

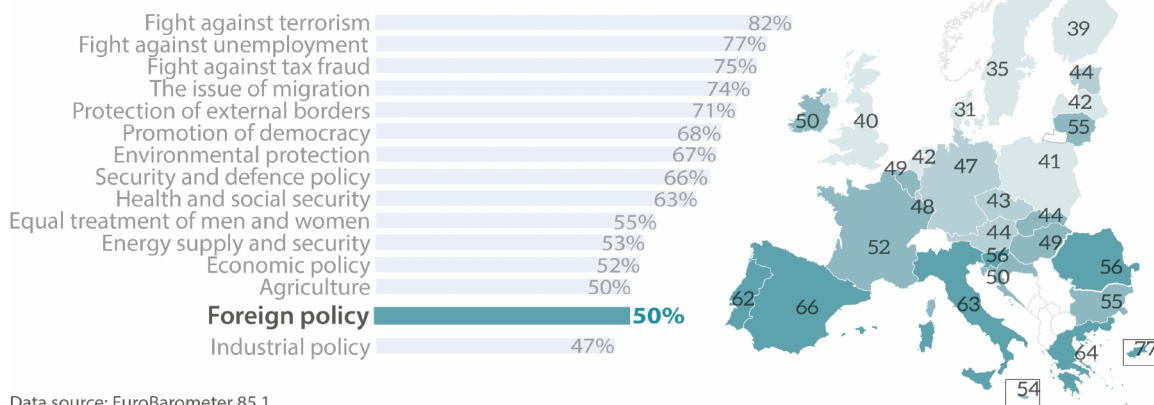
Foreign policy

OVERVIEW

Citizens who think EU engagement in foreign policy is sufficient are almost as numerous as those wishing the EU does more in this area – and nearly one fifth confess they are not able to evaluate EU action. This can be explained as the remit of EU foreign policy is not easy to identify, since it brings together missions for which the EU has full responsibility and competences shared with EU Member States, or even the UN or WTO. However, since its inception, EU foreign policy has adapted to an ever-changing global context: most international issues have multiple impacts – on climate, migration flows or security – and need to be comprehensively addressed. Building on the Treaties' provisions, the EU and its Member States are moving from 'silo' policies (trade, development, humanitarian aid) towards more integrated strategies.

Public expectations and EU commitment on foreign policy – is there a gap?

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



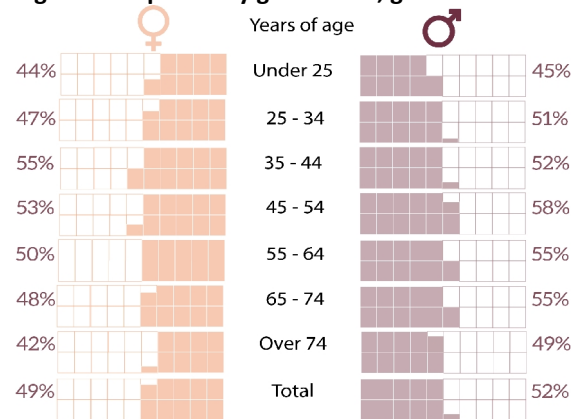
Data source: EuroBarometer 85.1

According to a new Eurobarometer survey of the European Parliament on '[perceptions and expectations](#)', 50% of EU citizens surveyed would like the EU to intervene more in foreign policy. The differences across Member States are significant, with the strongest support for increased EU action in Cyprus (77%), Spain (66%) and Greece (64%). The weakest support for increased EU involvement in foreign policy is shared by citizens from Denmark (31%), Sweden (35%) and Finland (39%). Some 11% of EU citizens would like to see less EU involvement in foreign policy, which is one of the highest results among the areas surveyed. When asked about their evaluation of current EU involvement in foreign policy, 40% of EU citizens say it is insufficient while almost the same proportion of citizens (37%) evaluate it as adequate. This is one of the policy areas with the highest proportion of citizens not able to evaluate the current involvement of the EU (17% answered 'do not know'). There is a gap between the perception of current EU

involvement in foreign policy and the expectations of citizens in that area in only some Member States, which tend to be in the southern part of the continent. However, the study as a whole shows that there are significantly higher expectations for EU involvement in specific aspects of foreign policy rather than 'foreign policy' as a whole, e.g. migration, promotion of peace and democracy in the world, security and defence policy.

The strongest support for more EU involvement in foreign policy is from women between 35 and 54 years old and men between 45 and 74 years old.

