



Work plan 2023–2024

Contents

Connecting Africa and Europe	3
The year ahead	4
Our gender lens	5
Our institutional funders and partners	6
How we work	7
Europe and Africa in the world	8
EU foreign and development policy	8
Migration and mobility	9
Digital economy and governance	10
AU-EU relations	11
Peaceful societies and accountable governance	12
Peace, security and resilience	12
Inclusive governance and accountability	13
Sustainable African economies and climate action	14
Economic recovery and transformation	14
Climate action and green transition	15
Sustainable food systems	16
African economic integration	17
Outreach and impact	18
Centre management	19

Connecting Africa and Europe

“We aim to generate sustainable and equitable solutions through dialogue and collaboration, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

ECDPM is a leading think and do tank focusing on Africa–Europe relations and on cooperation between the two continents at the global level. Our mission is to promote innovative forms of international cooperation involving European and African actors, to address major global development challenges. We aim to generate sustainable and equitable solutions through dialogue and collaboration, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We produce practical knowledge that is politically savvy and interdisciplinary, to inform policy debates. We act as an independent knowledge broker, facilitate dialogue and collaboration with and between different actors, and contribute to inclusive policymaking and effective policy implementation.

This is the second rolling work plan under ECDPM’s strategy 2022–2026. That strategy sets out the challenges and opportunities we see in the world and how our work contributes to **five broad thematic areas** identified through an inclusive and consultative strategic planning process.

Linked to those thematic areas and our envisioned impacts, ECDPM’s work is organised in three clusters:

-  **Europe and Africa in the world**
-   **Peaceful societies and accountable governance**
-   **Sustainable African economies and climate action**

The Centre engages in a dynamic policy space and in policy processes that are multi-actor and contingent. We therefore need to be flexible and able to adapt our plans depending on contextual changes, emerging windows of opportunity and specific demands from our partners. Most of our activities also have a longer timeframe than one year. Therefore, ECDPM works with rolling work plans, providing a period of overlap in which the current plan is under implementation while the drafting of a new plan gets underway.

This work plan outlines who our partners are and our key areas of focus, highlighting specific examples of ECDPM activities in 2023. It also sets out how we ensure uptake of our results.

The year ahead

“According to the United Nations, the COVID-19 pandemic obliterated four years of poverty reduction.”

Our global community is in a dire state, marked by global warming, pandemic, climate disasters, war, famine, inequalities, energy crisis, irregular migration, political upheaval, and the rise of extremist and populist movements. In the field of human rights, we are witnessing an alarming pushback on the accomplishments of the last 70 years.

According to the United Nations (UN), the COVID-19 pandemic obliterated four years of poverty reduction. In 2020 alone, 93 million more people fell into absolute poverty. It is estimated that a decade will be needed to return to pre-COVID levels of human development. And this does not take into account the consequences of the Russian war against Ukraine.

At ECDPM, our task is to identify and understand the elements that drive these dynamics and what they mean for the Africa-Europe relationship. In 2023, we will work in the following areas:

- Europe in an increasingly competitive geopolitical order and in initiatives such as the Global Gateway and the Team Europe approach
- Responses to irregular migration by the EU and its member states, especially the increasingly strict policies adopted against migrants and asylum seekers and the – narrowing – avenues for legal labour migration
- AU-EU relations and the commitments both parties made at the 6th AU-EU Summit in February 2022
- The green and digital transitions, and the digital economy and governance, particularly in regard to infrastructure, data governance and support for African integration
- Approaches and perspectives on how to achieve peace in Europe and Africa and implementation of gender equality policies
- Inclusive and accountable societies centred on citizens’ demands and needs
- Sustainable, gender-sensitive and inclusive economic recovery and transformation in Africa
- The geopolitical dimensions of the European Green Deal, the politics of renewable energy, EU climate finance and a global green recovery
- The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)
- Governance arrangements for food systems that are better adapted and more resilient to climate change

With these, we aim to contribute to the impact areas set out in our five-year all-Centre strategy:



Strong international cooperation and partnerships



Prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable African economies



Ambitious and fair responses to the global climate and environmental crises



Peaceful resolution of conflict, human security and increased resilience of communities



Open, equitable, and accountable political spaces and democratic governance systems

Our gender lens



“Through experimentation, learning and adaptation, we will further institutionalise the integration of gender in our work.”

As part of our 2022-2026 strategy, ECDPM has committed to the meaningful integration of gender and gender-related issues across our focus areas. A key fixture in our new organisational structure is therefore an agile core group of gender focal points for each thematic cluster, supported by a gender coordinator and our Outreach and impact department. Their work is geared towards supporting a more systematic, strategic and accountable approach to gender, to bring gender to a deeper and more embedded level within the various clusters.

