination for their diaspora (estimated at [10.5 million](#)) than the Americas or Asia (4.3 million each). Nevertheless, the Philippines is consistently among the [top fifteen](#) countries of origin of non-EU migrants to the EU. The largest Filipino communities are in the United Kingdom (220 000) and Italy (184 000). By contrast, the number of EU migrants to the Philippines is much smaller ([13 500](#)), with the UK as the main country of origin.

Remittances sent by Filipinos working in Europe are a major boost to the country's economy — in 2015, these amounted to [€4 billion](#), 1.4 % of its GDP and one-sixth of Filipino remittances worldwide.

Filipino migrants sometimes face abuse

[Human trafficking](#) is a problem which affects the Philippines. However, most cases occur within the Philippines itself or in other non-European countries. Between 2010 and 2012, EU countries reported just [105 registered Filipino victims](#) (out of a total of [22 000](#)). Irregular migration is a much bigger problem — nearly one-fifth of the 800 000 Filipinos in Europe are living there illegally, many of them working as domestic servants. As such, they are particularly vulnerable to [exploitation](#), due to their irregular situation and the lack of supervision by labour inspectors.

In 1998, concerns about abuse of Filipino au pairs (in 2013, there were [3 000](#) working in EU countries, mostly in Denmark) led to a [ban on](#) au pair migration to Europe. The ban was eventually lifted in 2012; since then, to prevent abuse, au pairs [register](#) with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas and are given special training before going abroad.

Marriage migration is also open to abuse. Between 1989 and 2011, 26 000 Filipinos (mostly women) emigrated through marriage to Germany, the UK and Sweden. Some of these were genuine relationships, but others were 'mail-order marriages' organised by

agencies. In 1990, the Philippine authorities banned such transactions, and the law was [strengthened](#) in 2016, but marriage brokers still advertise 'devoted' Filipino women.

Migration issues in the EU-Philippines partnership and cooperation agreement

Filipino migration to EU countries is already partially regulated by [bilateral agreements](#) between several EU countries and the Philippines. These include a memorandum of understanding with Spain on migration in general, and sectoral agreements with the UK and Germany on the hiring of Filipino doctors and nurses. The partnership and cooperation agreement envisages 'a mechanism for ... dialogue and consultation on all migration-related issues', including expulsion of illegal migrants.

Maritime labour

A massive [quarter](#) of the world's sailors are estimated to be of Filipino origin; approximately [80 000](#) of them work on EU vessels, over [28 000](#) as officers. However, since 2006 repeated [audits](#) by the EU's European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) revealed that many Filipino seafarers' schools do not provide adequate training. After EMSA's most recent audit in 2014, the EU decided to give the Philippines more time to take corrective action, for example by [closing underperforming schools](#). The EMSA's next audit is planned for spring 2017; a negative outcome could trigger withdrawal of EU recognition for Filipino schools, thus barring graduates from serving as officers on EU ships — a blow both to the seafarers concerned and the EU shipping sector.

Fisheries

The Philippines is severely affected by the problem of unsustainable [illegal fishing](#); in 2014, EU fisheries Commissioner Maria Damanaki [accused](#) the country of 'exercising no real control' over its fisheries. In June 2014, the EU gave the Philippines a warning that unless it took urgent action, its fish exports would be banned from EU markets. Prompted by the risk of losing one of its main markets (one-sixth of total fisheries exports), the Philippines [cracked down](#) on the sector, improving out-of-date fisheries legislation, freezing licenses on new vessels, and beefing up inspections. Acknowledging these improvements, the EU withdrew its warning in April 2015.

Moving beyond practical cooperation towards a closer partnership

A relationship based on values

During a visit to Manila in July 2014, then EU High Representative Catherine Ashton [expressed](#) the hope that the EU and the Philippines could 'go further in this relationship, and turn it into a more strategically rounded partnership beyond "trade and aid"'. Apart from economic ties and practical cooperation in a wide variety of areas, such a partnership could build on cultural closeness. Over 400 years of western colonisation — 350 years under Spanish rule, 50 years under the USA, longer than for any other southeast Asian country — have left an enduring influence in a country which is sometimes described as the [most westernised in Asia](#). [Over 90 %](#) are Christians (80 % Catholic) and most have Spanish names; English is an official language and is widely used as a medium of instruction in schools and universities.

