



ecdpm

Annual Report 2021

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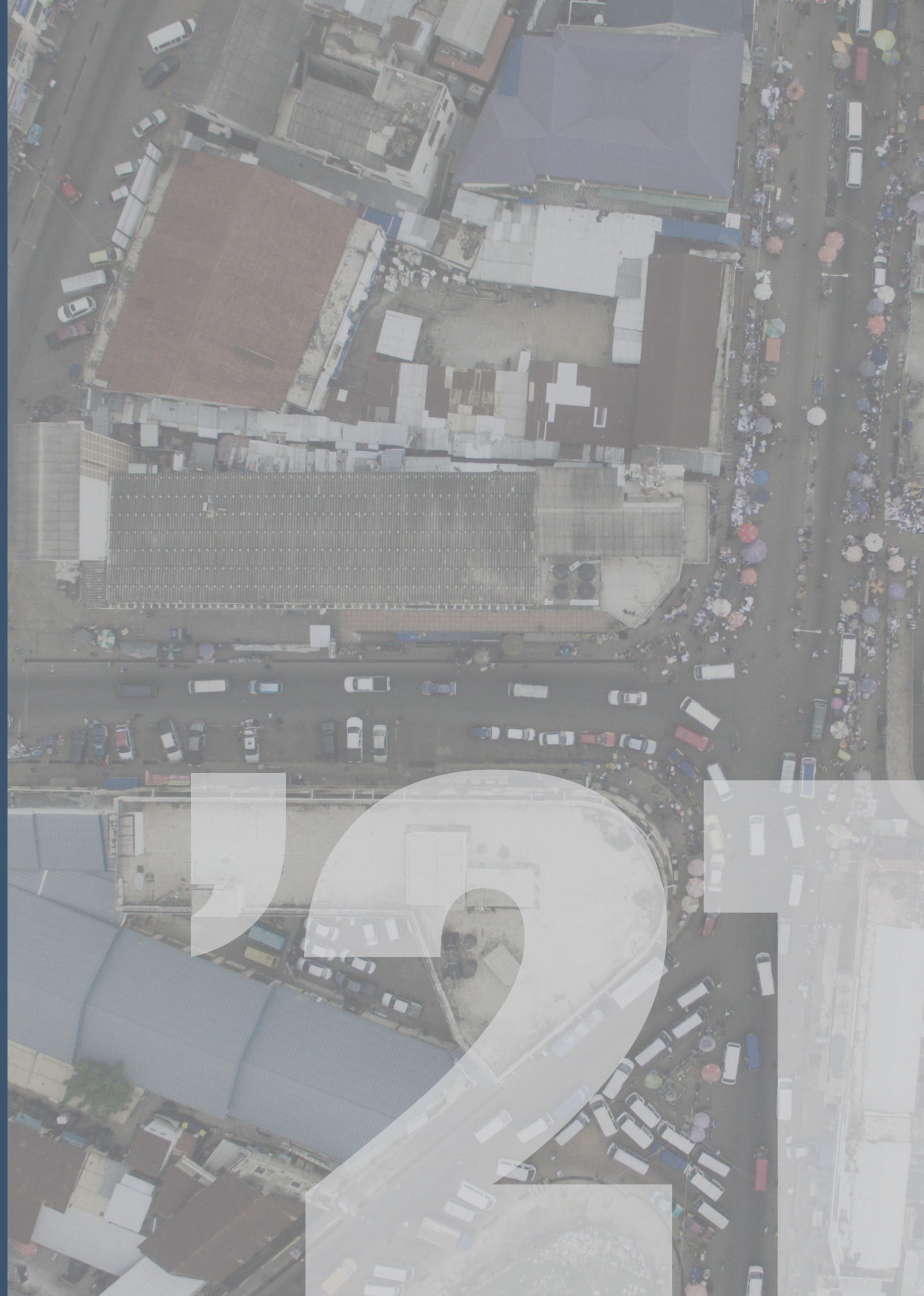
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Board Chair

Adebayo Olukoshi

As the world ushered in 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to rage, taking a huge toll on lives, while undermining economies, dislocating social relations and disrupting aspects of international affairs. By mid-2021, the initial dissatisfaction with the enforcement of lockdowns, quarantines and travel restrictions worsened as the political and economic repercussions of the pandemic grew.

Although not a direct area of work for ECDPM, many of the challenges thrown up by the pandemic spoke to concerns at the heart of the Centre's mandate. As powerful nations scrambled to secure advantages in accessing and administering vaccines, it became clear that cooperation, solidarity and an equitable sharing of the fruits of science were the last concerns on their mind. African countries, joined by other countries around the world that felt disadvantaged, drew attention to the emergence of a global vaccine apartheid that denied them fair access to vaccines, and they demanded a waiver of patent rules to enable local vaccine manufacturing.

The strain on international cooperation caused by the inequitable management of the global pandemic, and the dysfunction it exposed in the international multilateral system, underscores the importance of the kind of work carried out by organisations like ECDPM, promoting win-win outcomes in international relations. In 2021,

the Centre continued to play a robust role, both on its own and through various partnerships, striving to ensure that the grounds for meaningful engagement between the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) are maintained.

To this end, through policy studies and advocacy, the Centre carried out various engagements on issues of trade, investment, development finance, population movements, climate change, food systems, governance and security. Throughout its work, the Centre focused on strengthening awareness and proposing pathways demonstrating that approaches built on mutual respect and shared values offer the best hope for progress and success in Africa-Europe cooperation.

As in 2020, I am delighted that the management and staff of the Centre were able to carry out a full work programme in 2021, despite the many disruptions created by the COVID-19 virus. At the same time, the Centre carried forward its process of institutional renewal, towards an ECDPM that is even more fit for purpose in the changing global context. The Board remains grateful for the unwavering dedication and commitment shown by staff. They represent the Centre's strongest asset in its march towards an even more successful future, implementing activities that help demonstrate the heights to which humanity can soar if a foundation of justice and equity is carefully nurtured.

Director



Carl Michiels

While we dedicated much of 2020 to developing our new strategy for 2022-2026, in 2021 we embarked on a major overhaul of the functioning of our organisation – to maximise the value we bring to our partners in Europe and Africa and to become a more agile and flexible organisation, capable of responding to the evolving sustainable development agenda and rapidly changing global dynamics. With this all-encompassing process, we are making our organisation fit for the future.

We defined four objectives: (1) to prepare ourselves for the generational shift that will take place in a few years' time, (2) to set up an effective and strategic management team, (3) to provide younger staff with opportunities to grow and take on more responsibility and (4) to create an organisational structure that encourages cross-thematic work. We looked at our structure and governance, our human resources policies and our financial strategy. We re-examined how we aim to increase the outreach and impact of our work, and last but certainly not least, we took a hard look at our organisational culture.

After an intensive participatory process, we set a path towards a structure that builds on our recognised areas of expertise, while giving more visibility and legroom to new themes, such as climate and digital cooperation. We also merged our communications and learning and quality support units into a new 'outreach and impact' department, to strengthen the quality, policy relevance, practical usefulness and impact of our work.

To reflect the diversity of our staff and of society in our management, we selected a new leadership

team that is more balanced in terms of age, gender and geographical diversity. We also revised our overall job architecture, with a special emphasis on talent development and career planning, to attract and retain the best and brightest in their fields.

To achieve financial sustainability, we designed a strategy to strengthen our partnership with the nine European countries that provide us with institutional funding. With this, we will be able to remain fiercely non-partisan and proudly independent. At the same time, we stepped up efforts to further diversify our funding base.

Changing the culture of our organisation is the most complex task on our priority list, as culture is the origin and result of a myriad of other elements. However, the character we aim for is clear: ambitious, self-critical, curious, empathic, entrepreneurial and collaborative.

These are ambitious plans, and a lot still needs to be done in the coming months and years. We are fortunate to be able to work in an environment of trust and confidence. Indeed, at the end of 2021, all of our institutional partners announced that they would renew their multiannual agreements, with some of them even increasing their funding.

While the world is still dealing with the socio-economic and geopolitical fallout from COVID-19, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022 brought a range of new global insecurities. We are committed to continuing to play an essential role in these challenging times, through our research, facilitation and brokerage.

Who we are and what we do

ECDDPM is a leading independent 'think and do tank' that wants to make European and African policies work for inclusive and sustainable development.

Good policies can lay a foundation for change and play a crucial part in making the global development and international cooperation agenda a reality for all. We want to help institutions and governments across Europe and Africa create policies that work.

Our independent policy experts contribute sharp analysis, thorough research and fresh ideas. But making policies work also requires stepping off the sidelines. It means working closely with the people who design, implement or are impacted by policies. We bring different groups of people around the table, smooth the way for debate and make sure that everyone's voice is heard. We provide advice and training and, most importantly, design practical solutions together.

ECDDPM has more than thirty years of experience in development policy and international cooperation, and a thorough knowledge of African and European institutions. Our focus is on EU foreign policy and European and African policies related to conflict, migration, governance, sustainable food systems, regional integration, business, finance and trade.

Our partners include representatives of ministries and government institutions, international organisations, think tanks, academia and social and economic actors from Africa, Europe and beyond.

What we offer



Research & analysis

We provide thorough policy research, sharp analysis and fresh ideas.



Advice, training & support

We offer practical policy advice, training and support.



Events

We organise and speak at debates, conferences and workshops.



Partnerships & dialogue

We connect people, broker partnerships and create space for dialogue.



Expert information

We provide background information to our partners and the media.

What sets us apart



We are more than a think tank.

We are researchers and analysts – but we are also facilitators, advisers, evaluators and trainers. It's that combination of roles that sets us apart from other think tanks. To make policies effective we need solid knowledge of what works and what doesn't, but also to work with the people who are crucial in implementing those policies.



We are independent.

Our unique funding structure allows us to maintain operational autonomy and set our own, non-partisan agenda. We are not here to defend the interests of anyone – apart from the most vulnerable people in society.



We look beyond promises.

Whether policy change is good, bad or absent usually depends on a number of factors and people. That is why we look beyond policy statements and analyse what drives or prevents change. This means looking at all political constraints and incentives.



We know the African and European policy landscape inside and out.

Africa-Europe relations is in our DNA. For more than thirty years we have worked with institutions, governments and partners across both continents. This has resulted in a broad network, a solid institutional memory of what has and hasn't worked before, and a knack for discerning how policy arenas will evolve.



We are in it for the long run.

We engage in policy processes from beginning to end and commit to long-term relationships with our partners – to jointly accomplish change over time.

Our programmes

Our work contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 10 (reduced inequalities), 12 (responsible consumption and production), 13 (climate action), 15 (life on land), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (partnerships for the goals).