Through experimentation, learning and adaptation, we will further institutionalise the integration of gender in our work. In particular, we will apply our “gender marker”, which is a dedicated tool to support our staff in their policy analysis and facilitation work. Additionally, we will conduct the following activities:

- Support the workstreams in integrating realistic gender ambitions in their theories of change
- Develop institutional accountability to integrate gender and follow up on steps taken by senior staff and the gender coordinator, in line with their job descriptions
- Invest in the learning and capacity of the gender focal points and the support function of the gender coordinator
- Promote the effective and accountable use of ECDPM’s gender marker within our different workstreams and identify ways to strengthen and expand the scope of the gender marker
- Support development of effective monitoring and evaluation to track progress in the integration of gender in ECDPM’s work
- Keep abreast of relevant discussions and developments in Europe and Africa on gender and intersectionality and what they mean for our work as a think tank on Africa-Europe relations

Our institutional funders and partners



“Our institutional partners continue to play a major role in supporting ECDPM’s mandate, strategy and work plans by providing multi-annual institutional and medium-term flexible funding.”



Our institutional partners continue to play a major role in supporting ECDPM’s mandate, strategy and work plans by providing multi-annual institutional and medium-term flexible funding. They allow us to produce cutting-edge policy-relevant analysis and engage in European and African policy processes as a non-partisan broker. ECDPM has built and maintains a solid relationship of trust with the Netherlands, as its founder, and with Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg and Sweden. These multi-annual partnerships are a cornerstone of ECDPM’s way of working.

ECDPM is respected for its wide network of partners and privileged access to key stakeholders and policymakers in the foreign and development policy communities of Europe, Africa and beyond. In Europe, we engage with policymakers, including officials from the Council of the EU and its working groups, the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Parliament, EU delegations and EU Council presidencies. We also work with EU member states, ministries of interior and foreign affairs/development, national institutions and implementing agencies.

In Africa, we engage with policymakers, the AU Commission and departments, regional economic communities (RECs), AU member states, and relevant national ministries, as well as international organisations such as the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). On both continents, we work with social and economic actors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the private sector, economic agencies, academia, and think tanks operating at the continental, regional and national levels.




In 2023, we will continue to seek support to scale up our Young International Professionals (YIP) programme, which gives young African graduates the opportunity to spend 12 months at ECDPM. We will strengthen partnerships with African think tanks by engaging in concrete joint activities, such as the balanced narrative and reality check of AU-EU relations with the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and the Policy Center for the New South. We will continue to partner with peer institutions on joint research, publications and events, including through the [European Think Tanks Group \(ETG\)](#).


How we work

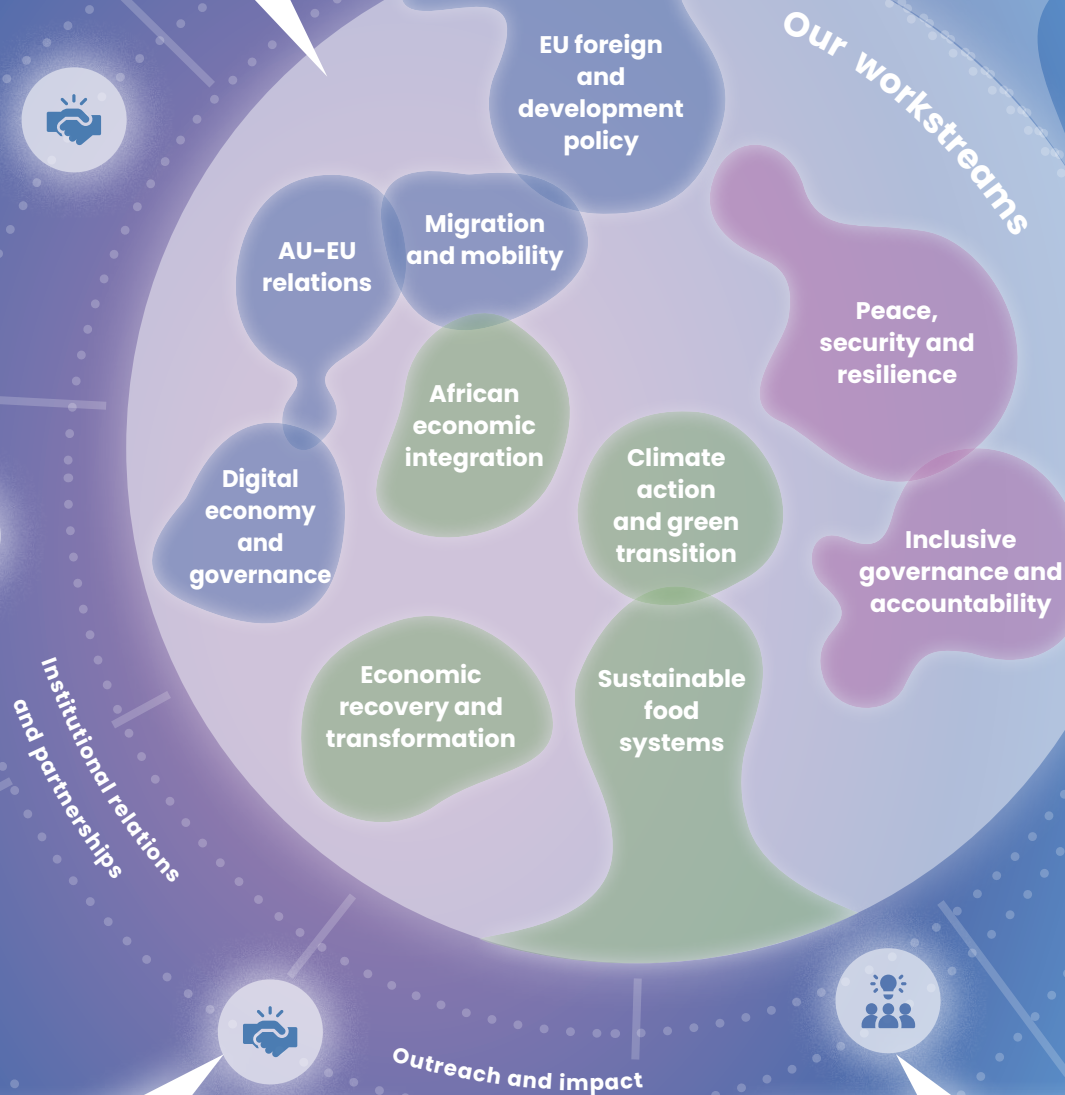
1 We generate knowledge and act as an independent broker.  