As well as these cultural similarities, the Philippines also shares many of the EU's fundamental values. It is true that Philippine democracy is [deeply flawed](#), chaotic, often corrupt, and dominated by a handful of political dynasties. Nevertheless, the Philippines is still one of the very few Asian countries to have a genuine alternation of power, second only to Indonesia among ten southeast Asian countries in Freedom House's [2016 ranking](#) of political and civil freedoms.

Such values were emphasised under Benigno Aquino, Philippines president from 2010 to 2016. Priorities of his ['straight path' policies](#) included good governance and combating corruption. Aquino's decision to refer the country's [territorial dispute](#) with China in the South China Sea to an international tribunal was [fully in line](#) with the EU's position that such disputes must be resolved peacefully on the basis of international law (although his successor Duterte has since [dismissed](#) the court's ruling as just 'a piece of paper', preferring to follow a bilateral approach).

These similarities between the EU and the Philippines helped to make the country one of the EU's most reliable allies in southeast Asia during Aquino's presidency. It was during this time that relations took several major steps forward (signing of the partnership and cooperation agreement; admission of the Philippines to the GSP+ preferential trading scheme; launch of talks on a free trade agreement).

The Philippines as a close partner of the EU in south-east Asia and east Asia

Recognising southeast Asia as a region of growing importance, the EU has [declared](#) its intention to forge a strategic partnership with ASEAN. For the EU, the Philippines is therefore important not only as a major country in its own right, but also as an influential member of ASEAN (and the country which will hold its presidency in 2017).

The East Asia Summit is a key platform for Asian cooperation

The [East Asia Summit](#) (EAS) is an ASEAN-led annual meeting of heads of state and government from key Asia-Pacific countries (the ten ASEAN member states, plus China, Japan, South Korea, the USA, Russia, India, Australia and New Zealand). Like ASEAN itself, the EAS operates on the basis of consensus, meaning that it can only progress at the pace of the least-willing member, and achieves [few tangible results](#). Nevertheless, it has become the main platform for meetings between ASEAN leaders and their regional partners, enabling [useful discussions](#) on wide-ranging issues including non-proliferation, climate change and energy. The keenness of countries from east Asia and beyond to join the EAS and regular attendance of its annual summits by their leaders testify to its importance.

Joining the East Asia Summit would help the EU to become a bigger player in Asia

Ever since the East Asia Summit was launched, the EU has repeatedly expressed an interest in participating, for example in [2006](#) and again in [2015](#). However, unlike the USA and Russia, both of which joined in [2011](#), the EU has not yet been admitted. Exclusion from ASEAN's main forum for cooperation with its neighbours makes the EU look like a [secondary player](#) in Asia, and is a serious obstacle to a genuine EU-ASEAN strategic partnership.

The Philippines has consistently backed the EU in its efforts to join the EAS, most recently at the October 2016 [ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting](#) in Bangkok. However, there is still opposition from some other ASEAN member states, due to concerns that the EAS first needs to consolidate before accepting new members (for example, consolidation is emphasised in the 2015 EAS [10th anniversary declaration](#)), and no agreement has yet been reached. It is not yet clear whether the Philippines will use its 2017 presidency of ASEAN to support the EU's membership bid.

All change for EU-Philippines relations?

New President Duterte insults the EU

Since his election in May 2016, new Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte has repeatedly insulted his country's western allies, giving the EU the [middle finger](#),

criticising it as a '[shambles](#)' run by lawyers who are 'stupid and idiots', describing its Member States as [hypocrites](#) for defending human rights, given their historical track record in former colonies, and [declaring](#) that the Philippines will not beg for aid from the USA and the EU should they decide to cut it (since then, the USA — but not the EU — has put some of its aid [on hold](#) over human rights concerns). At the same time, he has [announced](#) a reorientation of Philippine foreign policy towards Russia and China.

Human rights and democracy under threat in the Philippines

The EU is worried not only by Duterte's abrasive style, but also by the wave of killings caused by his war on drugs — over [6 000 deaths](#) as of January 2016. Not only is Duterte encouraging this violence by calling for criminals to be exterminated, he also [admits](#) (in his former capacity as mayor of Davao City) personally taking part in the city's death squads. In the current wave of extrajudicial killings, [statistics](#) undermine claims that the 2 000 victims of police operations were killed in self-defence, and there are [reports](#) of unarmed suspects being killed while under arrest. Moreover, police are [accused](#) of involvement in many of the 4 000 killings attributed to vigilantes.