In 2021, we strategically focused our work through five interlinked programmes.

European External Affairs

The EU is dealing with a number of challenges close to home, while at the same time seeking to play a more significant global role. Our European External Affairs programme wants to help the EU institutions and member states work towards coherent and effective international cooperation, particularly with Africa.

African Institutions and Regional Dynamics

The AU and its member states, and the numerous regional blocs across the African continent, all develop and implement policies promoting Africa's socio-economic development. Our African Institutions and Regional Dynamics programme works to help African institutions and regions pursue that goal.

Migration

Migration and mobility can stimulate development as drivers of social and economic change, but they also pose significant challenges. Our Migration programme wants to help tackle the challenges, while making use of the potential for global development and improving cooperation between Europe and Africa.

Security and Resilience

African and European institutions are torn between managing urgent crises and tackling the structural causes and consequences of violent conflict. Our Security and Resilience programme works to support the development of effective and sustainable ways to prevent conflict and build peace, and it promotes strategic partnerships between Africa and Europe.

Economic and Agricultural Transformation

Economic and agricultural transformation is central to many African and European development strategies. It can create more and better jobs, stimulate sustainable economic growth, and tackle inequality. We want to help accomplish these goals. Our programme teams focus on trade, investment and finance; the private sector; and sustainable food systems.

Trade, investment and finance

In Europe and Africa, a transition to sustainable economies is essential to prevent issues linked to poverty and environmental degradation from escalating, and to ward off major crises in the future. The trade, investment and finance team

contributes to shaping policies that are sustainable, resilient and take into account the needs of the most vulnerable.

Private sector engagement

A transition to socially and environmentally sustainable economies cannot be achieved without responsible businesses. The private sector engagement team supports public and private actors to help shape policies, instruments and collaborative efforts that contribute to private sector development and put sustainability at the heart of production, development and trade.

Sustainable food systems

Food systems struggle to provide the growing global population with affordable, healthy and nutritious foods. They also create livelihood stresses for producers and damage our natural environment. The sustainable food systems team wants to help change that. We promote policies and investment to improve the sustainability and resilience of food systems in Africa and globally.

All our programmes jointly contribute to our work on Africa-Europe relations, on policy coherence for (sustainable) development, on climate change, on gender and on youth.

Introducing our new strategy for 2022–2026

At the end of 2021, we published our **new five-year strategy**, which spells out our ambition to remain a leading European ‘think and do tank’ working for sustainable global development solutions.

The strategy sets out the challenges and opportunities we see in the world and how our work will contribute to five broad thematic areas. In the next five years, we will pay greater attention to climate change, gender equality, digitalisation and governance, to address current global development challenges and maximise our influence.

The strategy is based on an internal assessment, an [independent external evaluation of our 2017–2021](#)

[strategy implementation](#), analyses of our external environment and consultations with our partners and the Board – all undertaken in 2020.

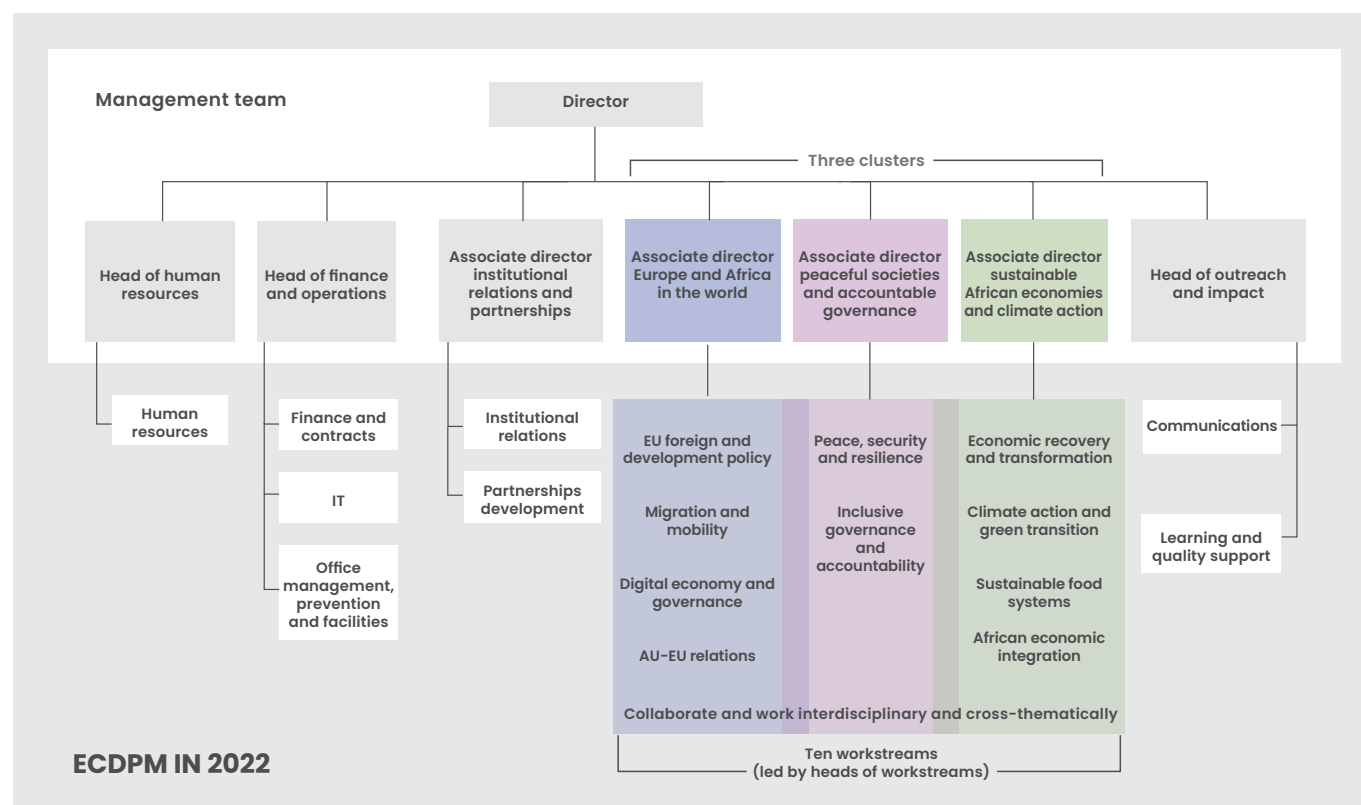
To deliver on our strategy for 2022–2026, we will organise our work in [three clusters as of 2022](#): (1) Europe and Africa in the world, (2) peaceful societies and accountable governance and (3) sustainable African economies and climate action. Within each cluster, we then focus our work through workstreams – ten in total. This set-up allows for more flexibility and cross-organisational collaboration.

Another innovation of our new set-up is the merger of our learning and quality support team and our

communications team into an outreach and impact department, which aims to strengthen the quality, policy relevance and practical usefulness – and ultimately, impact – of ECDPM’s work.

We also introduced a [new generation of leaders](#) heading the different departments, clusters and workstreams – paying particular attention to gender balance, diversity and inclusion, and increasing opportunities for younger staff.

Want to know more about our new strategy, workstreams and leadership? Visit ecdpm.org/strategy, ecdpm.org/workstreams or ecdpm.org/leadership.



How we work

ecdpm

1 We generate knowledge and act as an independent broker in five broad thematic areas. Our work is politically informed, evidence-based and interdisciplinary.



Our five interrelated impact areas are:

- Europe and Africa in the world
- Prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable African economies
- Green transition and effective climate action
- Peaceful societies and human security
- Accountable governance and engaged citizens

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



Highlights in 2021

Here are our most memorable highlights from 2021. Pages 16 to 29 then zoom in on nine projects. These feature the work of our programmes throughout the year, demonstrating how we contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and how all our work is connected.

Go to ecdpm.org/2021 for all our events, publications, magazine issues and commentaries from the past year. To look for particular categories, use the filters to narrow your search.

JANUARY

In an interactive [youth edition of our Great Insights magazine](#), young people from Africa and Europe talked about what they think policymakers on both continents need to do better.

We looked back at the first-ever [global Climate Adaptation Summit](#), organised by the Global Center on Adaptation, ahead of which we produced the [Climate Adaptation Talks](#) podcast series, with experts from Europe, Africa and elsewhere.

We produced the first critical [analysis of the EU 'Team Europe' approach](#), which emerged in 2020 to respond to COVID-19 globally. As part of our collaboration with the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU, we looked at how [EU development cooperation can become more inclusive within the Team Europe approach](#), making better use of member states' experience and expertise and involving all interested members.

With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), we continued the two-year [AgrInvest project](#), promoting private investment for more sustainable food systems. During the year, we published political economy analyses of the food systems in [Burkina Faso](#), [Ethiopia](#) and [Niger](#). We also analysed the [onion value chain](#) in Niger, the [rice sector](#) in Burkina Faso, and the [indigenous vegetables](#) and [cage aquaculture](#) chains in Kenya.

Throughout 2021, one of our staff members assisted the Italian Presidency of the G20, supporting the Italian prime minister's office and the foreign ministry with technical preparations and negotiations within the G20 development working group. We contributed to the adoption of the [Matera Declaration](#) on food security, nutrition and food systems – the strongest ever G20 call to action on these topics.

With support from the Swedish foreign ministry, we published a [study on a sustainable development approach to return and reintegration](#), an issue that features prominently in the EU's new

January continued...

migration and asylum pact. Later in the year, we explored how [diaspora organisations and individuals can be engaged in implementation of the EU's talent partnerships](#) – another key element of the pact – with the European Commission's Migration Partnership Facility (MPF) and the EU Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF).

FEBRUARY

We zoomed in on [low-skilled migrants from sub-Saharan African countries working in the Gulf and the Middle East](#), with a paper identifying the regional measures taken by African governments to improve conditions for the recruitment and protection of vulnerable African migrant workers. The paper was used during a discussion on the protection and rights of migrant workers in Africa, organised by the AU.

Our papers on transboundary climate impacts in [Tunisia](#) and the [wider North Africa region](#), published for the [CASCADDES project](#), triggered a lot of interest and led to invitations to several events, as well as an [interview with the BBC World Service Arabic](#).

We travelled to Niamey, Niger, to present our research on the role of legal clinics and legal caravans in addressing access to justice and serving judicial needs in Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire, Tunisia, Senegal, Guinée Conakry and Nigeria. This also provided an occasion for exchanges on the preliminary findings of the [OKP-RESCOM project](#) on resilience to insecurity and climate change in the Central Sahel.