We have organised our work in three clusters, linked to the impact areas of the strategy.

The three clusters are:

-  Europe and Africa in the world
-  Peaceful societies and accountable governance
-  Sustainable African economies and climate action

2 We apply a gender lens to address gender equality and women's political and socio-economic participation in all areas of our work. 



3 We collaborate with our partners from around the world.

[Institutional relations and partnerships department]

4 We reach out to European and African policymakers and practitioners to strengthen uptake and impact.

[Outreach and impact department]

Europe and Africa in the world



ECDPM supports European countries and the EU to

become more effective and responsible global actors for sustainable development. We facilitate strong and mutually beneficial international cooperation and partnerships, particularly between Europe and Africa.

In 2023-2024, we will work in four areas: EU foreign and development policy, migration and mobility, digital economy and governance, and AU-EU relations.

EU foreign and development policy

ECDPM will contribute to more effective, **responsible and integrated EU external action and development policy and seek to reduce the policy-to-implementation gap, in collaboration with EU member states.**

Key activities for 2023:

- **Analysis of EU foreign and development policy and practice.** ECDPM will analyse the impact of Russia's war against Ukraine on EU foreign and development policy, including the EU's capacity to respond to successive and mutually-reinforcing crises and the EU's partnership with Africa in an increasingly contested geopolitical environment. We will follow the operationalisation of the EU's NDICI-Global Europe and Team Europe approach, including the Global Gateway, particularly their implications for partner countries in Africa.
- **Integration of gender lens.** We will follow up our work on the EU's Gender Action Plan III (GAP-III), including analysing how different EU member states enact feminist foreign policy and align with EU gender objectives.
- **Support to the Swedish presidency of the Council of the EU.** ECDPM will collaborate with Sweden during its EU Council presidency in the first half of 2023. This work will include a focus on the NDICI-Global Europe, Team Europe and GAP-III, as well as addressing corruption as an obstacle to development.

HIGHLIGHT

Partners' perceptions of the EU as a human development actor

This research centres on the renewed human development focus in EU international cooperation. It analyses partners' perceptions of the EU as an external actor and sheds light on partner countries' interest in the EU's human development agenda and its influence. Specific attention is given to interlinkages between gender and human development sectors, including education and health. The analysis will result in policy recommendations to strengthen the EU-Africa partnership in human development.

Activities

Three case studies – in Kenya, Guinea and Zambia – will capture views from various African stakeholders. To understand partners' perceptions and level of ownership of the EU's human development agenda, the project will engage with human development stakeholders such as women's organisations, national and local authorities, and civil society organisations working on human development.

Migration and mobility

ECDPM will promote **comprehensive, effective and human-centred migration and mobility governance within Europe–Africa relations** and by EU and African governments and regional organisations, to maximise migration’s development potential, minimise its risks, support migrant and refugee rights, and generate ideas to address migration-related development challenges.

Key activities for 2023:

- **Labour mobility.** Continuing our work on legal labour migration pathways, especially within EU and African frameworks (e.g., talent partnerships and the AU Free Movement Protocol), we will provide practical guidance for implementation, considering sustainable development dimensions and views from both continents. We will table options for innovative and development-friendly mobility and migration, highlighting conditions for success.
- **Development approaches to sustainable reintegration.** Following on previous work, we will document and share lessons from interventions on employment, employability and sustainable reintegration in West Africa, to support ongoing and future programmes in this area.
- **Migration in EU international development cooperation.** We will continue our research on implementation of migration-related programmes in Africa under the NDICI-Global Europe and Team Europe initiatives, to help resolve emerging issues and document lessons learnt. We will also strengthen our expertise on the link between displacement and climate change.

HIGHLIGHT

The Horizon Europe project DYNAMIG

The DYNAMIG project considers the interaction between policies and migration decisions and behaviours. It gathers insights on the dynamics, trajectories and heterogeneity of migration decisions, to assess policies and policymaking and explain their effectiveness. To explicitly address the diversity of potential migrants, the project incorporates a monitoring process to ensure that gender justice and diversity concerns are mainstreamed.

Activities

- Contributing to DYNAMIG research
- Managing dissemination and use of outputs through joint knowledge creation and stakeholder engagement
- Raising awareness of the gender impact of migration policies

Partners

- Kiel Institute for the World Economy (Germany)
- Université Mohammed VI Polytechnique (Morocco)
- African Migration and Development Centre (Kenya)
- Middlesex University Higher Education Cooperation (UK)
- Université de Luxembourg (Luxembourg)
- Migration Policy Centre at the European University Institute (Italy)
- Elizade University Nigeria (Nigeria)

Digital economy and governance

ECDPM will promote **digital cooperation between Africa and Europe for mutually beneficial, sustainable human development outcomes** and contribute to a **more effective EU role in international digital affairs**.

