

# Discussion Paper

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## **Insights from Developments in National Policy Coherence for Development Systems:**

### **Key Cross Cutting Issues and Dilemmas**

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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK

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DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



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A study commissioned by  
the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Anna Rosengren and Andrew Sherriff

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**The views expressed in this discussion paper are those of the authors only and should not be attributed to any other person or institution. Feedback on how this discussion paper can be addressed to Andrew Sherriff, Head of the EU External Action Programme at ECDPM at: [as@ecdpm.org](mailto:as@ecdpm.org)**

## Acronyms

AA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
BMELV	German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection
BMWi	Ministry of Economy and Technology's
BMZ	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDU	Christian Democratic Union
CGD	Center for Global Development
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSU	Christian Social Union
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAFM	Ireland's Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DBE	Service Special Evaluation
DEC	Department for Effectiveness and Coherence
DEVCO	Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation
DGE	Belgian Directorate-General for European Affairs
DIE	German Development Institute
DPC	Development Policy Committee
EC	European Commission
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EEAS	European External Action Service
EU	European Union
EUHES	Group of Heads EU Member States' development cooperation evaluation services & EC
FDP	Free Democratic Party
GDI	German Development Institute
GKKE	Gemeinsame Konferenz Kirche und Entwicklung
GPG	Global Public Goods
ICEI	Complutense Institute of International Studies
IOB	Independent Inspection Development Cooperation and Policy Evaluation
IPG	International Public Goods
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NSA	Non-State Actors
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
PGD	Policy for Global Development
PGU	Sweden's Policy for Global Development
SOU	Statens Offentliga Utredningar
UD-USTYR	Unit for Development Cooperation Governance
UN	United Nations
WRR	Scientific Council for Government Policy
WTO	World Trade Organisation



## Executive Summary

Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) is fundamentally a matter of politics. As such, the key dilemma for the countries covered in this study is **how to develop and sustain the level of political interest in and support for PCD**, firstly how to put PCD on the political agenda, and secondly to retain momentum and make commitments towards promoting PCD meaningful at both the national and EU level. Although the potential benefits of effective PCD remain unquestioned, the study shows that political leadership, sponsorship and focus have waned in recent years in the countries studied, even if many of these are considered global leaders in PCD.

Whereas comparative analysis shows there is at present no fool-proof way to sustain high-level political interest, will and support for PCD, the concept could be better branded and communicated across government and to the broader public. To do so, champions of PCD should be proactive and tactical in **focussing on windows of opportunity** in specific policy processes with favourable national political and public resonance. For PCD commitments at the national level to be meaningful, strategically selected priority policy areas, specific objectives and measurable progress indicators, as well as clear implementation guidelines can ensure better mainstreaming of responsibilities throughout the concerned line-ministries.

The configuration and dynamics of PCD systems and mechanisms vary greatly, depending on a country's governance and administrative culture and on the existing arrangement of government. In general, however, **ownership and mainstreaming** of PCD engagements across the whole of government remains problematic. Whereas permanent geographic and thematic desks in the various ministries are the veins of policy coordination, they are rarely proactively involved in institutional and administrative mechanisms for promoting PCD. In order to make sure that PCD is acknowledged as the responsibility of all concerned departments, at both the technical and political level, all cross-cutting offices of government should be involved in the relevant mechanisms.

The investments made to bring PCD policy commitments into the day-to-day practice of governance continue to fall short of the effort and resources necessary to ensure that components and actors in the institutional PCD mechanisms have the adequate **capacity and skills**. While rapid staff turnover hampers the development of both expertise and networks, a lack of political support and evidence-based knowledge input further constrains the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms. Cross-country analysis further confirms that having one single unit or department mandated to promote PCD is insufficient to make sustainable progress on PCD.

Although all concerned countries have included explicit references to enhanced promotion of PCD at the EU level in their national PCD policy commitments, most have few to no **linkages in place between the existing institutional arrangement for EU coordination and the PCD mechanisms**. Putting PCD on the agenda of existing EU policy coordination mechanisms and involving PCD-mandated bodies in the national positioning processes toward EU policy dossiers remains a challenge.

Whereas knowledge inputs and assessment mechanisms can demonstrate the value and impact of PCD by rendering an otherwise abstract concept more concrete and tangible, **the knowledge factor is still by far the least developed aspect of the PCD systems covered in this study**. Current efforts towards research on PCD are overwhelmingly limited to studying and promoting of the concept itself. It is furthermore unclear to what extent research presently undertaken feeds into and is used in PCD-relevant policy processes. It is clear however, that without investment in evidence-driven research on the (potential) impact of national and EU policies on developing countries, commitments and institutional arrangements for PCD will continue to lack the necessary traction and evidence base.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background and Scope

The fact that development progress in poor countries can be negatively or positively impacted by the policies of richer ones is well established. The need to “development proof” these policies so that they at least do not harm developing countries has been widely recognised by researchers, think tanks, civil society and politicians since the 1990s (see Box 1 for a definition of the term). Commitments on achieving greater policy coherence to promote development have also been promoted by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as well as in the 2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation<sup>1</sup>, the UN Millennium Declaration and the 2010 UN Millennium Development Goals Summit. In an era when development assistance is likely to come under more pressure, Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) should become more rather than less important, including in the post 2015 framework as is increasingly recognised.<sup>2</sup>

Yet this recognition should not be misinterpreted: progress in promoting PCD is not an acceptable reason to reduce Official Development Assistance (ODA) budgets – rather countries and organisations need to perform well in both areas. At the European Union level there has been a specific legal commitment to take account of the impact of other policies on development countries since 1992, recently restated and strengthened in the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, as well as recurring strong statements in political declarations such as the 2005 European Consensus on Development. At the national level, several European countries have made commitments to take forward and develop systems to promote PCD. Some of these efforts are relatively young or nascent, while others have been consolidated over more than a decade.

### Box 1: Development proofing or Policy Coherence for Development?

In recent years the term “development proofing” has become increasingly used in development policy-making circles. The phrase “development proofing” clearly draws parallels to the concept of “climate proofing” which has been used to draw attention to the potential negative impact of various policies on climate change. As such, ‘development proofing’ refers to the process of ensuring that national non-development policies do not contradict national development policy objectives, nor have a negative impact on developing countries (i.e. “do no harm”).

Development proofing is an important component of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), though the two concepts are not equal. PCD in addition also encompasses the seeking of synergies between development policy and other policy areas, as well as the identification and rectification of policy incoherencies. Whereas PCD has clearly defined and endorsed definitions (at EU and OECD level), development proofing has been used as an alternative, as some see it as a more accessible, understandable and less technocratic term. Throughout the report, the term PCD is maintained, while development proofing or development proof policies are considered as the baseline for effective PCD in the country studies.

In Denmark, as in other EU Member States, civil society pressure and political leadership has coalesced with the promotion of best practices by the OECD<sup>3</sup> and the EU to ensure that specific commitments to Policy Coherence for Development were made.<sup>4</sup> The new International Development Cooperation Act that entered into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2013, sets the tone by stating that Denmark “*recognises that developing countries are not only affected by development policies, but also by other policy areas.*”

<sup>1</sup> See Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011). Page 2.

<sup>2</sup> See GDI, ECDPM and ODI (2013).