For the EU-South Africa Partners for Growth project and with DNA Economics, we analysed [opportunities for promoting circularity in food trade between South Africa and the EU](#). Later in the year, with PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, we looked at [how the Dutch and EU ambition to move towards a circular economy could affect low- and middle-income countries](#) – and what roles they could play.

MARCH

During the State of the Art Conference, organised by the Dutch foreign and justice and security ministries, we spoke about border management and development aid, as well as irregular migration.

We worked with TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) to pilot a political economy analysis tool in Burundi that TMEA can use to gather information on East African political economy dynamics. TMEA will use the tool to help design trade and transport programmes in the region.

APRIL

In one of our most-read papers of the year, we [analysed the new partnership deal between the EU and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States \(OACPS\)](#), days after negotiators formally initialised the new partnership agreement.

As part of our collaboration with the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU, we looked at [how to reinvigorate human development in the EU's foreign policies](#). Later in the year, we analysed the [EU's implementation of the 'humanitarian-peacebuilding-development nexus'](#). Both papers were widely distributed and received positive feedback, particularly from the EU institutions and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

We analysed how the [EU's new gender action plan is integrated into the EU's programming process](#), and presented our findings during a [webinar](#). Later in the year, we looked at the [principles of the plan](#), how it is [guiding the EU's approach to gender equality in external action](#), notably through the programming process, and how it integrates the [women, peace and security agenda](#). We also analysed how the [EU is implementing gender priorities in Mozambique](#).

April continued...

We contributed to a [European Parliament hearing on the reform of the EU generalised scheme of preferences](#), and continued our engagement with the Parliament on this issue throughout 2021.



MAY

With the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), we brought together leading experts for a [webinar on how the private sector can help harness the benefits and address the challenges of migration](#). The discussions were based on our 2020 study looking at [private sector engagement at different stages of the migration cycle](#).



Following last year's successful [webinar series](#), we again partnered with DAI Global to organise six [webinars on connecting public and private responses to COVID-19](#), focusing on agri-finance, digital financial inclusion, fragile and conflict-affected countries, green recovery, gender and development finance.



With the Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI), we produced a series of notes on the evolving EU financial and policy framework for addressing climate and green transition in EU external relations, focusing specifically on the [external effects of the European Green Deal, EU climate finance and international cooperation](#), and the [role of climate and energy in the EU-AU partnership](#).



JUNE

Our work on how the [EU can engage more strategically with middle-income countries to achieve its wider foreign policy objectives](#) fed into debates leading to the adoption of conclusions of the Council of the EU on the EU's partnerships with middle-income countries.



We commented on the [proposed reform of the European financial architecture for development \(EFAD\)](#), and with the Center for Global Development (CGD), we launched the [EFAD Talks series](#). During the series, we interviewed representatives of European bilateral and multilateral development banks and the European Commission, and development finance experts. Throughout the year, we (co-)organised several informal discussions on the topic for representatives of the EU institutions, member states and financial institutions.

We moderated two panel discussions during an event on [universal and equitable access to healthcare and water](#), organised by the European Investment Bank (EIB) during the 2021 European Development Days.



JULY

The 2021 [African Transformation Report](#), published by the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), built heavily on ECDPM work on the political economy of regional integration and cooperation in Africa and on the challenge of cooperating to provide regional public goods.



Based on past ECDPM research on [domestic advisory groups \(DAGs\)](#), which seek to include civil society in trade processes, in EU free trade agreements, we contributed to a [note by DAG members](#) on how to strengthen the groups. We also participated in the first-ever meeting of all EU DAGs. The European Commission welcomed the note, and later in the year, we discussed recommendations with the cabinet of EU trade commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis.

SEPTEMBER

We contributed to the first-ever United Nations (UN) Food Systems Summit in various ways. We co-organised [one of the independent summit dialogues](#) on experiences from Africa and lessons for research methods, pointed to [four priority action areas](#) ahead of the summit, and published a paper on understanding and [managing trade-offs in food system interventions](#).



In the run-up to COP26, we published a [climate edition of our Great Insights magazine](#) – featuring contributions from AU energy commissioner Amani Abou-Zeid, Belgian development minister Meryame Kitir, and Roger Cox, the Dutch climate change lawyer who won the historical case against Shell.

CO2

The Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU invited us to present our analysis on water cooperation and on the governance of Global Europe, the EU's new financial instrument for neighbourhood, development and international cooperation, to EU member states. We also facilitated two working sessions at the informal meeting of the Council of the EU's Working Party on Development Cooperation and International Partnerships.



Our paper on the [EU's evolving approach to digital policy in its external action and its digital cooperation with Africa](#) received wide-ranging feedback and led to invitations to speak to the European External Action Service (EEAS), CONCORD (the European confederation of relief and development NGOs), the Lithuanian Permanent Representation to the EU and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).



For the EEAS, we carried out a strategic review of the EU's strategy for the Gulf of Guinea and 2015–2020 action plan, and made recommendations on how to update these in light of recent evolutions in the Gulf of Guinea, as well as EU geopolitical priorities.

September continued...

Ahead of the International Day of Peace, we analysed the [long-standing peace and security partnership between the AU and the UN](#), looking at how it is influenced by power and politics. Later in the year, we looked at how the [AU can advance its agency in external partnerships](#).



We looked at trade between Africa and Europe, zooming in on the [economic partnership agreement process in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana](#). Later, we looked at what the future holds for [Africa's trade with Europe](#), analysing developments in the EU market and increasing demand from emerging markets, as well as African initiatives to boost intra-African trade. We explored what the [African Continental Free Trade Area \(AfCFTA\) means for an intercontinental trade agreement between Africa and the EU](#), and organised a [webinar](#) on the topic.



OCTOBER

At the second Finance in Common Summit, bringing together over 500 public development banks worldwide, our study with the European Think Tanks Group (ETG) on [how public development banks can align their activities with the 2030 Agenda](#) was presented. We also moderated a session on [climate adaptation and resilience](#), organised by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP).



With the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), we organised a [webinar on the merger of the AU Commission's Department of Peace and Security and its Department of Political Affairs](#), based on [ECDPM](#) and [ISS](#) papers on the topic.



Ahead of the AU-EU foreign affairs ministerial meeting in Kigali, Rwanda, we summarised our [analysis of five key AU-EU cooperation areas in a paper and a visual guide](#). The series was produced with the German Development Institute (DIE) and ACET, for the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), with financial support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), and published by ETG.



Following a presentation at an amfori [webinar](#), we spoke about [human rights and environmental due diligence during the European SDG Summit 2021](#), organised by CSR Europe. Earlier in the year, in a widely read guest commentary for ECDPM ahead of upcoming EU due diligence legislation, amfori and AIM-The European Brands Association looked at the [environmental aspect and what is required from companies to comply](#).



For the Luxembourg foreign and European affairs ministry, we looked at the 'digital for development' strategies of the EU, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom (UK). We drew lessons on [how to work with the private sector](#), which plays a crucial role in providing digital technologies, to support countries in their digital transformation processes.



October continued...

The findings of the [three-year RESPECT project](#), on Europe's soft power in external cooperation and trade, were presented at a [conference in Brussels](#), Belgium, and discussed with consortium partners at the [final RESPECT conference](#) in Firenze, Italy. Our last research for the project included a [paper analysing if trade policies can help promote sustainable forest management, zooming in on Ghana](#), and a [paper looking at EU support to policy reform on social inclusion and renewable energy in Mauritius](#).



Ahead of a high-level European Commission conference on the Farm to Fork Strategy and a European Parliament debate and vote, we published our [widely shared analysis on the potentially negative consequences of the strategy for food security in Africa](#).



During the European Commission's EU Sustainable Energy Week, we moderated a [session on a just energy transition in Africa and Asia](#), which we co-organised with the EIB, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).



NOVEMBER

Building on previous research, we published our [analysis of how to streamline regional trade and free movement protocols in Africa](#) – particularly the AfCFTA and the AU's free movement protocol. We also organised a well-attended [webinar on the institutional challenges of connecting markets and people](#), with speakers from the AfCFTA Secretariat and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).



We explored how [developing countries are impacted by the EU's list of tax havens](#), which exposes non-EU countries that encourage abusive tax practices and whose tax systems affect the EU tax base. Later, we looked at [how Morocco and Tunisia managed to remove themselves from the list](#).



With the Good Food Finance Network and the Finance in Common secretariat, we organised a [virtual closed-door roundtable](#) on stronger collaborations between private and public banks to scale up finance for sustainable food systems.



With the Centre Africain pour le Commerce, l'Intégration et le Développement (ENDA-CACID), we organised a public webinar to present and discuss our work on [informal cross-border trade in West Africa](#). This followed a presentation of the same work to ECOWAS and the Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA), to support their work on informal trade under the Trade Facilitation West Africa programme.



We spoke about how to [adapt to transboundary climate impacts in Tunisia](#) and about the [key messages of the 2021 European Climate Change Adaptation Conference](#), which we co-organised earlier in the year, at two COP26 side-events.



DECEMBER

In a widely read guide, we answered [questions about Global Europe](#) in an easy and accessible way.



We presented a paper to the Dutch foreign ministry explaining some of Nigeria's policy choices leading up to its decision to close its land borders with neighbouring countries in 2019 and drawing implications for support from development partners in the area of trade facilitation.



For the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU, we analysed the role of digital tools in humanitarian aid. We presented the work to member states in the Council of the EU's Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid, providing useful inputs ahead of the 2022 European Humanitarian Forum. Our [paper on the topic](#) was published in early 2022.



Throughout the year, we looked at how political decisions in Europe could impact EU development and international cooperation, particularly with African countries. For instance, we offered insights on the [EU's Global Gateway investment package](#), on [new German government plans](#), and earlier in the year, on the [EU-UK trade and cooperation agreement following Brexit](#).



Putting human development back on the agenda

►► To measure the level of human development in a country, it is important to look at the population's general well-being.

This means looking at more than financial income alone, and also including people's access to adequate and nutritious food, healthcare, housing, work, education and ability to vote or take part in communities.



The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the urgency of stepping up strategic and smart investments in human development, which regained political attention in the EU during the course of 2020 and 2021. Given the scale of the socio-economic challenges brought by the pandemic, the EU – acting as Team Europe – sought to act more swiftly and globally, with sufficient resources to support partner countries in their recovery efforts and avoid dire setbacks in human development worldwide.

For the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU, we explored how to [reinvigorate human development in the EU's foreign policies](#). We looked at opportunities for the EU to increase support for human development, and how to link human development to EU strategic priorities, such as innovation and green and digital transition.

The resulting paper was widely distributed and received positive feedback, including from the cabinet of European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen, as well as from ONE, CONCORD members and UNDP, which each year reports on the state of human development using the human development index developed by Mahbub ul Haq. UNDP used the paper to inform its strategy on EU-UN cooperation on human development.