Key activities for 2023:

- **Regional harmonisation of digital financial services in Africa.** We will continue to explore how the EU can support a smooth rollout of the AfCFTA, with a special focus on gender-inclusive and integrated cross-border digital payment systems.
- **Global Gateway.** We will follow the digital dimension of the Global Gateway, including how it is understood in partner countries and how it can contribute to the EU's geopolitical goals, while also exploring its development outcomes in partner countries. We will link this work with wider initiatives across ECDPM on the Global Gateway and on private sector development.
- **Digital governance.** We will look at different elements of digital governance, including at the multilateral level. We will seek to understand dynamics at multilateral fora and the space for the EU and the AU to develop their role in international digital affairs.

HIGHLIGHT

Supporting better EU digital partnerships (awaiting funding contract)

This project supports the EU to develop mutually beneficial digital partnerships with partner countries. It provides in-depth research and policy recommendations to enable the EU to play a stronger and more effective role in international digital affairs. Project findings and outputs are geared particularly to help the EU build meaningful digital partnerships based on a human-centred approach to digital transformation that responds to local needs. The objective is fair, inclusive and gender-responsive digital transitions, in line with the SDGs, and creation of synergies between the green and digital transitions.

Activities

- In-depth studies accompanied by policy-focused briefs. Precise topics will be set in January 2023, and may include the reception of the Global Gateway, digital governance (e.g., in multilateral fora), digital services and digital skills
- Workshops that bring the voices of non-European policymakers and researchers to the fore

Partners

- African Center for Economic Transformation (Ghana)
- Institute for Security Studies (South Africa)
- Asian and Latin American think tanks

AU-EU relations

ECDPM will explore **how a more mutually beneficial and interest-driven partnership between Europe and Africa can be constructed** in the post-COVID era. We will look at the formal EU-AU partnership, the multilateral level, and ways to enhance cooperation and include new generations of non-governmental actors.

Key activities for 2023:

- **Sahel strategy for Luxembourg.** We will help Luxembourg with background work and support drafting of its “all-of-government” Sahel strategy. This builds on our work assisting EU member states with the development of their Africa strategies.
- **Broadening the policy research community.** We will broaden our policy research community on issues around the AU-EU partnership, especially the role of non-state actors in the AU-EU partnership.
- **Follow-up to the 6th AU-EU Summit.** We will analyse the status of the commitments made at the summit, examining how to construct a more interest-driven partnership and how to achieve more equal and mutually beneficial relationships between European and African actors. We will develop work on the role of multilateralism in the AU-EU partnership, reflecting the commitment from the [Joint Vision for 2030](#).

HIGHLIGHT

Balanced narratives and reality checks in AU-EU relations

ECDPM coordinates a project with 3 African think tanks, financed by the EU Delegation to the African Union, to provide practical insights and substantive inputs to enrich AU-EU policy dialogues and better connect Brussels and Addis-based policymakers. This work focuses specifically on the policy areas of climate and green transition, digitalisation, economic transformation and integration, and peace and security. Its aim is to help ensure that future policies are based on a clear understanding of past successes and failures.

Activities

- Analysis of the Africa-EU partnership in the new geopolitical context
- A series of working group sessions on the summit outcomes and priorities
- Communicating outcomes of these discussions and informing policy discussions via joint briefing notes

Partners

- African Center for Economic Transformation (Ghana)
- Institute for Security Studies (South Africa)
- Policy Center for the New South (Morocco)

Interested in working with us?

We offer comprehensive analysis and research | policy briefs and short articles | dialogue and collaboration | advice and support | podcasts and video content | expert information and training | organisation and facilitation of roundtables, events and webinars |

Are you interested in working with us? Please get in touch with Mariella Di Ciommo, Associate director: mdc@ecdpm.org.

Peaceful societies and accountable governance



ECDPM contributes to the peaceful resolution of



conflict, human security and increased resilience

of communities affected by protracted conflict. We support processes leading to open, equitable and accountable political spaces and democratic governance systems as “enablers” of sustainable development in Africa and in Europe.

In 2023–2024, we will work in two key areas: peace, security and resilience and inclusive governance and accountability.

Peace, security and resilience

ECDPM will promote the transition of **fragile and conflict-affected environments towards peaceful, well-governed and prosperous societies** in which human security is guaranteed and the resilience of individuals and communities is enhanced.

Key activities for 2023:

- **Radicalisation and violent extremism.** Building on earlier work conducted in West Africa, the Sahel and Central Asia, we will deepen our expertise on fragility, conflict and religious radicalisation and opportunities for conflict- and religion-sensitive programming.
- **Rule of law in Somalia.** We will continue the evaluation of the EU’s past and current cooperation with Somalia. Particularly, we will identify lessons and make recommendations to inform decision-makers, notably those at the EEAS and Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA), on how to improve current and future EU strategies, programmes and actions.
- **Climate change, resilience and security.** Building on ongoing NUFFIC-funded work and the CASCADES project, we will strengthen our outreach on climate change, resilience and security through several short policy briefs. We will also seek to deepen our engagement on issues related to gender and the gender-security-climate nexus.
- **Multilateral approaches to peace and security.** We will continue to follow and produce knowledge on multilateral approaches to peace and security, as carried out by the UN, EU and AU, and African RECs, as well as ad hoc security initiatives.