<sup>3</sup> See for example OECD-DAC (2011).

<sup>4</sup> Danish Civil society was very active during the Danish Presidency of the EU. See, Concord Denmark (ed.)( 2012).

More specifically the new Danish Development Cooperation policy of June 2012 titled “A Right to a Better Life” articulates this commitment more clearly, noting that, “*Political measures in other areas such as trade, energy, climate, security, migration, taxation, agriculture and fisheries often play a far more important role than development cooperation. Unless a stronger coherence between these policies is ensured, we run the risk of undermining the aim of poverty reduction and sustainable development. Accordingly, Denmark will work for stronger coherence between policies in the many areas that affect developing countries.*”<sup>5</sup> In the same document, Denmark also committed to developing an Action Plan on Policy Coherence for Development and promoting progress on PCD at the European Union level. This follows on from a political commitment of the new Danish government in 2011 that “*Denmark shall lead the efforts on closing taxation gaps, addressing illegal capital transfers and promote a fair taxation of natural resources in the worlds poorest countries*”

In the preparation of the Action Plan, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs wished to understand how other countries have approached Policy Coherence for Development, thereby providing food for thought on how the Ministry might effectively take forward its new commitments. While Denmark ranks very well in the Commitment to Development Index<sup>6</sup>, which is seen by some to approximate performance on PCD, specific mechanisms for promoting PCD in Denmark are less well developed. One of the reasons noted for the lack of formal mechanisms was that having a small government with ‘short lines of communications’ between the ministries reduced the need for putting in place specific and formal mechanisms. Danish civil society and the OECD-DAC Peer Review of Denmark’s Development Cooperation have however remarked that developing PCD mechanisms is necessary if Denmark is to continue to live up to its development commitments. In addition to pressures from outside government, the important political engagement of the Danish government during its EU Presidency to facilitate the formulation of a specific set of Council Conclusions on PCD (EU commitments on PCD adopted on 14 May 2012) strengthen the government’s resolve to make further progress.<sup>7</sup>

As an input to its preparations of the Action Plan, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs approached the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) with a request to undertake a brief study to look at how other countries have addressed PCD. The study serves as an input to both internal discussions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as an expert meeting to allow direct exchange between government officials as well as other experts including some from the Member States covered by the study and civil society. This expert meeting was held in Copenhagen on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2013 and a report of this event is included as an annex to this Discussion Paper.

PCD systems are highly related to the national political culture and existing systems of public administration system in countries. As such, a selection of EU Member States was chosen to offer some comparative analysis. The study focuses on smaller EU countries with a history of engaging in development issues, namely Belgium, Ireland and Finland, on the assumption that they share similar challenges and opportunities in influencing national and EU policy processes to Denmark. One larger country, namely Germany, was also added to provide a different perspective to the comparative analysis. The study also looks, albeit in less detail, at the Netherlands and Sweden as two “early adopters” and “front-runners” in promoting Policy Coherence for Development. Together these six countries offer a variety of experiences that can provide instructive examples, key dilemmas and some “food for thought” for Denmark to effectively take forward its Action Plan. It is also hoped that the report would be of wider use to those seeking to promote Policy Coherence for Development in EU and OECD DAC countries.

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<sup>5</sup> See The Danish Government (2012), Page 34.

<sup>6</sup> In 2012 Denmark was ranked number 1 on the Commitment to Development Index but this was mainly due to non-PCD aspects. See Center for Global Development (2012).

<sup>7</sup> See Council of the European Union (2012b) in reference to EU document 9317/12.

## 1.2. Methodology and Approach

In undertaking the analysis, ECDPM has drawn on its own methodological framework<sup>8</sup> and experience in assessing PCD as endorsed by national evaluation departments, as well as those of the OECD. It is important to note that this report presents the results of only a brief study – the results should therefore not be interpreted as an assessment of the PCD systems of the six countries. The latter would require a more comprehensive investigation, formal agreement from the countries concerned and access to internal documents, all of which were not part of this study. In analyzing the countries, ECDPM decided to look at three mechanisms deemed essential for making progress on Policy Coherence for Development. These three components have been identified by ECDPM in the past to analyse country systems for PCD and bear close resemblance to the “building blocks” for PCD, as defined by the OECD for DAC members to strive towards.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 1: ECDPM and OECD approaches to analyzing and understanding PCD components**

ECDPM	OECD
1. Explicit political and policy commitments	1. Political Commitment: Setting, Prioritising and Articulating Objectives
2. Administrative and institutional mechanisms for policy coordination	2. Ensuring Effective Policy Co-ordination
3. Knowledge input and knowledge assessment mechanisms for analyses and assessing impact	3. Improving Implementation, Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting

### 1. Explicit Policy Statements (to be explored in chapter 2.1)

The most usual form of this type of mechanism is an official policy statement or strategy paper. There are a few cases where the authorities have gone further and passed legislation of some form. Certain governments have taken a more sector-by sector approach (in addition to general policy statements) by concluding inter-ministerial agreements of different forms with ministries responsible for policy areas that can have a significant impact on developing countries. Policy statements of intent can be made and endorsed at the EU and OECD level as well.

### 2. Institutional & Administrative Mechanisms (to be explored in chapter 2.2 & 2.3)

Whereas inter-ministerial or inter-departmental arrangements for promoting policy coherence at national or EU level are a common feature of national government administrations in EU Member States, it is only as of recently that such arrangements and mechanisms have been instituted or have adopted functions relating to the promotion of PCD. There is a wide variety of such mechanisms, involving civil society, independent bodies and parliament in different ways.

### 3. Knowledge Input & Assessment mechanisms (to be explored in chapter 2.4)

Commonly, multi-stakeholder reference groups of different types provide assessment and knowledge inputs on PCD to the policy formulation structures and processes. In some approaches, knowledge mechanisms are linked to academic analysis or to existing evaluation systems. Civil society also generates knowledge inputs, which can have influence on policy formulation processes with relevance for PCD.