The findings of the paper were presented to the Council of the EU's Working Party on Development Cooperation and International Partnerships in March 2021, and fed into debates between the EU institutions and member states that led to the adoption of [Council conclusions at the Foreign Affairs Council in June 2021](#). These were the first Council conclusions related to human development for over a decade. Throughout the process, we worked closely with the Portuguese Presidency.

We will continue looking at how the EU implements its commitments to human development in 2022. For instance, now that the 2021-2027 programming process for Global Europe is complete and we know what specific activities are being financed in partner countries, we will analyse how the EU supports human development at the country level. We will also analyse the extent to which EU support in the area of human development matches partner countries' priorities.

Want to see all our work on EU foreign and development policy or learn more about what we do? Visit ecdpm.org/programmes/eu-foreign-development-policy or get in touch with Pauline Veron, Katja Sergejeff or Alexei Jones via ecdpm.org/people.

►► ***The absence of conflict and crises is a prerequisite for sustainable human development. It is therefore not surprising that the idea of more closely linking policies on humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and development is gaining in importance.***



The people who design and implement policies in the areas of humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and development can achieve a greater combined impact if they work together to address protracted and complex crises and effectively build on their comparative strengths. The idea of achieving better results by closely linking these three fields – also dubbed the ‘humanitarian–peacebuilding–development nexus’ or ‘triple nexus’ – has become a critical component of international efforts. But those involved face challenges in aligning their approaches and implementing the nexus.

As part of our support to the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU, we analysed the [EU's implementation of the triple nexus](#). Our aim was to help international partners working in humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and development to better understand the EU's conceptualisation of the triple nexus and how EU institutions hope to promote it as an effective way of working together.

We presented the work and resulting paper to the Council of the EU's Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid, where it fed into an exchange with representatives of the EU member states and institutions on the collective challenges and positive outcomes of adopting a nexus-oriented approach. Our presentation was positively received by the Portuguese Presidency, the European

Commission – which recognised the paper as in line with its own priorities – and member states. The work was considered a practical tool for effective implementation, as it included clear guiding principles, concrete examples and suggestions, and lessons learnt. Beyond the EU institutions, it also generated interest from UNDP.

Building on this research, we organised a workshop on the triple nexus with EU delegation staff in six pilot countries: Uganda, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Iraq and Myanmar. The workshop focused on practical challenges that EU delegations face in implementing the nexus, namely joint analysis, joint planning and programming, and flexible funding.

In 2022, we will continue to work on this topic. We are conducting a study for the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) analysing drivers and obstacles in the operationalisation of the nexus on the ground. The study – to be finalised by the end of 2022 – will draw on ten country analyses, which will provide a solid evidence base.

Want to see all our work on peace and security or learn more about what we do? Visit ecdpm.org/programmes/peace-security-resilience or get in touch with Volker Hauck or Pauline Veron via ecdpm.org/people.

Connecting humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and development



►► *Climate change extends across borders, not only physically, but also by driving conflict and migration and by impacting global processes like trade and business. For instance, in 2010, droughts in Russia and Pakistan caused an international shortage of cereals, leading to spikes in cereal and food prices. In Egypt, the higher cost of food was one of the additional triggers for the riots that led to a change of government.*



The domino effect of climate change

The idea of transboundary climate effects is gaining political ground. The issue was included in the EU's adaptation strategy and the AU's new climate change strategy, both from 2021. Since 2020, ECDPM has been involved in the [four-year CASCADES project](#), which analyses the cross-border impacts of climate change on Europe, as well as the risk that climate change creates for global trade, business, conflict and migration, and how Europe can adequately respond. Much of our work focuses on regions that are key to European foreign policy.

In 2021, we looked at the [links between climate change, development and security in North Africa](#), as well as the [challenges Tunisia faces in adapting its agri-food system to climate risks](#) and possible knock-on effects for Europe. This work resulted in two papers and led to an [interview with the BBC World Service Arabic](#), as well as invitations to speak at events, including a [COP26 side-event](#) and a [webinar in the run-up](#) to the 2021 Adaptation Futures conference. With the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB) and adelphi, we looked at [climate impacts in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger](#), and at potential regional knock-on effects on livelihoods and food security, mobility, and peace and security.

Considering ways to manage transboundary climate impacts, we co-authored an article for Climate Risk Management, [drawing lessons from COVID-19](#). With CIDOB and Chatham House, we examined [climate vulnerabilities in urban areas](#)

[in countries to the south of the EU and in the wider Middle East and North Africa region](#), focusing on how the European Green Deal can help cities adapt to climate impacts based on a water-energy-food nexus approach. We also explored [what the EIB plans to do to increase climate adaptation finance for developing countries](#).

On climate adaptation more broadly, we looked back at the [first-ever Climate Adaptation Summit](#) that took place in January 2021, ahead of which we produced the [Climate Adaptation Talks](#) podcast series. We were also a member of the organising committee of the 2021 European Climate Change Adaptation Conference. We delivered the [opening remarks](#) and later wrote a [paper on the event](#).

In 2022, we have several activities lined up; for instance, a presentation of our Tunisia study at the George Washington University's Middle East Policy Forum and a talk about transboundary climate impact management at the renowned Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). With the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), as well as the Institute of Economics and Peace, we are organising informal briefings for EU officials throughout 2022. We are also looking at ways to contribute to COP27, set for Egypt in late 2022.

Want to see all our work for the CASCADES project or learn more about what we do? Visit ecdpm.org/cascades or get in touch with Hanne Knaepen via ecdpm.org/people.

►► *Climate change will detrimentally impact many areas of life, but especially agri-food systems. With a rapidly growing population, Africa will need to urgently rethink how it grows, trades and eats, and build more sustainable and resilient food systems. The EU has its Farm to Fork Strategy in place, but needs to make sure the new strategy doesn't have unintended consequences in other parts of the world.*



A greener Europe at the expense of Africa?

Farm to Fork is the EU's ambitious strategy to make Europe's food system more sustainable and resilient. Launched in May 2020 as part of the European Green Deal, the strategy has gained traction among EU policymakers. We wanted to know what effects the strategy would have in countries outside Europe, in Africa in particular.

Our [analysis](#) found that the strategy, as it stands, might result in reduced agricultural production in Europe, which could lead to increased European agricultural imports and reduced exports. Such changes could contribute to higher international food prices and increased global food insecurity. Africa, with its fast-growing population, changing diets and increasing reliance on food imports, is likely to be particularly affected. Lower European agricultural production could also lead to increased production outside Europe. Depending on how and where this takes place, the shift in production could generate increased greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity loss – effectively undermining the strategy's sustainability objectives.

Ahead of a high-level European Commission conference and a European Parliament debate and vote on the strategy, we published our analysis and tried to make sure it became part of the policy discussion, with the aim of providing a niche perspective.

Our paper was widely picked up in different policy, research and (social) media circles. It was

referenced by media outlets, including [The Nation Kenya](#), which is Kenya's most-read newspaper. It was also picked up by POLITICO. In addition, we reached out to political stakeholders, including the Kenya Fresh Produce Consortium, the EEAS, the European Parliament and the European Commission. We received several invitations to speak at or co-organise events. For instance, we co-organised an [event with foodFIRST](#), and in early 2022 we spoke at a debate on implications of the [European Green Deal for agri-food trade with developing countries](#).

In 2022, we will continue looking at the effects of the EU's plans on food security elsewhere in the world. This topic is now increasingly relevant in light of the war in Ukraine, among other things. We will also focus on strengthening coherence between the expanding number of food system strategies from the EU, the UN and national governments. In particular, we will analyse where overlap and tensions lie between different visions of sustainable food systems and the different ways to work towards this goal.

Want to see all our work on sustainable food systems or learn more about what we do? Visit ecdpm.org/programmes/sustainable-food-systems or get in touch with Koen Dekeyser or Francesco Rampa via ecdpm.org/people.

Europe and Africa's transition towards a more circular economy

►► *The EU's circular economy action plan is one of the key building blocks of the European Green Deal. In Africa too, the urgency of a green transition – including the transition to a circular economy – is gaining traction.*



Beyond the EU's new circular economy action plan, which was launched in 2020, national circular economy strategies have been adopted by a number of European countries, including the Netherlands, Finland, France and Sweden. In Africa, countries such as Ghana, Rwanda and South Africa are leading the way, for instance, through the African Circular Economy Alliance. For the last two years, we have looked at how the shift towards a more circular economy is integrated into policies and trade in Africa and Europe.

In 2020, we wrote a paper for PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency on how [climate and circular economy are integrated into the foreign policies](#) of the EU, Finland, France, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland. In 2021, we continued our cooperation with PBL, analysing the [green recovery strategies of the EU, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK](#). With PBL, we also looked at [how the Dutch and EU ambition to move towards a circular economy could affect low- and middle-income countries](#) – and what roles these countries could play, for instance, as suppliers of circular products and 'green' raw materials, or as a market for recyclable and reusable materials generated in the EU. The resulting paper fed into a new [PBL policy brief](#) on the international dimensions of the Dutch circular economy transition, which was published in 2022.

For the EU-South Africa Partners for Growth project and with DNA Economics, we analysed the [opportunities for promoting circularity in food trade between South Africa and the EU](#), resulting in a paper that was published in early 2021. Building on this work, we highlighted [six ways for South Africa and the EU to support circularity in food trade together](#), and organised a webinar with the South Africa Plastics Pact and the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa on brand leadership to increase packaging recycling rates.

In 2022, we will continue looking at circular economy principles in the context of Africa-Europe relations. With Msingi East Africa (which was integrated into Gatsby Africa in 2022) and Solidaridad, we will analyse circular textiles in Kenya, to inform Kenyan businesses on EU sustainability policies and standards. We will also look at how Kenyan and EU institutions and businesses can work towards a more circular textile and garment industry while also achieving Kenya's wider goal of industrialisation. Already in early 2022, we organised a session of the EU-Africa Business Forum [exploring circularity in fashion and apparel trade and investments within Africa-Europe partnerships](#).

Want to see all our work on circular economy or learn more about what we do? Visit ecdpm.org/circulareconomy or get in touch with Nadia Ashraf or Jeske van Seters via ecdpm.org/people.