HIGHLIGHT

Deepening understanding of religious radicalisation

Building on earlier research on Salafism in West Africa and the Sahel and on Islamic activism in Central Asia, we are continuing this line of work in 2023. Funded by INTPA, we are conducting an EU study on radicalisation and recruitment in Liberia and Guinea-Conakry. We will capitalise on our earlier research by publishing a research paper on radicalisation and what it means for conflict prevention, social cohesion and inclusive governance.

Activities

- Publication of a research paper on religious radicalisation
- Conduct of a study on radicalisation and recruitment in Liberia and Guinea-Conakry, including risks and opportunities for EU interventions

Inclusive governance and accountability

To contribute to more peaceful and inclusive societies, ECDPM will inform actors in Europe and Africa about **what drives and enables inclusiveness, responsiveness and accountability to citizens' demands** and what this means for governance as a public good and as an "enabler" of human rights and wider sustainable development.

Key activities for 2023:

- **Charter Project Africa.** As part of this six-organisation consortium, ECDPM will work to counterbalance the risk of overly normative and enthusiastic approaches when it comes to civil society engagement vis-à-vis the AU and African continental institutions.
- **Anti-corruption support to Swedish EU presidency in 2023.** Building on our independent evaluation of EU support to the rule of law and the fight against corruption, we will foster uptake of lessons learnt by the upcoming EU presidency and within the EU more widely.
- **Role of cities in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).** We will support the monitoring and evaluation of EU efforts to empower cities as development actors, in particular, by supporting 57 city-to-city partnerships between Europe and the Global South, translating lessons learnt into policy recommendations for the EU.
- **Gender equality.** We will work on social movements and political processes with women as change agents and not merely "victims". We will consider gendered aspects of civic activism, institution building and gender dynamics within sectors (e.g., justice) and relationships (e.g., EU development support to partner countries).

HIGHLIGHT

Political economy analysis to inform EU programming in Morocco

This research informs the EU's programming process in Morocco, in order to make it more rooted, context driven, and connected to existing demands and initiatives.

Activities

- Identification of the scope for transformative changes in the justice sector, particularly to promote human rights
- A series of exchanges to define a realistic approach to translate the political economy analysis into an actionable plan for EU support delivery

Partners

- EU delegation in Morocco
- Domestic actors in the justice sector
- Local and regional experts, including on human rights, political freedoms, rights of the child and gender equality

Interested in working with us?

We offer comprehensive analysis and research | policy briefs and short articles | dialogue and collaboration | advice and support | podcasts and video content | expert information and training | organisation and facilitation of roundtables, events and webinars |

Are you interested in working with us? Please get in touch with Lidet Tadesse, Associate director: lta@ecdpm.org.

Sustainable African economies and climate action



Premised on the sustainable use of natural resources and economic development within our



planetary boundaries, ECDPM contributes to the formulation and implementation of coherent European external economic policies; to the achievement of prosperous, inclusive and resilient economies in Africa; and to ambitious and fair responses to the global climate and other environmental crises.

In 2023–2024, we will work in four key areas: economic recovery and transformation, climate action and green transition, sustainable food systems, and African economic integration.

Economic recovery and transformation

ECDPM will contribute to **more effective and integrated European and African policies and instruments** to support a sustainable, gender-sensitive and inclusive recovery and economic transformation in Africa.

Key activities for 2023:

- **European financial architecture for development.** We will analyse how various actors can work better together, in the context of the Team Europe approach, including through effective implementation of the NDICI-Global Europe and the European Fund for Sustainable Development+ (EFSD+).
- **Linking public development banks and development finance institutions (DFIs) with private financiers.** We will analyse opportunities for linking public development banks and DFIs with private financiers, for more resilient, adaptive, gender-inclusive and sustainable food systems. We will stimulate their engagement in climate adaptation and transition, in coordination with other development actors.
- **European initiative to promote African start-ups and young businesses.** Through the “Trade, Private Sector Development, and Engagement Facility II”, managed by a DAI consortium with ECDPM, we will provide facilitation and advisory support to the Team Europe initiative “Invest in Young Business in Africa”.
- **Equal access to quality-assured health products, including vaccines, in Africa.** We will inform and facilitate policy and technical discussions on how the EU and its member states can best support African endeavours.

HIGHLIGHT

Green, social, sustainable and sustainability-linked bonds

Green, social, sustainable and sustainability-linked (GSSS) bonds are generating significant interest among both African and European development partners, and gaining more traction in the lead-up to the EU’s Global Green Bond Initiative. This project analyses how the issuance of GSSS bonds can be strengthened in and by developing countries.