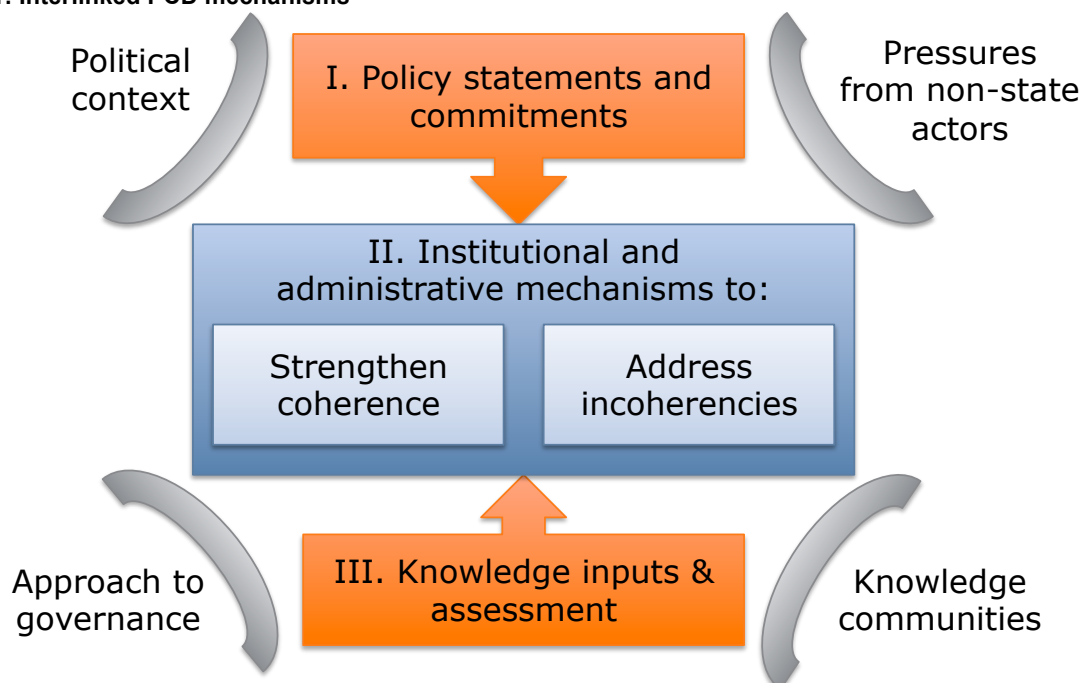
While the three mechanisms are analysed separately, it is the interaction of these different elements that constitute a PCD system as illustrated by Figure 1 below. The system is made up of the dynamics of interaction between the three elements, and has in OECD guideline documents also been presented as a

<sup>8</sup> See, European Centre for Development Policy Management (2006). See OECD (2009). See Aksant Academic Publishers.

<sup>9</sup> This graphic representation is taken from, see Keijzer (2012).

cycle. These three components are influenced by the political context in the country, how governance is conducted on a day-to-day basis, pressure and level of influence from non-state actors (e.g. NGOs and CSOs), and various knowledge communities.

**Figure 1: Interlinked PCD mechanisms**



Source: ECDPM/Keijzer for Concord Denmark, 2012

### 1.2.1. Timing and key questions

This study was conducted in three phases by a team of ECDPM researchers from mid-January to March 2013. First, the study team conducted desk research of relevant (policy) documents and reports available in the public domain. These included notably the 2007 Evaluation of the EU Institutions & Member States' Mechanisms for Promoting Policy Coherence for Development (ECDPM, ICEI and Particip, 2007), relevant OECD DAC Peer Review reports and related legislation, government statements, policies and programmes from the countries studied.

These documents were collected and analysed in order to source relevant information on (aspects of) the selected countries' respective PCD mechanisms. EU bi-annual PCD reports, as well as studies and reports undertaken by civil society, academia and other independent research institutions, further contributed to the desk research.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The ECDPM research team taking part in this project speak Swedish, Dutch, English, German and French allowing them to analyse legislation in the national language of all but one of the countries studied.

Four research questions were used to guide the research undertaken in this phase of the study, based on existing best practices in analysing PCD (ECDPM et al. 2007, OECD 2010):

1. What are the explicit policy statements of intent with regards to PCD, and how do they work?
2. What are the administrative and institutional mechanisms for policy coordination in support of PCD and how do they work?
3. What are the knowledge-input and knowledge-assessment mechanisms for generating evidence on the effective design, formulation and impact of policies on developing countries, and what is their capacity for monitoring, analysis and reporting this?
4. What are the links and effective interaction between the components of the PCD 'system'?

Based on the answers, a 'snapshot' of the current state of the PCD 'systems' for the selected EU Member States was developed. A graphical mapping of the various actors, organisations and institutional structures, and the linkages between them, is available for each of the respective countries (see Annex I)<sup>11</sup>.

Following the desk research, the research team undertook a small number of semi-structured interviews with key people involved in, or knowledgeable of, the respective countries' PCD systems.<sup>12</sup> As such, twenty-four different people were interviewed in the course of this study. The interviews served to fill in information gaps and clarify or confirm specific issues for the countries covered. However, it should be noted that the vast majority of informal and formal discussions on Policy Coherence for Development are conducted within government public administrations and are not accessible in public domain or available to researchers.

Finally, the research team analysed the six separate mapping studies of the countries (Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands and Sweden), to determine cross-cutting commonalities, differences, bottlenecks, solutions and other issues, all derived from the following considerations:

- What cross-cutting issues regarding the policy statements of the six countries stand out (both in parallel and in contrast), which have had an effect on degree to which PCD is promoted?
- What crosscutting issues stand out regarding the institutional and administrative mechanisms in the six countries? Are any specific arrangements particularly effective at screening policies for PCD concerns? To what degree do these mechanisms link to the EU policy coordination system?
- Do any particular methods or arrangements stand out which overcome common constraints for establishing PCD systems?
- What crosscutting issues stand out regarding the knowledge-input and –assessment mechanisms in the six countries?
- To what extent do the three components of PCD mechanisms fit together, what can be said comparatively across the six countries about this?

In answering these cross-cutting questions, the research team remained conscious of the fact that no ideal one-size-fits-all approach can be followed to promote PCD in any country, as also reflected in ECDPM research outputs and OECD guideline documents. The research team also assumed that PCD systems are never static, but rather evolve constantly. Although the report focuses primarily on recent years, the research findings broadly confirm that promoting PCD is a continuous political and policy debate rather than a one-off construction exercise. A final, important caveat is that governments in some cases do promote development policy objectives in other policy areas without explicitly referring to the concept of PCD – the research team has taken care to explore a wide range of recent experiences of cross-sectoral

<sup>11</sup> No visual mapping has been undertaken for the Netherlands, as its structures for promoting PCD are at present possibly subject to significant change.

<sup>12</sup> It was not always possible to acquire an interview with all those contacted given their other commitments and the short timeline for this study.

policy processes in the six countries, but cannot guarantee that all instances of policy coherence for development in the countries have been included.

With these caveats in mind, the resulting crosscutting analysis and country mapping studies form the knowledge base of this report. In particular, attention was given to extract broad trends from the country mappings while simultaneously identifying practical challenges and choices for developing PCD mechanisms related to the EU policy screening and coordination process of Denmark.

## 2. Mechanisms to Promote Policy Coherence for Development

Section 2 considers the broad trends of each of the essential components of systems for promoting PCD, both at the national level, across the six countries, and at the EU level.

### 2.1. Policy Commitments

Political and policy commitments to PCD constitute one of the essential mechanisms for any progress on development proofing, let alone PCD in the broader sense, to be made. Some form of policy commitment was present in all countries studied – three variables regarding recurring crosscutting differences emerged from the research: 1) drivers for the commitment 2) the nature and scope of the commitment and 3) the understanding of the commitment.

#### 2.1.1. Drivers for the commitment

An overarching or specific commitment to Policy Coherence for Development does not arise unless there is pressure or political will, encompassing political leadership, focus and longer-term sponsorship. In the countries studied there are a variety of drivers that enabled PCD to be put and/or kept on the national policy agenda and that influenced the focus on particular thematic policy priorities. The cross cutting drivers which emerge are: (a) political drive and priorities of parties or individual politicians; (b) pressure, advocacy and lobbying by development-focussed civil society, and; (c) international norms set, assessments and commitment to the OECD and EU. Regarding the latter, the main instrument of the OECD for conveying messages on PCD at the national level is the Peer Review process (which includes an assessment of the national PCD system according to the three “building blocks”). The EU conveys such messages through the three EU-wide PCD Reports of 2007, 2009 and 2011, which were based on evidence from each Member State about what progress they are making on PCD collected by means of a questionnaire. These completed questionnaires are not in the public domain so they cannot be searched easily, but it is assumed that this process may have had some effect in prompting action at the national level.