►► *While the EU is Africa's largest trading partner, the AfCFTA, Africa's continental free trade area, is a key priority for African countries. This makes it a cornerstone of Africa-Europe relations. With 2021 marking the official launch of the free trade area, there is substantial demand for pragmatic and balanced analysis of the multiple layers of its implementation.*



Grounding Africa's free trade area in reality

Trading under the AfCFTA agreement started on 1 January 2021, and while negotiations continue, the free trade area is fast becoming a central pillar of African economic policy. Integrating 54 markets is a highly ambitious endeavour. Getting there involves navigating multiple layers of institutional structures, interests and incentives within and between countries. Ultimately, political economy dynamics will shape the extent to which AfCFTA objectives can be met.

Through the [second phase of our project on the political economy of regional organisations in Africa](#), we examined three key ambitions of the AfCFTA: the simplification of trading regimes, the [promotion of industrialisation](#) and the [incentive of free movement of people](#). Our analysis helped fill the gaps between policy agreement, implementation and impact that abound in these discussions. Our work on the AfCFTA was commended by international partner agencies and African private sector actors alike for presenting a realistic and grounded perspective.

We also analysed the wider context of the AfCFTA, focusing on [private sector engagement](#), the [reforms made at the continental level to improve trade-related infrastructures](#), the [implications of the AfCFTA for an EU-Africa trade agreement](#) and

the [role of the AU in tackling Africa's challenges](#).

Our commitment to a practical analysis of the AfCFTA led us to develop a webinar series on how to [connect African markets and people](#), which allowed policymakers, researchers, civil servants and other actors to exchange ideas on AfCFTA policies and politics.

Given that the negotiations for the AfCFTA and institutional structures are still being finalised, there is a continued demand and need for work at the continental, regional and member state levels to identify where there is political traction for AfCFTA-related reforms, and where blockages remain.

In 2022, we will continue to apply our political economy approach to the AfCFTA in institutional terms, focusing on its application along trade and transport corridors. We aim to present a realistic approach to its industrialisation objective as well, in the understanding that some interests and incentives may be at odds with the AfCFTA commitments.

Want to see all our work on the political economy of regional organisations in Africa or learn more about what we do? Visit ecdpm.org/pedro2 or get in touch with Bruce Byiers via ecdpm.org/people.

►► *Mobility between African countries is key to making the continent's economic integration ambitions a reality. In a similar vein, improving options for migration and mobility between Africa and Europe can also generate economic benefits.*



The EU's talent partnerships: Improving legal migration from Africa

The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare acute labour shortages in a variety of sectors across Europe. Immigration policy has therefore come into focus as a way to respond to the demand for workers. Simultaneously, legal migration pathways are being discussed as an incentive for EU partner countries to cooperate on return and readmission.

To this end, the European Commission is set to launch its first talent partnerships – a key proposal under the EU's new migration and asylum pact – in 2022. The talent partnerships combine mobility schemes for workers and students with relevant capacity-building support in countries of origin. They have the potential to open legal migration opportunities for African third-country nationals, and thus become a cornerstone of the envisaged comprehensive approach to migration that the AU and the EU have agreed to. Various actors will need to work together in implementing such partnerships to deliver benefits for migrants and both host and origin societies. Their design needs to take the interests and concerns of all parties into account for them to become successful and support sustainable development outcomes.

In 2021, we worked with the European Commission's Migration Partnership Facility (MPF) and the EU Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF) to [explore how diaspora organisations and individuals can be engaged in the implementation of the EU's talent partnerships](#). The resulting study provided practical recommendations to guide the design of these partnerships. The MPF and EUDiF hosted a webinar

to discuss the findings with EU policymakers, practitioners and diaspora organisations and to facilitate further opportunities to link diaspora with the implementation of pilot legal mobility schemes and upcoming talent partnerships. The study has been widely disseminated and discussed, and can provide a useful contribution to the design of the first talent partnerships.

We also started following policy and political discussions on legal migration and talent partnerships in a number of EU member states, focusing on what their labour needs are, where talent partnerships could add value and how they could be designed.

In 2022, we will closely follow the development of the talent partnerships. We will publish findings from our analysis of the current thinking of four EU member states (the Netherlands, Estonia, Poland and Portugal) on labour migration, the policies that exist and whether there are political openings and possibilities for reform to accommodate talent partnerships and stronger cooperation on legal mobility. We will actively disseminate these findings in Africa and Europe, take part in the discussions on legal mobility as part of the MPF Labour Mobility Practitioners' Network, and follow up with additional analysis and commentaries.

Want to know more about our work on migration? Visit ecdpm.org/programmes/migration-mobility or get in touch with Anna Knoll or Amanda Bisong via ecdpm.org/people.

►► *The actions of European and African policymakers in the different areas of AU-EU cooperation – including migration, but also trade, health and climate change – should be informed by sound advice and analysis that brings in different perspectives. Think tanks, especially when joining forces, can play an important role here.*



Joining forces for an informed AU-EU partnership

Africa-Europe relations is in our DNA, and it underpins every piece of work we produce or undertake. Since 1986, we have analysed the dynamics, policies and instruments that form the basis of cooperation between Africa and Europe, aiming to present policymakers with realistic options or alternatives and bring in different voices. We do this alone and in partnership with others – especially the other members of the European Think Tanks Group (ETTg) and African think tanks such as ISS and ACET.

In the last two years, we focused on the EU-AU Summit – set initially for October 2020, but eventually held only in February 2022. More broadly, we responded to the desire of policymakers on both sides of the Mediterranean to create a new kind of partnership in the rapidly changing geopolitical context. For instance, in 2021 we organised a well-viewed [webinar on the Africa-Europe partnership](#), bringing together former officials and independent thinkers from Africa and Europe. We also explored the [steps Europe can take to improve cooperation with the AU and Africa on the multilateral stage](#), with fellow ETTg members DIE and the Institute of International Affairs (IAI).

We continued our Africa-Europe series with DIE and ACET, exploring key areas of the AU-EU partnership. The series was produced for BMZ with financial support from GIZ, and published by ETTg. After three publications in 2020, on the [AfCFTA](#), [digitalisation](#) and [health](#) – all based on workshops

– we concluded the series in 2021 with two final papers, on [green transition](#) and on [investment](#). Ahead of the AU-EU foreign affairs ministerial meeting in Kigali, Rwanda, we [summarised our work in a paper and a visual guide](#).

We were also involved in a [partnership between ETTg, ISS and UNDP](#). In late 2021 and early 2022, the group organised three roundtable discussions on AU-EU cooperation, in the areas of [green transformation and climate change](#), [economic development and trade](#) – which was facilitated by ECDPM – and [participatory governance, peace and security](#). Recommendations from the discussions were summarised in three briefs, all published in early 2022 in the lead-up to the EU-AU Summit. Ahead of, during and after the summit we published a number of commentaries and organised or spoke at several events.

In 2022, we will continue to provide analysis for an informed AU-EU partnership. We [announced a new partnership](#) with ACET, ISS and the Policy Center for the New South. Our aim is to strengthen AU-EU cooperation by bringing in voices from outside the EU and AU institutions and connecting policies with the day-to-day realities in African and European countries.

Want to know more about our work on Africa-Europe relations? Visit ecdpm.org/africaeurope or get in touch with Philomena Apiko or Geert Laporte via ecdpm.org/people.





►► *Partnerships are crucial to deliver on common challenges, but they can only be effective if there is strategic coordination and coherence. Europe’s financial architecture for development is a case in point. The EU, its financial institutions and its member states provide billions of euros in development finance each year. With more coherence and coordination, this money could be used more impactfully.*



The European financial architecture for development

In 2021, EU member states faced decisions on how to reform the European financial architecture for development to make it more effective and efficient. Would one single European development bank achieve better results? How could coordination be improved among Europe’s existing financial institutions – including the EIB, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and other public development banks and development finance institutions?

Our work on this topic established ECDPM as an independent insider with valuable insights on systemic issues related to Europe’s financial architecture for development. After EU member states reached an agreement on the way forward in conclusions of the Council of the EU, we stressed that the [reform needs to go even further](#). We analysed how to improve coherence, effectiveness and cooperation with financial institutions in developing countries, in Africa in particular. We also looked at how [European financial institutions can work better together for sustainable and green investment in times of COVID-19](#). With the Elcano Royal Institute, we looked at [collaborative efforts to stimulate sustainable investment for COVID-19 recovery in developing countries](#), and with the Elcano Royal Institute and ETTG we explored the [rise of public development banks](#).

We also engaged in discussions with key institutions within the financial architecture. With

CGD, we [launched the EFAD Talks series](#), for which we interviewed representatives from European bilateral and multilateral development banks and the European Commission, and development finance experts. We also organised informal discussions on the topic for EU member states, and European and national development banks. With the Association of bilateral European Development Finance Institutions (EDFI), we organised informal discussions on greater cooperation and strategic coordination for financial institutions, member states, the European Commission and the EEAS. Finally, with ETTG, DIE and ACET, we organised an informal discussion for European and African institutional representatives on EU-Africa cooperation on development finance.

In 2022, we will continue our efforts to help improve the financial architecture and make the newly established EIB Global branch – one outcome of the EU decisions from mid-2021 – a more impactful and innovative part of it. We will also promote greater cooperation and more effective approaches, in line with the SDGs, by development finance actors in Europe, and in partnership with Africa.

Want to know more about our work on the European financial architecture for development?
Visit ecdpm.org/european-financial-architecture-development or get in touch with San Bilal via ecdpm.org/people.

Learning and quality support

ECDPM's learning and quality support unit aims to make learning and quality part of all our activities. That enables us to be more effective and maximise our added value. Ultimately, the team wants to increase the impact of all ECDPM work.

The unit has four main responsibilities:

- **Planning and review** – We lead the Centre's operational planning, as well as regular reviews of progress in the different policy processes we engage in.
- **Monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting** – We strengthen the Centre's monitoring and reporting approaches and systems, and give advice and support to raise the quality of our work and learning. Learning and review take place around theories of change, formulated to accompany the implementation of ECDPM's strategy.
- **Quality support** – We develop and support methodologies for quality assurance, including a peer review system, as well as in-house training in cooperation with the human resources and communications teams.
- **Advice and support on research methodologies and cross-cutting issues** – We help ECDPM programmes and partners refine their policy research approaches and methodologies. Examples are political economy analysis and policy coherence assessments. We also take part in ECDPM's task

forces on gender issues, climate change and Africa-Europe relations.

Our unit in 2021

In 2021, which marked the last year of our 2017–2021 strategy, we completed outcome narratives for ECDPM's areas of work, assessing the results and added value of our activities. We were also closely involved in the preparation process for our new strategy and structure (see page 10). We initiated a new generation of theories of change for the new strategy's areas of work. With the communications team, we took a leading role in designing a strategy to ensure the quality, policy relevance, practical usefulness and impact of ECDPM's work. As of 2022, the learning and quality support team and the communications team will work together more closely, in the newly established outreach and impact department.