Figure 1 – Opinion by generation, gender



Data source: EuroBarometer 85.1

Legal framework

EU foreign policy has multiple aspects, reflected in the Treaties: the Treaty on European Union (TEU) includes provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the [Common Security and Defence Policy](#); they are mainly designed by the Member States, through the Council ('intergovernmental method'). The Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) also includes related matters on which the European Parliament and Council act as co-legislators ('ordinary legislative procedure'). This is the case for the EU's 'external action' which encompasses development, humanitarian aid, sanctions, and a range of international agreements and participation in international fora. A third level of action lies in the 'external dimension of internal policies' such as migration policy and the fight against terrorism. Although prior foreign policy coordination mechanisms existed, CFSP was institutionalised by the Maastricht Treaty (1993) as the then 'second pillar' of the EU. The function of High Representative for CFSP was put in the hands of the Secretary-General of the Council by the Amsterdam Treaty (1999). The close relationship between CFSP, EU external action, and the 'external dimension' has been embodied by the Lisbon Treaty (2009) in the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP). The consent of the [European Parliament](#) is required for most types of international agreements, it has also broad supervisory powers.

Current implementation and EU action

A large toolbox is available for what is called 'foreign policy', for ease of reference. Internal policies with clear relations to external aspects – such as the [fight against terrorism](#) and the [issue of migration](#) – and by contrast, [security and defence policy](#), a foreign policy with clear internal impact, are among those in which most citizens would like the EU to intervene more. If the role of the EU in negotiating trade agreements has recently caught the media's attention, in other areas the EU touch is less visible because it acts along with many other actors.

Trade negotiations are conducted by the [European Commission](#) on behalf of the EU, this competence is not shared with the Member States, and ratification by the Council with Parliament's consent is sufficient for trade agreements to become binding for the Member States. However the Commission's position has to be in line with the mandate given by the Member States in the Council and the [WTO framework](#). Moreover, trade-only agreements are rare; most often, conditions such as respect for the rule of law are added, for which ratification by all Member States is needed – this will be for example the case for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The EU has conducted negotiations on a very large number of [trade agreements](#), and contributed to [shaping new global trade standards](#).

[The High Representative](#) is constantly promoting **international cooperation** to foster peace and security. The EU has been actively involved in the [Iran talks](#) and in a number of [peace talks](#) around the world. **Development cooperation** is a [major aspect](#) of the EU external policy: its main objective 'the reduction ... of poverty' should be a guiding principle for all other EU foreign policies in developing countries (Article 208 TFEU). [Several policy frameworks](#) provide guidance

for action to all EU stakeholders – institutions and Member States – which together fund more than half of global development aid. These frameworks aim at complying with the UN Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) and build upon the concepts of [policy coherence](#) and [efficiency](#), to ensure that no EU action has negative impact on development and that the money is well spent. In the field, however, coherence has sometimes proved [difficult to assess](#). Efforts have been made to implement measures aimed at reconciling the objectives of other policies (such as [trade](#), [climate action](#), or [security](#)) with those of development. **Humanitarian aid** is also a domain where competences are shared between EU institutions and Member States (Art. 4 TFEU), together [the first world donor](#). Guided by a '[European Consensus](#)', the Commission's DG ECHO has a coordinating role. Coherence and efficiency are primary principles, all the more so since [most needs cannot be addressed](#), despite the ever-growing humanitarian spending.

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in 2004 to prevent fault lines between the enlarged EU and its closest neighbours growing too big. It consists of [tailor-made agreements](#) between the EU and each of 16 countries sharing its external borders, financed by a specific budgetary programme, the European Neighbourhood Instrument. Aimed at [stabilising the neighbourhood](#) through spreading the [EU's values and prosperity](#), the ENP has fallen short in settling 'frozen' (in [Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine](#)) stalled ([Western Sahara, Israel/Palestine](#)) and full-blown ([Libya](#) and [Syria](#)) conflicts. It has not been flexible enough to adapt to quick regime changes in the 'Arab Spring' countries, and lacked leverage over Russia in Ukraine. However, lessons have been learned and the [reviewed neighbourhood policy](#) acknowledges that the EU's values are not shared by all its partners, and focuses more on the EU's own interests (energy security, counter-terrorism and migration). **The 'EU's neighbours' neighbourhood'** is probably the area where the whole range of EU foreign policy tools has been deployed. The EU strategies in the [Sahel](#) or for the [Horn of Africa](#), bring together most stakeholders (EU, Member States, regional partners) and tools (CSDP missions, humanitarian aid, trade and development programmes) towards integrated programming and common goals: climate action, better migration policy, and the fight against terrorism.