Table 2 provides an illustration of where the drivers for the policy commitments come from in the various countries. It is difficult to ascertain the exact “weight” to be given to the different drivers (political leadership, civil society, multilateral pressure) as the specific reasons for progress on PCD are opaque and differ in the individual country studies. It seems however, that all three are needed to sustain interest and progress on PCD policy commitments, with political leadership and focus playing particularly crucial roles.

**Table 2: Political/Policy Drivers for taking forward PCD**

	<b>National Political leadership</b>	<b>Civil Society</b>	<b>EU</b>	<b>OECD Peer Reviews</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	Yes, since 2012 <sup>13</sup>	2008 Annual report by NGO-federation was entirely dedicated to PCD. 2009 Agreement between the minister and the NGOs. Yes including 2012 commitment for legal process	In 2005 and in 2012/2013 clear reference to EU level as a driver	2005, 2010	-
<b>Finland</b>	Yes All government's programmes after 2007 presented commitments to PCD.	Yes, involved in promoting PCD since 2003, pushed the agenda in 2006-2007.	Finnish Presidency of the EU in 2006	2007, 2012	Independent advisory body (DPC) reporting on PCD from 2003 onwards.
<b>Ireland</b>	Limited	Yes in 2005-2006 (consultations for the White Paper on Irish Aid). More nuanced in recent years.	Implicit drive by debate at EU level	2003, 2009	Academic work by Irish institutions gave further insight.
<b>Germany</b>	Commitment to develop coherent policies / PCD in relation to specific areas (trade, agricultural subsidies), otherwise little political will (recent decline).	Yes, regular monitoring on PCD issues since 2001. Little influence outside BMZ and Parliament.	Reference on the EEAS as an actor providing the framework to dovetail different policy areas more coherently for development (implementation strategy of the Minds for Change Document)	2010	--
<b>Netherlands</b>	Yes originally to get commitment to PCD and now through new Minister	Yes, particularly on specific issues such as taxation, migration, biofuels	National process originally	National process originally – 2011 review had further insight	Influential 2010 report by Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) identified PCD as an underdeveloped instrument for effective development cooperation
<b>Sweden</b>	Yes, strong "whole-of-government" commitment to principles and intent, lesser commitment in day-to-day activities.	Yes, coalition of NGO conducts a bi-annual shadow report following the national PCD report.	National process originally. Clear national positions on several EU PCD issues e.g. the CAP.	Originally a national process 2005, 2009 (2013)	PCD process initiated by a report conducted by a parliamentary committee, who consulted a wide range of national and international academia, NGOs, civil servants etc.
At the <b>European Union</b> level, civil society, European Parliament the biennial EU PCD reports and the advocacy of certain Member States as well as action by the DAC-OECD have all had some influence on PCD policy commitments and priorities.					

<sup>13</sup> A new minister was appointed in early 2013 – it is too early to comment on their commitments to PCD.



Once an overarching priority for PCD has been established, it is often due to individual political parties, politicians or, as in the case of the Netherlands, an active Parliament that ensures that the government maintains the issue on the agenda. The general commitment to PCD in Finland has been sustained across political parties, yet it is the political sponsorship from the top levels of government that has allowed the agenda to further focus on specific thematic areas – the current Prime Minister for instance pushed for the issues of taxation and migration to be included among the policy priority areas for PCD in Finland.

Across countries, the Minister for Development Cooperation or equivalent holds a key position for promoting PCD, with for example recent incumbents of this post in Belgium being essential for progressing on making commitments towards PCD. More recently, the Minister for International Cooperation and Trade in the Netherlands stated that she would be the first Minister to actually make PCD work, referring to previous years of many commitments and discussions with few subsequent results (see also sections 2.2 and 2.3 below). The personal involvement of politicians or political parties can ensure greater political sponsorship yet regular changes of government in EU Member States leave PCD vulnerable to being dropped quickly as a policy priority (as can be observed in changes of government in Germany). The observations on the importance of political factors and political leadership in driving forward PCD policy commitments in this study do reinforce those of previous analyses.<sup>14</sup>

A common feature is the role of the civil society in pushing for general or specific PCD policy commitments. In Ireland, the 2006 White Paper – the first specific standalone commitment on development cooperation policy that laid the groundwork for PCD – was informed by consultations with various stakeholders including civil society. In Belgium, progress on PCD started in 2009 when Minister Charles Michel signed an agreement with the Belgian NGO community. In the Netherlands, civil society consistently promoted and voiced for further progress on PCD. In Sweden, one of the countries often cited as the most advanced on PCD, civil society has nevertheless consistently pushed the government to do better and has not shied away from pointing out shortcomings or areas for further improvement. In Germany, civil society has regularly monitored PCD and sought to influence BMZ, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

In Sweden and the Netherlands, it was originally the national political processes, rather than discussions influenced or encouraged by multilateral commitments, that led to the governmental PCD commitments. It is clear however, that the OECD DAC Peer Review process were an added impetus, for instance for Belgium (from 2005 and 2010) and Ireland (2003 Review), to increase their focus on PCD. In the past, the OECD-DAC Peer Review congratulated the Dutch government on its progress on PCD and more recently the reviews provided additional insight into how PCD should be prioritised. The EU's efforts to promote PCD are enshrined in the European Consensus on Development, among other documents, and past EU Presidencies also seem to have had an impact on Belgium, Finland and Ireland, to endorse and promote PCD at national and EU level – see section 2.3 for more details. Focussed civil society lobbying benefitted from EU Presidencies and used EU commitments to push for progress on PCD.

### **2.1.2. Nature and scope of the commitment**

The nature and scope of PCD commitments varies across the countries studied. Sweden has had a legal commitment since 2003, while Belgium, which had fairly ambiguous commitments in the past, now presents Policy Coherence for Development as one of the six overarching objectives of a new law on development cooperation adopted in March 2013. Ireland presented its commitment to PCD in the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid, which, though not being legally binding, is still a significant and high-level policy document that was widely consulted on by a number of stakeholders. In Finland, PCD is recalled in the

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<sup>14</sup> See European Centre for Development Policy Management (2007).

2011 Government's programme and the Finnish Development Policy Programme of 2012 - both are political documents. In the case of Germany, PCD is part of the 2009 "Coalition Agreement" (albeit rather ambiguously) and appears in the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development's own strategy as well.

A particular aspect of interest is how much commitments to PCD, which by their very nature should extend beyond the ministries of development or foreign affairs, are endorsed and supported by other ministries or departments of government. In the Netherlands, Ireland and Finland, PCD commitments can be found in the strategies of other non-development departments, while in Germany PCD is, for example, reflected in a joint strategy by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV) on food security.