Activities

- Facilitation of informal roundtables with African and EU institutions, private sector actors, and development finance institutions to analyse bottlenecks in supporting the GSSS bonds ecosystem

- Analytical work on the GSSS bonds ecosystem, including how it can be reinforced to support the development of gender-inclusive local capital markets and greater partner country capacities to use such instruments strategically

Partners

- OECD THK Blended Finance Platform (global)
- Financial Sector Deepening Kenya (Kenya)
- Greensquares Venture (private sector)

Climate action and green transition

To contribute to ambitious, fair and effective responses to the climate crisis, we will focus on **strengthening adaptation and resilience, supporting the European and African politics of green transition and renewable energy deployment, and fostering green recovery through finance and international cooperation.**

Key activities for 2023:

- **Climate diplomacy and justice.** We will work towards effective and inclusive climate diplomacy and international governance for climate justice and green transformation, focusing on Africa-Europe relations in the context of geopolitical crisis.
- **Interconnected climate risks.** In the last phase of the CASCADES project, we will assess the challenges of cascading or transboundary climate impacts, originating in food systems, for European policies. We will advise on how to make European public financial instruments more effective for mitigating and building resilience to global climate risks.
- **Climate finance and economic recovery.** We will analyse the fiscal space for climate action, particularly, better use of European resources to promote global green recovery, including through sovereign debt reform, the European external finance architecture and initiatives for strengthening adaptation finance.
- **Renewable energy and green industrialisation.** We will lay the groundwork for further ECDPM engagement in the politics of renewable energy deployment and green industrialisation in Africa. Our work will seek to better anchor “just transition” initiatives in African priorities of manufacturing-led industrialisation and structural economic transformation.

HIGHLIGHT

Recalibrating EU-Africa climate diplomacy and green partnership

This project contributes to a recalibration of the EU’s external climate diplomacy and improvement of Africa-EU cooperation on climate and green transition in the context of the changing geopolitical environment. It analyses the state of the EU-Africa partnership on climate change; stimulates public debate on EU and AU interests, perceptions, priorities and power; and makes recommendations for strengthening future AU-EU cooperation on climate and green transition.

Activities

- A policy paper that reframes AU-EU diplomacy and collaboration on climate and energy with consideration of the changing geopolitical environment
- A paper that outlines EU-AU cooperation finance for climate action and green transition

Sustainable food systems

ECDPM will support **transitions to more sustainable, resilient, equitable and inclusive food systems**, paying particular attention to food systems governance, financing, and climate adaptation and resilience.

Key activities for 2023:

- **An integrated, politically sensitive food systems approach.** For greater uptake of an integrated and politically sensitive food systems approach, we will engage in activities for coherent, effective and inclusive governance arrangements in Europe (e.g., with the Dutch community of practice) and in Africa (e.g., with the AU Development Agency-NEPAD).
- **Support for sustainable food systems.** We will promote follow-up on recommendations from our evaluation of EU support for sustainable food systems, to improve EU coordination and agency amid the proliferation of Ukraine-related initiatives. We will also revisit decisions from the February 2022 AU-EU Summit.
- **Coherence and coordination between food diplomacy and climate diplomacy.** We will support strategic thinking and policy planning at the global level to better integrate the sustainable food systems agenda in the COP process and at the country level promote synergies between food systems strategies and national adaptation plans.

HIGHLIGHT

Advancing food security commitments through agrifood systems transformation

This project supports scaling up the quantity and quality of public, private and public-private investments to transform African food systems and achieve SDG 2 (zero hunger). It also works towards acceleration of climate-resilient African food and agriculture sectors, considering local demands and policies.

Activities

- Events to discuss challenges and lessons learnt on blended finance to support sustainable food systems and adaptation of food systems to climate change
- Policy briefs with recommendations to mobilise blended finance for food systems sustainability and resilience in Africa, especially involving the private sector
- Use of the [FAO-ECDPM methodology](#) to identify investment opportunities for more sustainable agrifood systems and ways to increase access to finance among smallholders, women and small and medium enterprises

Partners

- Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (global)
- Good Food Finance Network (global)
- Public Development Banks Platform for Food Systems (global)
- Netherlands Food Partnership (Netherlands)
- African Regional Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes (Zambia)

African economic integration

ECDPM will explore the **whys and hows of regional organisations' interactions with the AU, the AfCFTA and AU member states on economic issues**. We will focus on identifying and clarifying competing agendas and member state interests. Our analyses will consider how states balance industrialisation agendas and economic growth ambitions with regional trade commitments in practice, while also exploring issues such as creation of decent jobs, value chain linkages and cross-border corridor initiatives, including transport.

Key activities for 2023:

- **The AfCFTA and regional trade in Europe and Africa.** Our work will inform and facilitate the AfCFTA and regional trade actors in Europe and Africa with respect to the different processes underway, institutional challenges and ways to address these.
- **Open Society Foundation.** Together with the ECDPM climate workstream, we will finalise a financing tender allowing us to conduct research and organise dialogues around African economic transformation, including through the AfCFTA and the continent's green transition ambitions.

HIGHLIGHT

Political economy dynamics of green transition and economic transformation

This project provides policy research and stakeholder engagement on both the drivers of and blockages to regional economic integration in Africa. It is particularly interested in the AfCFTA, in shifting national interests and alliances, and in moves towards green industrialisation in African economies.