Also in 2021, we continued to advise colleagues and partners on political economy analysis. This included facilitating an interactive course for colleagues led by external experts. We continued our [work on policy coherence](#), providing methodological support and advice to ECDPM projects and facilitating meetings of the online community of practice on policy

coherence we created years ago. We also continued to organise internal knowledge sharing and discussion sessions, as well as programme learning sessions reflecting on progress made within each of our areas of work. Finally, we had discussions with a number of partners around the theme of more inclusive, balanced and equal partnerships and knowledge production.

Reporting

We report our monitoring data in line with the standards of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). Progress reports outline what we do, where, how much, with whom and to what effect. For each of our workstreams, we report on budgets and expenditures, participating organisations, and geopolitical and sector spread. In terms of performance, we report on both outputs and outcomes for each workstream.

IATI provides greater clarity on how aid, development and humanitarian resources are spent, to increase the effectiveness of their use to tackle poverty. The voluntary initiative brings together donor and recipient countries, civil society organisations and other experts on aid information.





What we learnt this year

Learning is a crucial element of our strategy. By integrating learning into all our activities, we create more valuable knowledge and practices, enhance our organisational efficiency, inform our strategic programming and ensure that we deliver on our ambitions. Below are some of the lessons we learnt this year, highlighting what we did well and where we still have room to grow.

Centre-wide

What we did well – In 2021, we restructured our organisation, in preparation for our next five-year strategy and to adapt to the rapidly changing global context. This process, which involved many people throughout the organisation and provided opportunities for everyone to have input, resulted in a flexible, more impact-driven set-up and introduced a new generation of leaders, more balanced in terms of age, gender and geographical diversity.

Where we can still grow – In our new strategy for 2022-2026, we have

committed to enhancing our gender focus by applying a gender lens to our work. We developed a gender marker for this purpose, but need to use it more systematically and ensure enough guidance. Similarly, to ensure more inclusive, balanced and equal partnerships and knowledge production, we need to shift focus from theory to practice.

European External Affairs

What we did well – We provided timely, critical and original analytical input on key topics in EU development and foreign policy, and we worked closely with the EU presidencies.

Our publications and events fed into both formal and informal policy discussions between the EU and member states as they agreed on priorities.

Where we can still grow – We want to engage more with African actors and look at how European development and foreign policy, and EU cooperation with Africa, is perceived and lands outside the African and European institutions. It is also time for us to shift focus to analysing how the EU will implement its new ambitions, approaches and instruments in partner countries and the extent to which it is effectively promoting both

a Team Europe approach and a truly equal partnership with Africa.

African Institutions and Regional Dynamics

What we did well – In 2021, we managed a diverse range of analytical work, looking at political economy dynamics in the AU, at the regional level in West Africa, in governance and in the economic realm. We also increased cooperation with a range of researchers within and outside of Africa, providing a basis for future partnerships.

Where we can still grow – Our work in 2021 demonstrated that engaging with different policy actors for research can itself be a good way forward to strengthen our networks and provide opportunities for new partnerships. We will make more effort in this direction in the future.

Migration

What we did well – We provided timely analysis on important topics that are key to migration cooperation between Africa and Europe. This included topics that did not always

make it to the top of the agenda, while being important to actors on both continents – including diaspora engagement in the implementation of the EU's new talent partnerships. Similarly, our research on the links between regional trade and free movement protocols shed light on important AU priorities.

Where we can still grow – We want to engage more with African stakeholders – beyond the institutional players – on migration, including European priorities and migration cooperation between Africa and Europe. This will allow us to better assess the extent to which African priorities are taken into account in partnerships on migration. We also want to feed our inputs and analysis more directly into key African policy processes.

Security and Resilience

What we did well – Despite high demands on the team in internal processes, such as the development of ECDPM's new five-year strategy and the overhaul of our organisational structure, we managed to deliver on our external work commitments and succeeded in securing new projects.

Where we can still grow – We want to expand our outreach to diverse audiences and increase our collaborative work with other think tanks. Particularly, we want to invest in content creation on topics of our choosing, balanced with our demand-driven and commissioned work.

Economic and Agricultural Transformation

What we did well – We used a rich set of tools to inform and engage with public and private actors in Africa, the EU and beyond, in areas such as development finance, climate adaptation in agriculture, sustainable food systems and the transition to a circular economy. This involved well-received events, both closed-door and public, alongside informal advice, briefs, papers, commentaries, podcasts, video interviews, Twitter threads and speaking with the press.

Where we can still grow – While we worked cross-programmatically, bridging related themes and expertise, as in our AgriInvest and CASCADES projects, we look forward to further building on this in the new strategic period.

Communications

Communication is crucial for ECDPM to perform its role as a strategic broker for informed policy dialogue. Our mission is to stimulate dialogue with our partners and get ECDPM's work and ideas to the right people, in the right way, at the right time. This builds understanding and capacity for more inclusive policies and practices. It also cements our legitimacy and reputation and fosters our audiences' trust in us.

Our team is a multidisciplinary one. We bring together expertise in social media, press relations, online communications, website development, writing and editing, multimedia and print publications, graphic design, and content curation.

Our unit in 2021

In 2021, our outreach, facilitation and events continued largely online or in hybrid formats, leading to our decision to stop printing publications. This allowed us to expand the variety of ways we present our work. For instance, we launched two multimedia editions of our Great Insights magazine, continued our [Climate Adaptation Talks podcast series](#) and created visual guides to break down complex topics in an easy and accessible way.

Readership in 2021 confirmed the quality and success of our Weekly Compass newsletter, as we received regular positive feedback from policymakers in Africa and Europe. We also kept up the production of our internal newsletter.

We contributed to the preparation process for our new strategy and structure (see page 10). With the learning and quality support team, we took a leading role in designing a strategy to ensure the quality, policy relevance, practical usefulness and impact of ECDPM's work in the next strategic period. As of 2022, the learning and quality support team and the communications team will work together more closely, under the newly established outreach and impact department. Finally, in light of our new strategy, we started preparations for a new ECDPM website in 2022.

Publications and other media

 **74** publications

 **8** events streamed on ECDPM's YouTube channel

 **2** interactive issues of our Great Insights magazine – including articles, videos and podcasts

 **10,534** publication and magazine downloads via our website

 **21** commentaries

 **91,996** online views of our Great Insights magazine articles

 **1** Climate Adaptation Talks podcast episode

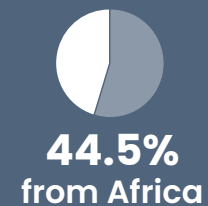
 **40,663** online views of our commentaries

Website



399,420
page views

75,407 visitors, of which:



Followers and subscribers

 **10,396** Twitter followers (+5.3%)

 **12,699** YouTube video views (+5.1%)

 **9,800** Facebook followers (+2.8%)

 **5,635** LinkedIn followers (+18.4%)

 **622** YouTube subscribers (+17.2%)


4,679 subscribers to our Weekly Compass newsletter (+14.5%)

Top 5 commentaries 2021



- (1) [Connecting people and markets in Africa in 2021](#)
- (2) [The AfCFTA: From institutional structures to private sector engagement](#)
- (3) [Brexit and development cooperation: A major connection problem](#)
- (4) [Mandatory environmental due diligence: What is exactly expected of companies?](#)
- (5) [How to make 2021 the year of sustainable food systems](#)

Top 5 publications 2021



- (1) [Team Europe: Up to the challenge?](#)
- (2) [A greener Europe at the expense of Africa? Why the EU must address the external implications of the Farm to Fork Strategy](#)
- (3) [The Green Deal in EU foreign and development policy](#)
- (4) [New beginnings or a last hurrah? The OACPS-EU partnership in 2021-2041](#)
- (5) [How European financial institutions can work better together for sustainable and green \(co-\)investment in times of COVID-19](#)

Media hits



Interviews and articles on our work appeared in Africanews, Al Jazeera, BBC, Bloomberg, Devex, The Economist, Foreign Policy, MO*, Modern Ghana, Nation Kenya, OmVärlden and Quartz Africa, among others.

Finances

Triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapidly changing global context and preparations for our new five-year strategy, in 2021 we embarked on a process to make ECDPM ‘fit for future’. We analysed the organisation’s internal and external environment, weighed different options, and finally, decided on a new organisational set-up and revised set of centre-wide ambitions. The implementation phase of this process will continue throughout 2022. For this investment in ECDPM’s future sustainability, we created a transition fund with €640 thousand of the Centre’s equity. In 2021, we used €220 thousand of the fund, with the remainder to be used in future periods.

While this internal process demanded a lot from the organisation, our staff remained highly committed to delivering timely and high-quality work. We concluded the year with an operational surplus of €164 thousand – or €640 thousand including our investment portfolio yield.

In our new strategic period, starting in 2022, the number of thematic areas of work will expand to ten. This has several implications for the organisation. For instance, it led us to increase our revenue target to just over €8 million – a target that had already been 95% secured at the start of 2022. The expanded thematic areas require additional investment as well.

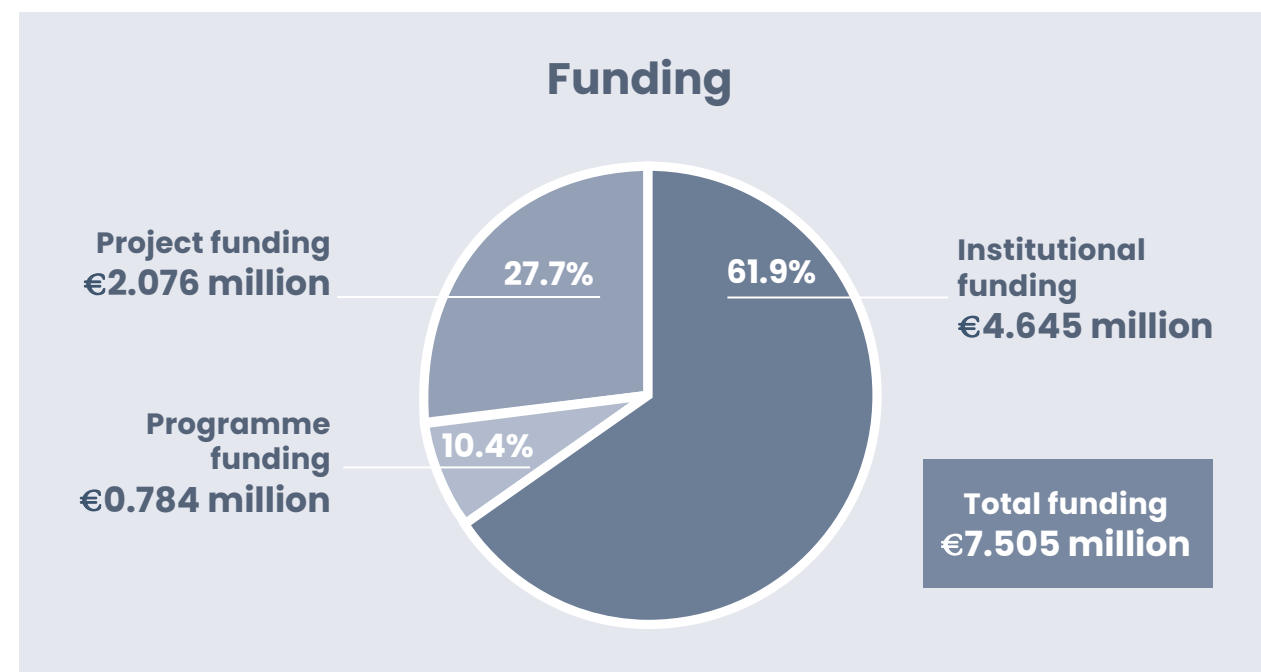
At the end of 2021, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, our main funder, decided to continue its financial support for the next five years, thanks in part to confidence in our new strategy. Our eight other institutional partners also agreed to renew their multi-annual commitments. We were particularly gratified by these decisions, as they demonstrate appreciation of and trust in our organisation.