**Table 3: Examples of Policy Commitment(s) specifically to PCD**

	Legal Commitment	All-of-Government	Development Ministry / MFA	Non-Development/MFA Ministry
<b>Belgium</b>	Included in 2013 law on development cooperation	Yes – legal (see 2013 law). The aim is to come to a high-level whole-of-government statement in 2013.	2013 Policy Note for Development Cooperation.	None yet
<b>Finland</b>	None	Yes in the Finnish Government's Programme (2011) <sup>15</sup> .	Yes in the Finland's Development Policy Programme (2012) <sup>16</sup> .	Yes in the Strategy of the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy (2009) <sup>17</sup> , restated in the 'Team Finland' concept (2011) <sup>18</sup> .
<b>Ireland</b>	None	The White Paper on Irish Aid (2006) has a general reference to <i>development policy</i> being the responsibility of the whole government.	Yes in the Department of Foreign Affairs' Strategy (2011) <sup>19</sup> .	Yes in the Department of Agriculture's Strategy (2011) <sup>20</sup> , in the Department of Environment's Strategy (2011) <sup>21</sup> .
<b>Germany</b>	None	No, policy statements mainly at Ministry level.	Yes, noted (ambiguously) in 2009 Coalition Agreement <sup>22</sup> and 2011 BMZ concept 'Minds for Change' <sup>23</sup> .	No specific PCD commitments of other ministries; Joint strategies / papers (e.g. food security <sup>24</sup> ) exist.
<b>Netherlands</b>	None	2011. The Development-dimension of International Public Goods (IPGs): A Practical Agenda.	2010. General Letter on Development Cooperation. New Policy note expected for spring 2013.	Reference to development issues in joint policy notes on Agriculture (incl. CAP), Trade, Migration

<sup>15</sup> See Finnish Government (2011).

<sup>16</sup> See Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (2012).

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Employment and the Economy (2009).

<sup>18</sup> See Prime Minister's Office Finland (2012).

<sup>19</sup> See Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2011)

<sup>20</sup> See Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (2011).

<sup>21</sup> See Department of Environment (2012).

<sup>22</sup> See Coalition CDU, CSU and FDP (2009).

<sup>23</sup> See Federal Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation (2011).

<sup>24</sup> See Bundesministerium für Ernährung Landwirtschaft und Verbraucherschutz and Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (2012).

Sweden	Government bill "Shared Responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development" 2003 <sup>25</sup> .	Yes – legal through the adaption of the 2003 government bill.	Bi-annual reports assessing past PCD efforts and outlining future strategies and priorities. These reports are not legally binding, but rather communications of how the government aims to work with PCD, to be presented to the Parliament.	Yes, e.g. the <i>Trade Policy Declaration</i> (Min. of trade, 2010 <sup>26</sup> ) and the Official Government Report on <i>Circular Migration and Development</i> (2011) <sup>27</sup>
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There is a distinction between a) having a general and explicit PCD statement which is then broken down to thematic areas – or b) not having a general policy statement on PCD but rather some inter-ministerial strategies on a particular issue relevant to development. The first is an all-of-government commitment, which does not then follow-up with more specific thematic commitments. The second weakness would be specific thematic commitments that are concluded in the absence of an overarching clear all-of-government commitment on PCD (as in the case of Germany), and is significantly less systematic or strong. It would seem critical for progress on PCD that a whole-of-government commitment be reflected in the priorities of non-development ministries, yet there was a disappointing amount of evidence of unambiguous commitments to PCD (rather than policy coherence more generally) that emerged from the countries studied.

PCD commitments are increasingly being taken from the general level to specific thematic areas as illustrated in table 4. This trend holds two possible weaknesses for PCD commitments. First, more specific priorities create specific responsibilities, which fall onto various parts of the national government, beyond the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Development, or onto the government to influence the multilateral system (such as EU or WTO). Such prioritisation may also be a tactical move to push PCD onto areas where progress is more likely to be made or political sponsorship can be gathered more readily. Indeed, it seems unrealistic and unmanageable to make tangible progress on PCD commitments in all relevant policy areas of government, as this would require a significant change, adaptation and reformulation of priorities in almost all departments of government. This was one of the reasons why Sweden refocused its original PCD commitments to a smaller set of areas while retaining an all-of-government approach. The EU itself concentrated the number of policy areas from twelve in 2005 to five priority areas in 2009 (see table 4). Monitoring any progress with regard to a generic commitment to PCD would seem to be difficult if the commitment is not complemented by more specific thematic policy priorities.

Examples of thematic priority areas at the national level include Ireland's prioritisation of hunger and nutrition following its Hunger Task Force's report (2008) and subsequent endorsement by the government. Germany also has a specific commitment to PCD in the food security area, including a joint government strategy. Finland has prioritised tax, migration, trade and security as well as food security for which a specific multi-stakeholder platform was created. The Netherlands and Sweden have gone further to define specific areas or priorities for action on PCD within broad thematic policies (within the area of trade or conflict and fragile situations), in order to provide further clarity on what is to be achieved and by whom.

<sup>25</sup> See Government Offices of Sweden (2003).

<sup>26</sup> See Björling (2010).

<sup>27</sup> See Statens Offentliga utredningar (2011)

**Table 4: Recent specific thematic policy focus areas of PCD**

	Year of commitment	Thematic Areas <sup>28</sup>	Commitment made in
<b>Belgium</b>	2012	Debt recovery, social and ecological aspects of trade agreements, financial sector. Step-by-step involvement in five priority areas, as stipulated in EU PCD Work Programme 2010-2013.	2013 Policy Note for Development Cooperation
<b>Finland</b>	2012	Food security, trade, tax, migration and security.	2012 Development Policy Programme
<b>Germany</b>	2009	No clearly identified focus areas for PCD at the national level. Reform of global trade system (WTO rules) and agricultural subsidies recurrently noted.	Coalition Agreement 2009 Minds for Change
<b>Ireland</b>	2008	Hunger and nutrition	[NB: the thematic areas was proposed by the Hunger Task Force's Report <sup>29</sup> subsequently endorsed by the Government].
<b>Netherlands</b>	2011	The 5 EU priority areas for PCD, noted as GPGs: trade and finance, climate change, food security, migration, security.	2011. The Development-dimension of International Public Goods (IPGs): A Practical Agenda.
<b>Sweden</b>	2008	Six priority areas: Oppression, Economic exclusion, migration flows, climate change and environmental impact, conflict and fragile situations, communicable diseases and other health threats (including sub themes under each of these)	Government Communication, Global Challenges – our responsibility, Govt. Comm. 2007/08:89 <sup>30</sup>

There has been a specific overarching EU policy commitment to policy coherence in reference to development since the Treaty of Maastricht updated in Article of the Treaty of Lisbon 2009. The EU also committed to 12 policy areas - Trade, Environment, Climate Change, Security, Agriculture, Fisheries, Social Dimension of Globalization, Employment and Decent work, Migration, Research and Innovation, Information Society, Transport and Energy in 2005. In 2009 Council conclusions the EU noted that while the 12 policy areas remained, the PCD work programme should focus on "five priority issues", "trade and finance, climate change, food security, migration and security". These were again endorsed along with the overall commitments to PCD in "Council conclusions" in the Foreign Affairs Council in May 2012.<sup>31</sup>

While there are specific priority area commitments to PCD, made by the EU and MS collectively (see table 4), some countries studied also have commitments at the national level to pursue certain PCD policy issues at the EU level (table 5). Some of these are directly aligned to the PCD five priority issues agreed upon at the EU level while other address different or more specific themes. The different prioritisation at the national and EU level indicates that national priorities for PCD are set within the country rather than solely influenced by the priority areas of the EU PCD work programme. Specific commitments could either refer to areas that the government wants to focus on or reform for other reasons than strictly PCD (e.g. because reform of the Common Agricultural Policy is already a government priority), or could reflect different assessments on where most progress is deemed feasible. It is interesting to note that although action in terms of PCD was seen as important at the EU level in all the countries studied, they continue to prioritise the national level for PCD. This may be because it is easier to make progress, sustain national interest and political support for PCD through nationally focussed stakeholders than through pursuing PCD solely at the EU level.