Activities

- A study on drivers to and blockages of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) joining the East African Community (EAC), to feed into discussions with TradeMark East Africa and broader public engagement on EAC issues
- A study on how the AfCFTA and wider regional integration ambitions can be aligned with economic transformation and decarbonisation objectives, to address concerns about "carbon colonialism", as well as the political economy dynamics around decarbonising trade and industrialisation

Partners

- TradeMark East Africa (Kenya)

Interested in working with us?

We offer comprehensive analysis and research | policy briefs and short articles | dialogue and collaboration | advice and support | podcasts and video content | expert information and training | organisation and facilitation of roundtables, events and webinars |

Are you interested in working with us? Please get in touch with San Bilal, interim Associate director: sb@ecdpm.org.

Outreach and impact



“We work to stimulate dialogue with ECDPM’s partners and get the Centre’s work and ideas to the right people, in the right way, at the right time.”

For all of the areas of work presented above, our aim is to have **impact**. That is why each team, in coordination with the Outreach and impact department, develops a targeted outreach and impact strategy. We work to stimulate dialogue with ECDPM’s partners and get the Centre’s work and ideas to the right people, in the right way, at the right time. This builds capacity for more inclusive policies and practices. It also cements our legitimacy and reputation and fosters our audiences’ trust in us. For individual activities, we identify key stakeholders – potential agents of change – and time our work to align with the relevant policy agendas, understanding the needs of the targeted policymakers and practitioners.

To ensure the **quality** of ECDPM’s outputs, our work is evidence-based, politically informed and practical, as well as including cross-cutting perspectives. As a think tank striving for excellence, we aim to improve how we work, our approach, methods and skills, as prioritised in our five-year Centre strategy, including gender aspects and collaboration across and beyond ECDPM, to integrate diverse perspectives and deepen our engagement. We partner with African and non-African organisations, stakeholders and experts.

As the Centre engages in policy processes that are invariably complex, multi-actor, non-modular and contingent, ECDPM knows that its work depends first and foremost on domestic actors and factors affecting the nature of change. ECDPM’s envisioned contribution to change in any policy or practice is based on the assumption that actors and institutions are open to cooperating and responsive to ECDPM’s knowledge and policy engagement.

We report our monitoring data in line with the standards of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI).

Want to know more about our work?

ECDPM distributes its work via its [website](#), the [Weekly Compass](#) newsletter, social media ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#)) targeted email campaigns and events.

To stay up to date on our work, [subscribe](#) to our Weekly Compass newsletter.

The Weekly Compass is ECDPM’s primary communication tool. It informs on the latest work done by ECDPM experts, provides useful information on events, and reports news from the fields of international cooperation and Africa-Europe relations from a multitude of outlets.

ECDPM’s website offers content highlighting progress on the activities described in this work plan:

- Publications (reports, papers and briefs)
- Commentaries and articles
- Events
- Multimedia presentations

Centre management

“We are adapting the Centre’s medium- and long-term funding strategy to become more robust.”

Finance

ECDPM has a close institutional relationship with nine countries: **The Netherlands** (5-year agreement entered in 2022), **Belgium** (3-year agreement entered in 2021), **Luxembourg** (3-year agreement entered in 2021), **Sweden** (3-year agreement entered in 2022), **Austria** (3-year agreement entered in 2022), **Denmark** (2-year agreement entered in 2022), **Finland** (4-year agreement in negotiation from 2023), **Ireland** (1-year contract to be renewed) and **Estonia** (1-year contract to be renewed).

Not considering institutional funding, the Centre has secured €1.5 million (as of December 2022) of the €4 million in additional funding required for 2023. The total annual budget calls for an income of €8.87 million, to be provided through institutional funding amounting to €4.87 million and €4 million from other sources.

In 2023, we expect institutional funding to make up 53% of our budget (compared to 58% in 2022). The remaining 47% will come from medium-term flexible funding (previously known as programme funding) and short-term fixed funding (previously known as project funding).

We are adapting the Centre’s medium- and long-term funding strategy to become more robust. An additional major change is the alignment of our funding targets with the ECDPM strategy. As the Centre is now focused on securing more multi-annual cross-thematic work, our funding targets need to reflect that. Our strategy for securing additional projects has been adapted to inspire all of ECDPM’s teams to combine efforts to secure projects and to facilitate more cross-thematic work.

The Centre keeps general and administrative costs at a minimum to ensure that the funds secured are utilised for our research and brokerage work. Nonetheless, these costs have risen somewhat, due mainly to inflation and legislative changes requiring Centre expenditures to be adapted.

Our most significant outlay remains personnel costs, which have increased due to inflation in Europe. Thus, our personnel costs rose by more than 7% in 2022, which was higher than expected. The current budget foresees these inflation rates as continuing in 2023. In 2022, the Centre invested in expanding its mid-level staff, employing three new policy staff. The overall staff size budgeted for 2023 is 67 FTEs (69 headcount), compared to 66.1 FTEs in 2022 (68 headcount).

Strategic talent management

ECDPM updated its job structure in 2022 to enhance the strategic effectiveness of the Centre's workforce. We hired new talent to support three workstreams and our Institutional relations and partnership teams. By making sure that talent management decision-making is in line with the ECDPM strategy, we create and maintain an organisation in which staff members feel well, can thrive, and work in the most effective and efficient way.