Accountability and transparency

We continue to strive for the highest standards of accountability and transparency. Twice a year an external auditor reviews our finances, financial procedures and internal control mechanisms. Our current auditor, BDO, confirmed that our 2021 financial statements give a true and fair overview of the Centre’s financial position.

Since 2014, Transparify has evaluated the financial transparency of think tanks around the world. ECDPM has been consistently awarded its maximum five-star rating.

For more information, visit transparify.org.



INSTITUTIONAL FUNDERS

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
the Netherlands, €2,700,000

Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
Sweden, €591,777

Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation*
Belgium, €334,708

Irish Aid*
Ireland, €320,000

Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs*
Luxembourg, €297,796

Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
Finland, €250,000

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*
Denmark, €199,984

Austrian Development Agency (ADA)*
Austria, €147,397

Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*
Estonia, €8,000

*Also includes programme funding. For a breakdown of institutional and programme funding, see our [detailed funding overview](#).

PROGRAMME FUNDERS

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Italy, €313,290

European Commission
Belgium, €110,977

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
Switzerland, €101,927

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
United States, €39,874

Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca (UNIMIB)
Italy, €12,959

PROJECT FUNDERS

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
United States, €454,268

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
the Netherlands, €229,115

European Commission
Belgium, €153,280

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Germany, €146,127

European Commission – Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)
Belgium, €110,994

Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
France, €92,611

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations, €80,227

Nuffic – Maastricht School of Management
the Netherlands, €76,532

European Partnership for Democracy (EPD)
the Netherlands, €70,529

European Commission – Particip
Germany, €63,666

Camões – Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua
Portugal, €62,177

Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI)
Belgium, €53,381

European Commission – International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)
Belgium, €44,387

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia
Slovenia, €39,941

Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IOB)
the Netherlands, €38,022

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
Sweden, €36,260

European Commission – European University Institute (EUI)
Belgium, €33,089

European Commission – German Development Institute (DIE)
Germany, €32,076

Embassy of the Netherlands in Tunis
Tunisia, €31,450

European Commission – French National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts (CNAM)
France, €30,800

European Commission – RUSI Europe
Belgium, €27,439

European Investment Bank (EIB)
Luxembourg, €27,324

PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency
the Netherlands, €24,800

European Commission – mediatEUR
Belgium, €21,866

European Commission – Ecorys Netherlands
the Netherlands, €20,525

European Commission – GFA Consulting Group
Germany, €13,140

Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL)
the Netherlands, €12,000

French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
France, €8,684

European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA)
the Netherlands, €7,350

Other funders <€2,500
Various, €7,309

CONCORD
Belgium, €5,202

ECOWAS – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Nigeria, €4,428

New York University
United States, €4,425

Msingi East Africa**
Kenya, €4,424

European Commission – Verband Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe Deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen (VENRO)
Germany, €4,128

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Ireland, €3,500

****Msingi East Africa was integrated into Gatsby Africa in 2022.**

Balance sheet

After allocation of 2021 result, as of 31 December 2021
In thousands of euros

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Fixed assets		
Intangible fixed assets	76	103
Tangible fixed assets	2,082	2,169
Financial fixed assets	5,010	4,528
<i>Investment portfolio</i>	4,997	4,515
<i>Participation in EDCS share fund</i>	13	13
Total fixed assets	7,168	6,800
Current assets		
Receivables	1,650	872
<i>Payments in advance</i>	62	69
<i>Trade debtors</i>	1,588	803
Taxation contributions	28	10
Cash	2,976	2,462
Total current assets	4,654	3,344
TOTAL ASSETS	11,822	10,144
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities	355	222
<i>Trade creditors</i>	60	36
<i>Employee-related creditors</i>	70	66
<i>Employee-related taxation due</i>	205	120
Other liabilities	2,569	1,695
Provisions	196	145
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,100	2,062
EQUITY		
Retained reserves from prior periods	8,152	7,292
Innovation fund	150	150
Transformation fund	420	640
TOTAL EQUITY	8,722	8,082
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	11,822	10,144

Income and expenditure account

From 1 January until 31 December 2021
In thousands of euros

	2021 actual results	2021 budgeted results	2020 actual results
INCOME			
Institutional funding	4,645	4,636	4,824
Other funding received	2,860	3,035	2,754
TOTAL INCOME	7,505	7,671	7,578
EXPENDITURE			
Direct operational expenses	(669)	(830)	(841)
Salaries and other personnel costs	(5,792)	(5,835)	(5,754)
Accommodation expenses	(254)	(226)	(219)
General and administrative expenses	(265)	(307)	(291)
Information technology related expenses	(169)	(150)	(131)
Depreciation	(184)	(196)	(192)
Other miscellaneous items	(10)	(127)	(29)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(7,343)	(7,671)	(7,457)
OPERATING RESULTS	162	0	121
INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO			
Interest and dividend income	42	0	56
Result of sales	151	0	46
Result on market value	312	0	61
Banking costs	(20)	0	(23)
Interest expense	(7)	0	0
TOTAL RESULT OF THE INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO	478	0	140
TOTAL RESULT	640	0	261
ALLOCATION OF RESULTS			
Contribution to retained reserves from prior periods	860	0	261
Utilisation of transformation fund	(220)	0	0

Our people



ECDPM is home to some 60 policy, communications and support staff from more than 20 countries around the globe.

At the end of 2021, we had 64 ECDPM employees:



Throughout 2021



Investing in our people

We encourage our staff to grow professionally. To facilitate this, we allocate a yearly budget per staff member. This year, our staff took part in a range of training programmes to improve their skills and efficiency in a number of areas:

- Languages
- Public speaking
- Writing, proofreading and editing
- Information and communication technology
- Data protection and privacy
- Works council and confidential advisers
- First aid
- Finance
- Leadership and personal coaching
- Project management

Staff also participated in training to broaden their thematic knowledge, for example, on political economy analysis, economics, development and international law.

Our junior staff are assigned relatively

high levels of responsibility, which allows them to quickly gain relevant experience.

COVID-19 and ECDPM

Like in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected the internal functioning of our organisation in 2021. [We continued various measures put in place throughout 2020 to limit the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the safety of our staff and partners](#), in line with the guidelines of public health experts at the World Health Organization and the Dutch and Belgian governments. These measures ranged from working from home protocols, COVID-proof offices and a travel stop to increased attention for the physical and mental well-being of staff and the automatic renewal of temporary contracts in exceptionally uncertain times. All this was overseen by a 'new normal' task force, management and our human resources department.

As several new waves of COVID-19 swept over Europe and the world, bringing new and more contagious virus variants, we closely monitored the situation and adapted our way of working accordingly. In early 2021,

in line with new health and safety regulations under the Dutch Working Conditions Act, we asked staff to complete an e-learning module on ergonomics, vitality, productivity and work-life balance. We also developed a COVID alert procedure, outlining a clear protocol to follow when a staff member who had been at the office or met with colleagues reported a COVID-19 infection.

Finally, we started exploring hybrid working modalities to prepare ECDPM for the future. In early 2022, management, in cooperation with the works council, announced a new policy on office presence and working from home. Staff members will have a large degree of flexibility in terms of where and when they work – provided some basic conditions are met to ensure mental well-being, adequate support, team functioning and organisational cohesion.

Our works council

Our works council, created in 2014, represents staff on a variety of matters, especially issues regarding personnel policy and employment conditions. In 2021, the works council was involved in multiple activities:

- Discussions on our new organisational structure and involvement in our 'fit for future' process (see page 42)
- Work of the 'new normal' task force and discussions on hybrid working and post-COVID working scenarios
- Discussions on the recruitment of a new head of finance and operations
- Discussions on a strategic approach to talent management
- Discussions on our budget and financial outlook
- Organisation of new works council elections

The works council had several formal meetings with management, executed its 'right to advise' on several topics and met with the Board during official Board meetings.

Staff confidential advisers

In 2021, we had two confidential advisers whom staff could approach to discuss any concerns or difficulties they faced.

Sick leave at ECDPM

In 2021, our sick leave was 2.38% in the Netherlands and 1.5% in Belgium.

Governance

Members of our Board in 2021



Adebayo Olukoshi *Chair of the Board*

Regional Director for Africa and West Asia for the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and former Director at the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning
Nigeria



Koos Richelle *Vice-Chair of the Board*

Member of the Dutch Advisory Council on International Affairs and Chair of its Commission on Development Cooperation. Former Director-General at the European Commission in the areas of development, employment, social affairs and inclusion
The Netherlands



Maria de Jesus Veiga Miranda

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Cabo Verde to the United Nations Office and the other international organisations in Geneva, Permanent Mission of Cabo Verde
Cabo Verde



Jean-Claude Boidin

Former EU Ambassador and former Head of Unit at DG International Cooperation and Development, European Commission
France



Alan Hirsch

Professor of Development Policy and Practice at the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town, and senior economic policy advisor to four South African presidents
South Africa



Ruth Jacoby

Former Director-General for International Development Cooperation at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, member of the UN High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, former Executive Director of the Board of the World Bank, and former Ambassador of Sweden to Germany and Italy
Sweden



Richard Dohmen

Partner at Pricewaterhouse-Coopers
The Netherlands

Honorary advisor to the ECDPM Board on European external affairs:



Dieter Frisch

Former Director-General for Development, European Commission
Germany

Members of our management team in 2021



Carl Michiels

Director
Belgium



Geert Laporte

Deputy Director
Belgium



Marleen Ackermans

Head of Human Resources
The Netherlands



Virginia Mucchi

Head of Communications
Italy



Jeske van Seters

Head of the private sector engagement team of ECDPM's Economic and Agricultural Transformation programme
The Netherlands



Volker Hauck

(replacing Anna Knoll during parental leave)
Head of ECDPM's Security and Resilience programme
Germany



Riaan Paul

(as of May 2021)
Head of Finance and Operations
South Africa



Roland Lemmens

(until May 2021)
Head of Finance and Operations
The Netherlands

Towards a new strategy, structure and leadership

In 2021, we published our new strategy for 2022-2026 (see page 10). To prepare ourselves for this new strategy and adapt to the rapidly changing global context, we started discussions on how to make ECDPM 'fit for future'. In 2021, a dedicated task force, consisting of management and staff representatives, devised an action plan to structure and prepare our organisation to effectively deliver on our new strategy.