<sup>28</sup> Countries can be expected to also have committed to the five EU PCD priority areas as per the 14 May 2012 Council Conclusions.

<sup>29</sup> See Hunger Task Force (2008).

<sup>30</sup> See Government Offices of Sweden (2008).

<sup>31</sup> See Council of the European Union (2012b) in reference to EU document 9317/12.

**Table 5: Examples of specific EU level commitments made at country level**

Country	Year of commitment	Thematic Areas	Wording	Commitment made in	PCD or Policy coherence generally
<b>Belgium</b>	2012	Tax Havens, Illegal Capital Flows. In time: EU PCD Work Program	"(...) To make the Belgian position in International Financial Institutions as coherent as possible with the objectives of the Belgian Development Cooperation"	2013 Policy Note	PCD
<b>Finland (1)</b>	2012	Agriculture, fisheries, environment and trade	-	Finland's 2012 Development Policy	PCD
<b>Finland (2)</b>	2008	Trade	"The inclusion of development concerns in global and EU trade agreement"	Finland's Aid for Trade Action Plan 2008-2011	Both
<b>Germany</b>	-	Not clearly articulated EU commitment in official policy documents	-	-	-
<b>Ireland</b>	2012	Common Agricultural Policy	"CAP post 2013 should respect EU's PCD commitments"	Department of Environment (2012) <sup>32</sup>	PCD
<b>Netherlands (1)</b>	2010	Trade, Energy, Agriculture and Climate Action	"Coherent approach in international fora and at EU level"	General Letter on Development Cooperation 2010.	Some ambiguity but seem to be related to PCD
<b>Netherlands (2)</b>	2010	Trade and Finance, Climate Food Security, Migration, Peace and Security (EU PCD work programme)	"In its selection of International Public Goods, the government seconds the EU's selection of priority areas for PCD"	The Development dimension of International Public Goods (IPGs): A Practical Agenda. (2011)	PCD
<b>Sweden</b>	2003	-	"Sweden should actively promote better coherence in EU policies relating to developing countries and the integration of development aspects into all EU policy areas. Sweden should seek to ensure that international commitments to equitable and sustainable global development are effectively monitored and evaluated by the EU."	The Swedish position on EU PCD policy as formulated in the 2003 Government Bill. Gov. Bill 2003 <sup>33</sup>	PCD

<sup>32</sup> See Department of Environment (2012).<sup>33</sup> See Regeringskansliet (2003).

### 2.1.3. The understanding of the commitments

In a number of countries it was found to be difficult to get a clear understanding of the PCD commitments enshrined in policy. A key area of confusion is the link between the need for policy coherence per se, which generally is accepted as a principle of effective national governance, and policy coherence for development in particular. In almost all countries studied, the commitment to PCD sits alongside other governments' commitments to policy coherence in general terms or in other thematic areas or for other purposes.

Some ambiguity around this seems to be wilful rather than unintentional, in the sense that general policy coherence is easier to promote and more easily manifests in a whole-of-government agreement and buy-in as no government wants to stand accused of being inefficient. In that sense, policy coherence is generally more readily accepted across government as a principle of effective public administration than policy coherence for development, which is often perceived as primarily benefiting one policy area only. This remains so despite the fact that promoting PCD often leads to supporting the longer-term objectives in the interest of all, while pursuing objectives incoherent with development can also harm individual EU Member States (e.g. the lack of reform to the Common Agricultural Policy will hamper the longer-term competitiveness of the European agricultural sector; failure to overhaul the failing Common Fisheries Policy will not reduce overfishing and endanger the EU's fishing communities in the long run). Yet the policy arguments about the benefits of PCD to other policy areas do not seem to be clearly conveyed given the acceptance of the principles of and modalities for working in PCD within other government departments.

For example, despite the drive by the EU and OECD since 2005, Belgium reduced its commitment to PCD to focus more on coordination amongst development actors and other donor organisations, including the EU, in 2009. While there have been various commitments to coherence in Belgium, it was not until 2013 that the Belgium Minister's policy note actually used the wording of 'policy coherence for development', referring explicitly to the OECD definition. This interpretation of coherence was also part of the Irish original commitment to PCD, which limited PCD to either the work of the Foreign Affairs Department on development issues or the Ministry for Development being more coherent within their own actions.

The issue has been further complicated in case the purpose of the overall development policy is ambiguous as well. For example, recent German and Swedish policy documents noted that development policy should to some extent benefit their countries as well. In the broad area of food security and agriculture, recent policy initiatives of Finland, the Netherlands and Ireland noted that outcomes should be mutually beneficial rather than exclusively for developing countries. While this does raise questions on the need for PCD not be a zero-sum game, whereby the benefits to the OECD countries in these thematic area always have a negative impact on PCD (or vice versa), this approach makes progress on PCD more complicated and increases the need for close monitoring. On the other hand, a policy commitment that is seen as "mutually beneficial" to different policy areas may be more readily accepted by other government departments that do not have development as their primary objective.

In part, differences in understanding of the concept of PCD may be due to the rather technocratic nature of the prevalent definitions of (and accepted practices for) PCD. As noted in Box 1, the concept of PCD consists of a variety of components, from a) ensuring that national non-development policies do not contradict national development policy objectives, nor have a negative impact on developing countries to b) seeking synergies between development policy and other policy areas, as well as the identification and rectification of policy incoherencies. The policy statements for PCD made in the countries studied predominantly concern themselves with the former: ensuring that non-development policy areas support or do not obstruct development policy objectives ("do no harm" or development proofing). Whereas this holds particularly for whole-of-government commitments (e.g. in Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden),

inter-ministerial strategies, are concentrated more on the later component of seeking synergies between particular policy areas (such as is common in Finland and Germany).

Another example of confusion occurs in the championing of greater policy coherence in addressing conflict and crises as promoting PCD. Several countries, including Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium, have all taken measures to better coordinate their response to fragile and conflict prone states in 'all of government' approaches. The genesis and driver for this policy does not necessarily come from a desire to promote better development alone, albeit this could be an impact. There is a need to further interrogate whether policy coherence per se as an all-of-government commitment is always positive for development. Continued vigilance and policy clarity are thus required to safeguard the 'D' of development for policy coherence.