Potential for better implementation and further EU action

CFSP/CSDP, external action, and the external dimension of internal policies are well differentiated in the Treaties, but in practice specific actions build upon a mix of all levels of decision-making and budgeting. Indeed, risks are so intertwined that most often a single tool is not sufficient: for example, population displacement triggered by a conflict over natural resources has to be addressed by humanitarian aid, itself secured by a CSDP mission, and its effects mitigated by adequate migration and development policies, while peace talks are conducted. Coordination between all stakeholders is challenging but vital, not only to respond to, but to prevent risks. The EU made [concrete proposals](#) to shape [synergy](#) between the actors globally, in order to respond to new challenges such as humanitarian access in conflict areas, to find new sources of funding and enhance crisis prevention through shared expertise. Current reflections within the EU build on the concept of '[resilience](#)': the future foreign policy framework ([EU Global Strategy](#)) aims at mapping tools and resources best designed to help all of society in the EU and its partners to better withstand natural and manmade shocks. This means breaking silos between actors and between traditional policy areas. This approach is [supported](#) by the European Parliament, which often highlighted the need for [proactive action](#) to prevent crises. Parliament also insisted that the core values of the Treaties – [democracy promotion](#) and the fight against poverty – should not be subordinated to security objectives. [Scrutiny](#) over TTIP has also triggered more [transparency](#) in the negotiation of trade agreements.

The EU budget and foreign policy

EU foreign policy is mainly financed under Heading 4, 'Global Europe' (see figure 2). For the 2014-2020 MFF, the Global Europe heading was allocated a total of €66 262 million. The overall package for Global Europe represents 6.12% of the 2014-2020 MFF, while it was 5.71% in the previous MFF (2007-2013). Among the most significant programmes under Global Europe are: the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), that focuses on combating poverty in

developing countries, and has a total amount €19 661.64 million (current prices) for the MFF; the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) benefits the countries included in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) for better political cooperation and better economic integration between the EU and its neighbouring countries; it has a total amount €15 432.63 million (current prices) for the 2014-2020 MFF; and the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA II), which provides financial support to countries with a view to eventual EU accession, has a total amount of €11 698.67 million for the 2014-2020 MFF. In the 2016 annual budget, these three programmes combined amount to **more than 70% of the Global Europe**

financing package, with [Humanitarian Aid](#) being the fourth biggest programme. With the continued instability in neighbouring countries and the refugee crisis, the requests for funding under Heading 4 are expected to grow. In order to guarantee existing levels of external action and not compromise them at the expense of the increased migration-related requests, a [report of the Budget Committee](#) of the EP on the mid-term review/revision of the MFF calls for upward revision of the relevant 2014-2020 MFF ceilings.

Financial instruments outside the EU budget

The [European Development Fund](#) is the most significant programme outside the EU budget. It is financed through EU Member States' contributions and it has specific provisions for its implementation. It is the main instrument for providing development aid in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. The 11th EDF (2014-2020) has been allocated €30.5 billion; in addition, €2.6 billion will be made available by the European Investment Bank in the form of loans from its own resources.

Potential for further financing at EU level

New [EU Trust Funds](#) could be an option to circumvent the lack of resources and flexibility of the EU budget. In November 2015, the EU Trust Fund for Africa, aimed at addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons, was signed at the Valetta Summit on Migration. Although it has existed since 2007, [Blending](#) (an Innovative Financial Instrument) has recently [caught the attention](#) of media and development aid actors. Blending combines EU funding with resources from public and private financiers.

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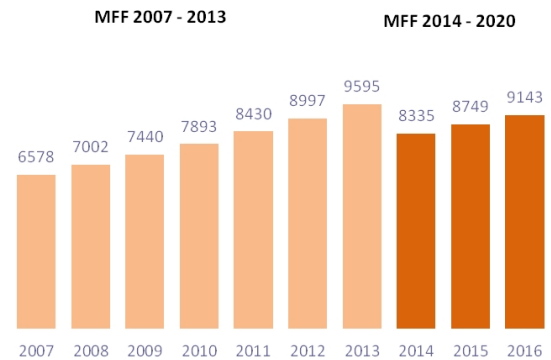
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Figure 2 – 'Global Europe' spending, 2007-2016 (% EU budget)



Source: Adopted EU budgets for years 2007-2016 (Commission expenditure Title V).