This process resulted in a new organisational structure (see page 10), effective as of January 2022. The new structure allows for more flexibility and cross-organisational collaboration and creates a basis for strengthening the uptake and impact of our work. We

also introduced a new generation of leaders heading the different teams, clusters and workstreams – paying particular attention to gender balance, diversity and inclusion, and increasing opportunities for younger staff.

Diversity and inclusion

In 2021, our diversity and inclusion working group developed a roadmap and action plan based on our [diversity and inclusion strategy](#), which we finalised in 2020, building on work initiated by our gender task force. In our discussions to make ECDPM 'fit for future', we paid particular attention to gender and diversity – which is well reflected in our new leadership structure. In

2022, we want to organise a centre-wide training on diversity and inclusion to address intercultural communication, intersectionality and microaggressions in the workplace, and implement specific mechanisms and procedures to promote inclusiveness.

Data protection

To guide compliance with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), in late 2017 we set up a privacy team including members of different departments, supported by an external legal adviser. In 2020, the team was discontinued as it had delivered on its initial tasks, and one privacy officer was appointed instead.

In 2021, we outsourced GDPR compliance to an external consultant, while appointing one ECDPM staff member to coordinate all GDPR-related matters within the organisation and liaise with the external consultant.

There were no data breaches at ECDPM in 2021. However, we did report one medium-risk, low-impact data breach incident that occurred at one of our suppliers. This was done in accordance with our updated data breach policy.

To see our privacy policy, visit ecdpm.org/privacy.



Our partners

Partnerships are at the heart of our work. Partners inspire new ideas and enable systematic exchanges of experiences and best practices. Most importantly, combined efforts are more powerful than any individual, uncoordinated actions could ever be.

ECDPM collaborates with a broad range of partners, who increase the value of our work. Our inputs, in turn, add value to work done by others. We also connect our partners, stimulating strategic collaboration among them towards common goals.

Institutional partners

Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Irish Aid

Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Programme and project partners

Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Camões - Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua

Centre Africain pour le Commerce, l'Intégration et le Développement (ENDA-CACID)

CONCORD

DAI Global

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

Ecorys Netherlands

Embassy of the Netherlands in Tunis

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

European Commission

European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA)

European Investment Bank (EIB)

European Partnership for Democracy (EPD)

European University Institute (EUI)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs

French National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts (CNAM)

Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas (FIIAPP)

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

GFA Consulting Group

International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL)

MediatEur

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

Msingi East Africa (*integrated into Gatsby Africa in 2022*)

New York University

Nuffic

NWO-WOTRO

Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI)

Particip

PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency

Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IOB)

Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

RUSI Europe

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

TradeMark East Africa (TMEA)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca (UNIMIB)

Verband Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe Deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen (VENRO)

International institutions, networks and platforms

African Union Commission

Africтивistes

Code for Africa

Council of the European Union

Dutch Food & Business Knowledge Platform (F&BKP)

ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States)

European External Action Service (EEAS)

FoodFIRST Coalition, Socires

Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation

UEMOA (Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine)

European Think Tanks Group (ETTG)

Elcano Royal Institute

European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)

German Development Institute (DIE)

Institute of International Affairs (IAI)

Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI)

Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Partners

African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET)

amfori

Chatham House

Democracy Works Foundation

DNA Economics

EUROCHAMBRES

Global Health Advocates

Gorée Institute

Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)

Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) Europe

International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food)

King Baudouin Foundation

KIT Royal Tropical Institute

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS)

MercyCorps

Österreichische Forschungsstiftung für Internationale Entwicklung (ÖFSE)

Pax Christi

SPARC Knowledge

University of Twente

Are you interested in partnering with us? Get in touch with Kathleen Van Hove or Sabine Mertens via ecdpm.org/people.

Sustainability

ECDPM promotes better international policies that benefit sustainable global development. But making the planet a better place starts with ourselves. We recognise that given the nature of our work, our efforts and activities inevitably impact the environment. We aim to minimise this environmental impact, through compliance with regulations and legislation and via our own initiatives. Integrating sustainability into all our daily activities is a learning process, but we eagerly work towards that goal.

Integrating sustainability

Our Maastricht office – known as the [Pelican House](#) – is the only Art Nouveau building in Maastricht, and is listed as a national monument by the National Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. In 2021, we applied for and received a grant from the agency for the preservation of the building. The fact that our office is a national monument means that we are somewhat limited in the types of changes we are allowed to make to the building's interior and exterior. Regardless, we are committed to making sustainability improvements wherever possible.

For instance, we continued our 'Greening ECDPM' initiative. Our switch to LED emergency lighting resulted in a 56% decrease in wattage per light fixture. We continued to work with a supplier of green energy produced in the Netherlands, which participates in forest protection projects to help compensate for customers' energy use. We use environmentally-friendly cleaning products at our offices, and seek ways to reduce the use of plastics.

Our plan to replace all office lighting and the heating system with smart systems to better monitor and control consumption had to be delayed to 2022. This was in anticipation of the building preservation grant, and because of global supply chain challenges and labour shortages resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sustainability improvements at our current Brussels office are limited, as it is rented space

in a shared building. In 2021, we looked into new accommodation, to provide a healthy, smart, social and sustainable working environment, while keeping our strategic location close to the EU institutions. In early 2022, we found a new – carbon neutral – office, to which we will move in late 2022.

Travel

In 2021, work travel was very limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, as we transition to, hopefully, a post-pandemic situation, we will continue our aim to reduce travel, not only between our offices in Maastricht and Brussels, but also to our partners, through intelligent use of electronic communications and video conferencing. We also incentivise public transportation, in particular by rail, to minimise our travel footprint. However, travel by plane is unavoidable, given the nature of our work. Therefore, we continue to participate in the Bluebiz CO2ZERO service, which contributes to the reforestation project CO2OL Tropical Mix in Panama and holds a 'Gold Standard for the Global Goals' certificate.

Sustainable sourcing

Our purchasing policy emphasises sustainable products and services. Whenever possible, we work with local suppliers who stand by a commitment to sustainable sourcing.



Concept

Nina Thijssen, Virginia Mucchi and Yaseena Chiu-van 't Hoff

Texts

Nina Thijssen, Catarina Farinha and Isabell Wutz

Art direction and design

Yaseena Chiu-van 't Hoff

Thank you to Michelle Luijben and Jacquie Dias for providing editorial assistance and to all ECDPM staff who contributed to the report.

Photo credits

Front cover and page 1

Aerial view of Kumasi, Ghana. Photo: Reuben Hayfron, Unsplash.

Page 2

ECDPM Board Chair Adebayo Olukoshi. Photo: University of Johannesburg.

Page 3

ECDPM Director Carl Michiels. Photo: Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

Page 4 and 5

ECDPM's Volker Hauck at a consultative workshop in Mali.

Page 6 and 7

ECDPM's Cecilia D'Alessandro at a focus group discussion in Nduwera, Malawi's Kasungu district. Photo: Reuben Kainga.

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Maize fields in Malawi's Kasungu district. Photo: Cecilia D'Alessandro, ECDPM.

Page 12 and 13

Landscape view of cultivated fields in Malawi's Kasungu district. Photo: Cecilia D'Alessandro, ECDPM.

Page 14 and 15

Landscape view of Malawi's Kasungu district. Photo: Cecilia D'Alessandro, ECDPM.

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Honey producers in Nduwera, Malawi's Kasungu district. Photo: Cecilia D'Alessandro, ECDPM.

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Farmer Sofia (right) with a representative of Malawi's Kasungu district's forestry department (left). Photo: Cecilia D'Alessandro, ECDPM.

Page 22

Garment factory in Nakuru, Kenya. Photo: Nadia Ashraf, ECDPM.

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ECDPM's Jeske van Seters at a textile mill in Thika, Kenya. Photo: Nadia Ashraf, ECDPM.

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Business street in Nairobi, Kenya. Photo: Edwin Echesa, iStock.

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ECDPM's Marleen Ackermans, Eunike Spierings and Sabine Mertens during a meeting. Photo: Yaseena Chiu-van 't Hoff, ECDPM.

Page 32 and 33

ECDPM's Paulina Bizzotto Molina speaks at a World Food Day event at Pakhuis de Zwijger in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Photo: Netherlands Food Partnership.

ECDPM's Volker Hauck at a workshop for the OKP-RESCOM regional study in Bamako, Mali.

ECDPM's Francesco Rampa with African indigenous vegetable value chain actors during a stakeholder forum in Nyamira, Kenya. Photo: Koen Dekeyser, ECDPM.

Page 40 and 41

ECDPM's Nadia Ashraf at a textile mill in Thika, Kenya. Photo: Jeske van Seters, ECDPM.

ECDPM's Alexei Jones and Andrew Sherriff at the Council of the EU's Working Party on Development Cooperation and International Partnerships, Slovenian Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels, Belgium. Photo: Pauline Veron, ECDPM.

ECDPM's Pauline Veron presenting at a meeting of the Council of the EU's Working Party on Development Cooperation and International Partnerships in Brussels, Belgium. Photo: Andrew Sherriff, ECDPM.

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ECDPM's Marleen Ackermans, Eunike Spierings, Sabine Mertens, Riaan Paul and Carl Michiels during a meeting. Photo: Yaseena Chiu-van 't Hoff, ECDPM.

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ECDPM's head office in Maastricht. Photo by Yaseena Chiu-van 't Hoff, ECDPM.

CONTACT US

ECDPM has two offices: in Maastricht (the Netherlands) and Brussels (Belgium).

We would love to hear from you. Contact us by telephone or email (info@ecdpm.org). If you would like to get in touch with any of our staff members directly, visit ecdpm.org/people for their individual contact details.

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