#### **2.1.4. Summary analysis on policy commitments**

There are obvious differences between rhetorical policy commitments and actual progress on PCD, yet specific and thematic political and policy commitments to PCD remain a crucial starting point for effectively promoting PCD both at the national and EU level. The drivers for progress on PCD policy commitments are political leadership, international norms and civil society, which, at different times in the six countries studied, have all prompted progress on PCD. Developing commitments towards PCD as well as the requisite mechanisms for living up to these commitments is not something that can be readily achieved during the average four-year lifespan of one government. Fluctuations in the level of political support to make or follow through policy commitments are evident in all countries. Political leadership to take on PCD, political sponsorship of thematic areas and political drive to focus action beyond broad commitments are crucial.

The engagement of parts of government beyond those specifically concerned with development to endorse PCD continues to be a particular challenge. While one solution is to ensure continued political sponsorship at the Prime Ministerial or cabinet level, clear examples of sustained engagement were not evident. To make any progress on PCD, a clear unambiguous over-arching policy statement needs to be made (and restated and refined over time). In addition, strategically and tactically defining a small number of thematic focus areas is important, particularly if these have resonance with the political culture (hunger in the case of Ireland) or have direct political sponsorship from politicians (taxation and migration in the case of Finland).

Furthermore, without the continued engagement of civil society, bolstered by the promotion of international best practices and the drive by developments at the OECD and EU level, there seems to be little or limited progress made in adopting clear policy commitments to PCD. In fact, even in the Netherlands and Sweden – countries where PCD has been long established as a principle and supported by the continued engagement of politicians and civil society - OECD and EU involvement helps to maintain a technical momentum on PCD. Yet, all policy commitments explored in this section have to be effectively linked to the other parts of the PCD system in order to achieve progress. In isolation they amount to little more than paper exercises with a questionable real 'developmental' impact.

## 2.2. Institutional mechanisms and arrangements for promoting PCD

Beyond securing political and policy commitments for promoting PCD at the national and international level (EU, OECD, multilateral), another key challenge to consider is how to operationalize such commitments in order for PCD to become part of the day-to-day practice of government. This requires not only widespread awareness and a shared understanding of what PCD means (both as a concept and in terms of concrete policy dossiers), but also agreed institutional and administrative arrangements through which PCD is promoted.

While it is common for government administrations to collaborate on and coordinate policies and positions, that is not to say that policies are in agreement with all the various ministries' different objectives. Arrangements for promoting PCD should ensure that (a) the coherence of government policies affecting developing countries is strengthened and, ultimately, not harmful towards or ideally supportive of development objectives, and (b) incoherencies in policies (negatively) affecting developing countries are identified and addressed. The former is usually addressed through such arrangements prior (ex-ante) to the adoption and practical application of a policy through the formulation and coordination of policies. The latter are usually addressed when such a policy is already in practice (ex-post). PCD can therefore be promoted through arrangements at any stage in the policy design, coordination and implementation cycle.

The OECD has set out several lessons for making policy coordination mechanisms more effective at promoting PCD (OECD 2009, p.32):

- Ensure that informal working practices support effective communication between ministries;
- Establish formal mechanisms at sufficiently high levels of government for inter-ministerial co-ordination and policy arbitration, ensuring that mandates and responsibilities are clear and fully involve ministries beyond development and foreign affairs;
- Encourage and mandate the development agency to play a pro-active role in discussions about policy co-ordination.

Annex I provides simplified graphical representations of the institutional structures and linkages to promote PCD and to coordinate EU policies for some of the countries studied.<sup>34</sup>

### 2.2.1. Institutional arrangements specifically mandated to promote PCD

Whereas the countries studied perceive PCD primarily as a whole-of-government commitment, the manner in which ex-ante PCD is formally operationalized varies widely from country to country. The determinants of this are not just commitment to PCD but very much the political culture and nature of public administration within different countries. Of the countries studied, the Netherlands and Sweden mark the two opposite ends of the spectrum – Box 2 provides a brief description.

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<sup>34</sup> Annex I currently only contains the mappings for Belgium, Germany, Finland, Ireland and Sweden. No visual mapping has been undertaken for the Netherlands, as its structures for promoting PCD are at present possibly subject to change.



**Box 2: Formalised institutional arrangements for promoting PCD in the Netherlands and Sweden*****The Netherlands until 2012 – designated, proactive PCD unit***

The Department for Effectiveness and Coherence (DEC) was for over ten years tasked with promoting PCD throughout the Dutch domestic and international policy-making processes. Situated under the Director-General for International Cooperation, the DEC was composed of five full-time staff members and promoted PCD by (1) screening Dutch contributions to and positions on EU policy dossiers, (2) proactively engaging with other departments and ministries on PCD policy dossiers according to the EU PCD Work Programme, and (3) promoting discussion on PCD issues with EU Member States and at the EU and OECD level. The DEC pursued clear actions and objectives of the Dutch government for promoting PCD in support of selected global public goods. Due to a reorganisation of the ministry, the DEC was discontinued in December 2012, and the ministry's capacity to work on PCD issues has been diminished.

***Sweden – government-wide mandate***

All departments of the Swedish government are responsible for ensuring their policy area is in compliance with the whole of government responsibility for PCD, as noted in the Policy for Global Development (PGD). The government office furthermore outlines a set of goals and results indicators for implementing the PGD on which each ministry has to report bi-annually to Parliament. The main responsibility for monitoring and supporting compliance with the PGD rest with a specific unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Department for Development Cooperation. This unit drafts guidelines for policy formulation, operational planning and provides research and analysis on global and thematic development issues. It was also asked to support the government departments in drafting their annual PCD reports.

For all countries studied, with the exception of Belgium<sup>35</sup> and Sweden<sup>36</sup>, commitments and efforts to promote PCD are put into practice by either 1) individual ministry departments or 2) inter-ministerial structures mandated to raise awareness of PCD issues and facilitate the exchange of information. For the former, the obvious place for such a unit or department would be in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' development policy division or equivalent, in practice situated at a technical level within the directorate or division for development policy and cooperation. This arrangement allows for synergies within the department. Furthermore, having a dedicated unit for PCD has the potential to concentrate and direct leadership to drive PCD commitments, whereas this may otherwise be diffuse – hence why such a unit was set up following a revision of the Policy for Global Development (PGD) also in the Swedish case.

A formalised arrangement with specific departments or structures mandated to promote PCD (e.g. in the Netherlands and Germany) might be the basis for mainstreaming PCD and/or consistently screening policies. There are however several important caveats to this. First, the effectiveness of such a unit remains to a large degree constrained by its terms of reference, which are in most cases limited to raising awareness of PCD issues. In the early 2000s the Netherlands tried to compensate for this by recruiting external experts when it found that the necessary skills were not present in the ministry. Second, such a unit may be perceived as 'taking care of' PCD for the rest of the government, reducing government-wide ownership and motivation for promoting or mainstreaming PCD. This is what led some to question the long-term relevance of the specialised DEC unit in the Netherlands. Effectively, an arrangement concentrated around a single department mandated to promote PCD risks isolating the awareness, motivation and practice of PCD, both within the MFA and from other line ministries.

<sup>35</sup> Belgium is in the process of deciding on the manner in which PCD mechanisms will be organized – initial decisions are expected during an inter-ministerial conference to take place sometime in 2013.

<sup>36</sup> The unit in the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs mandated to support the implementation of PCD across the government was relocated in 2011, and is currently composed of one part-time staff member.