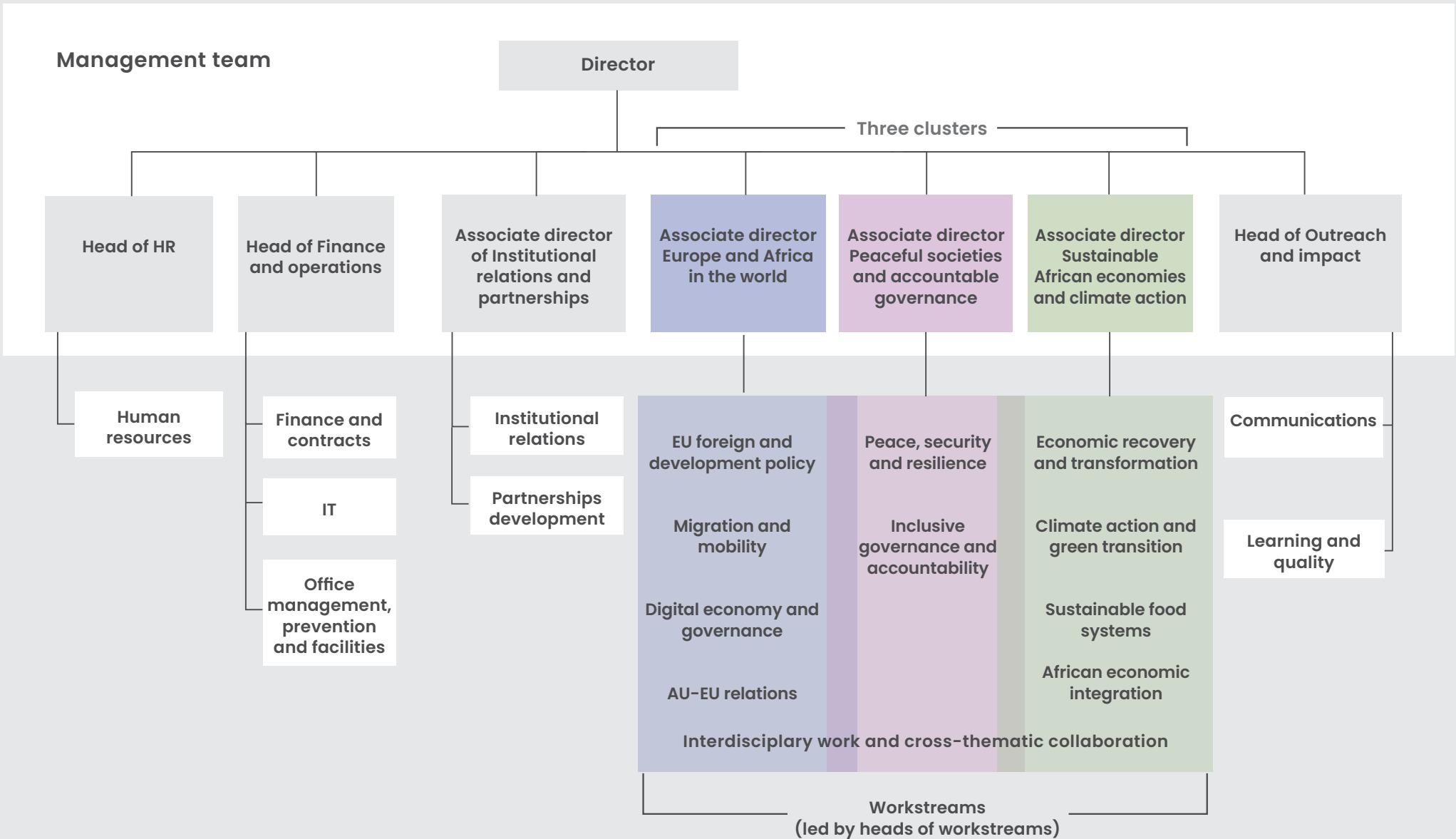
Like many organisations, ECDPM has been confronted with a need for greater flexibility. Organising flexibility for our diverse staff, in line with tax, social security and employment law, is complex and will remain a challenge. We strive to find solutions that meet the requirements of individual staff, while complying with rules and regulations and preserving ECDPM as an effective and sustainable organisation.

ECDPM, furthermore, works to maintain an open, safe and healthy work environment, on which we collaborate with our occupational health services.

We offer an inclusive work environment with development opportunities for everyone. To embed this, we apply an inclusion lens to all of our talent management decisions, executing our diversity and inclusion action plan and continuously checking that we are doing as we say.

Our leaders are key in creating a sustainable working environment. To gain insight into the individual development and learning needs of our leaders – both new and those more experienced – we provide coaching and training on and off the job. We set "SMART" goals for leadership development and monitor progress by tracking depletion of training budgets, both financially and in staff time.

ECDPM IN 2023



ecdpm

**The centre for
Africa-Europe relations**

www.ecdpm.org
KvK 41077447

Head office

The Pelican House
Onze Lieve Vrouweplein 21
6211 HE Maastricht, The Netherlands
Tel +31 (0)43 350 29 00

Brussels office

Avenue des Arts 44
1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel +32 (0)2 882 50 08

Graphic design: Yaseena Chiu - van 't Hoff