[Human rights](#) abuses are nothing new in the Philippines. A 2015 US State Department [report](#) notes that (before Duterte's election) extrajudicial killings by security forces, insurgents and vigilante groups were the most serious human rights problem; there have also been reports of a gruesome game in which police interrogators chose how to torment detainees by spinning a '[wheel of torture](#)'. What is different now is the scale of violence, with thousands of victims in the second half of 2016, compared to a [few hundred](#) during the six years of his predecessor's rule.

There are also concerns that human rights and democracy in general could be under attack. Duterte has called for [reinstatement](#) of the death penalty, and suggested suspending the principle of [habeas corpus](#) requiring the police to justify arrests to courts — a proposal, that if implemented, would considerably undermine rule of law. He has [warned](#) that, if the drugs crisis deteriorated, nothing would stop him declaring martial law indefinitely — not even the Constitution, which limits its use to sixty days. A further pointer to potential [authoritarian tendencies](#) on Duterte's part was the November 2016 [state burial](#) of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who ruled for many years under martial law.

In the EU, only the European Parliament has publicly criticised Duterte's drug war so far

Up to now, the EU has followed a wait-and-see approach, refraining from direct criticism of the situation — with the exception of the European Parliament's [resolution](#) of September 2016, which, while acknowledging the seriousness of the drugs problem, called for a stop to extrajudicial killings. It was this resolution which prompted Duterte's middle finger salute to the EU — a gesture which the EU delegation in Manila declined to comment on. There have not yet been any public statements by the European External Action Service; however, at meetings with representatives of the Philippine government, the EU [conveyed](#) its position that any solution to the country's drug problem must respect human rights, including the right to a fair trial. The European Commission is also planning to monitor the Philippines' continued eligibility for GSP+ preferential trading (which, among other things, requires implementation of international human rights standards).

What are the implications for EU-Philippines relations?

It is not yet clear how President Duterte's attacks on the EU will affect relations. In his comments on the USA, he has shown a tendency to backtrack after some of his more

provocative statements; for example, a few days after announcing 'separation' from the USA, Duterte explained that the alliance between the two countries would [continue](#); despite the rhetoric, he will probably also want to continue working closely with the EU.

There is substantial evidence for continued Philippine interest in cooperation. For example, talks on an EU-Philippines free trade agreement have not been disrupted, and Duterte is [reportedly](#) keen on closer economic ties with Europe; meanwhile, the partnership and cooperation agreement is still on track for ratification. At ASEAN-EU [talks](#) held in October 2016, the Philippines remained supportive of admitting the EU to the East Asia Summit. Philippine diplomats working in Brussels also report business as usual, with no instructions from Manila for a change of approach. For its part, the EU has [declared](#) its intention to pursue its partnership with the Philippines.

Although Duterte is a more difficult partner for the EU than his predecessor, there are many points in his programme that the EU can subscribe to: for example, ending fighting with Muslim and communist insurgents, and [reducing the poverty rate](#) from the current [22%](#) to 17% through inclusive growth. Both of these are areas supported by EU development aid. The EU also acknowledges the seriousness of the issues which Duterte's drug war are intended to address — the [worst amphetamines problem in Asia](#), and the [failure](#) of the country's courts to deliver effective justice; EU responses to these problems include support for judicial reforms, and possible funding for the rehabilitation of addicts⁴.

Despite this continued cooperation, EU ambassador to Manila Franz Jesson has [warned](#) that the EU will gradually 'adjust' to political statements by the Philippine government, while avoiding over-reaction to them. With uncertainty over the future direction of the Philippines under its new president, relations are likely to become less cordial, and progress towards the closer alliance urged by High Representative Ashton in 2014 has been halted for the time being.

Endnotes

¹ Figures expressed by source texts in US dollars have been converted to euros at €1 = US\$1.04.

² According to an official interviewed at the Philippines Embassy in London.

³ Son of Benigno Aquino Junior (a leader of opposition to dictator Ferdinand Marcos) and Corazon Aquino, who became president after her husband's assassination and Marcos' downfall.

⁴ According to the European External Action Service (EEAS), no decision on this project has yet been taken.

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