Given that there is a perception among non-development ministries and administrations that PCD implies a subordination of their respective policy area to the objectives of the development policy, the authority of a single department driving PCD across the government may also be increasingly called into question, particularly if it is also mandated to screen policies for PCD issues government-wide. Whereas there is no clear instance of this happening among the six countries studied, the aforementioned perception was recurrently cited during interviews.

Attitudes and approaches of the PCD-mandated units or departments vary. The Netherlands' DEC has often been likened to an internal PCD-advocacy bureau in proactively seeking engagement on policy dossiers and processes, while on the other hand the Department for Coherence and Cooperation in the Federal Government of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has been described as largely 'reactive' to other ministries' policy processes. That is not to say the latter cannot have a positive effect on policy formulation processes: the department managed to insert a section on development cooperation in the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology's 2010 Raw Materials Strategy, and recurring notes on the need for coherence with Germany's development policy.

A second form of arrangement for promoting PCD identified from the country cases are structures bringing together various ministries, whether it is in inter-ministerial policy coordination networks, committees or working groups.<sup>37</sup> Among the six country case studies, two types of inter-ministerial arrangements with PCD mandates can be distinguished. First, there are structures ensuring high-level coordination of broad policy areas (e.g. development policy, foreign affairs), ordinarily chaired at a political level by a State Secretary for Foreign Affairs or equivalent. These networks are composed of senior officials from relevant ministries, notably the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and meet two or three times a year - their meetings are prepared by civil servants from the development department of the MFA.

These networks have primarily an advisory or consultative role and are therefore able to give policy recommendations to Ministers, Ministry departments or the Cabinet, they are however not mandated to make policy decisions. Both Finland's inter-ministerial network on PCD and Ireland's Inter-Departmental Committee on Development (IDCD) play valuable awareness-raising and information exchange functions to promote PCD across government ministries. However, they do not actively assess policies, and meet too infrequently to systematically scrutinise policy dossiers – these forums are therefore not those in which the most relevant policy trade-offs for PCD occur.

Second, Sweden has developed inter-ministerial arrangements in which specific policy dossiers, such as international trade, migration and food security, are discussed in formal working groups complemented by informal working groups. The working groups are comprised of senior civil servants, supported by their departments, and are coordinated by the MFA – as dossiers are still treated at a technical level there is scope for PCD-relevant policy trade-offs to be made. The remaining countries (Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands) have no particular inter-ministerial arrangements or structures for promoting PCD. Table 6 provides an overview.

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<sup>37</sup> These structures are, however, no substitute for a whole-of-government policy statement or commitment clarifying the understanding of PCD.

**Table 6: Existing institutional mechanisms for promoting PCD**

Country	Year instituted	Name	Situated	Mandate for PCD
Belgium	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Finland	2008	Inter-ministerial network on PCD	Inter-ministerial, political level.	Awareness raising and exchange of information on PCD issues.
Germany	2011	Department for Cooperation and Coherence in the Federal Government	Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, technical level.	Mainstream PCD across the Federal Government.
Ireland	2007	Inter-Department Committee on Development (IDCD)	Inter-ministerial, political level.	Strengthen coherence in the governments approach to development.
The Netherlands	2002 (until 2012)	Department for Evaluation and Coherence (DEC)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate for Development Cooperation, technical level.	Screen Dutch positions on EU policies; proactively engage with specific policy dossiers.
Sweden	2003	Unit for Development Cooperation Governance (UD-USTYR)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation, technical level.	Coordinating government efforts towards the PGD.

Irrespective of the precise institutional arrangements chosen to promote PCD, the capacity of such structures to do so depends on the political commitment to the PCD agenda. With reference to the previous section, a clear, government-wide mandate for PCD, such as in Sweden, or a consistent push by Parliament (as in the case of the Netherlands) or other external stakeholders (such as Finland's Development Policy Committee) allows for momentum of the agenda to be retained. Awareness raising efforts of the PCD-mandated structures are therefore not in themselves enough. To the extent that the other countries actively promoted PCD, it was done so on the basis of individual priority policy dossiers or on a case-by-case basis (once specific PCD issues were highlighted by civil society, for instance).

Development policy and cooperation as a whole, and PCD in particular, may however not always be relatively the highest priority on the national agenda. Changes of government in both Germany and Finland have led to significant losses of capacity for PCD structures due to reorganisations or staff not being replaced. For these two countries, as for Sweden, the departments charged with promoting PCD have for some time also been staffed with only one or two people. Furthermore, staff rotation programmes in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Netherlands have made it difficult to develop and retain capacity for promoting PCD, or indeed to specialise on particular policy dossiers in which to do so.<sup>38</sup> This has led to poor institutional memory and lack of specialised knowledge on the part of the MFAs.<sup>39</sup>

### 2.2.2. National policy coordination and coherence mechanisms

Beyond such PCD-mandated structures, the country's system and process of inter-ministerial policy consultation and coordination is where relevant discussion and trade-offs for PCD are most commonly made. Whereas the purpose of these mechanisms is similar in each of the countries – e.g. to arrive at a coordinated and 'coherent' government position on any particular policy by involving all relevant ministries

<sup>38</sup> It is unclear whether this is due to the low political value attached to promoting PCD, or whether the resources needed to do so are underestimated.

<sup>39</sup> Consequently, the poor institutional memory on PCD allows line ministry officials to 'play dumb', forcing the MFA to enter into debates on what PCD means when in fact the concept is understood. However, given that these ministries also have some turnover, in many cases line ministry officials are genuinely unaware of the concept.

at some stage of the policy formulation process – their degree of formality varies significantly, as noted in Box 3. Any new mechanism specifically mandated to promote PCD would have to align to the governance system, culture and administrative practices if it is to stand any chance of making a difference.

**Box 3: Policy coordination and coherence mechanisms in Germany and Finland**

***Germany – constitutionally mandated consensus-building***

The German Constitution and Joint Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries provide a comprehensive legal framework for policy coordination to ensure that the Federal Government speaks and acts consistently. All proposals for Cabinet decisions affecting the mandate of more than one Federal Ministry undergo consultation with each of the ministries involved through Cabinet and/or inter-ministerial committees. Most compromises or trade-offs are made during consultation among departments in different ministries pursuing independent, often competing objectives. Policy coordination is geared towards reaching consensus in the short-run, rather than developing consistent long-term coordination between various ministries / departments. If consensus is not reached, higher levels of the hierarchy are involved. Though no formal PCD screening is in place, and no Federal Ministry can veto a proposal, it represents a solid structure for promoting policy coherence.

***Finland – systematic yet informal policy coordination***

The Finnish system of government reflects a collective and consensual style of politics, which involves systematic formal and informal coordination across the government. Informal or semi-formal inter-ministerial networks and groups provide the main administrative and institutional mechanism with decision-making powers to raise, discuss and address policy coherence issues and address the issue in other fora, such as the EU coordination mechanisms. The relevant department in the 'lead' ministry on a particular policy dossier coordinates the Finnish position supported by a number of informal coordination fora (such as inter-ministerial working groups). Finnish officials can also informally contact different departments to coordinate policy dossiers, which offers opportunities to promote PCD. Furthermore, an informal inter-ministerial network on PCD meets twice a year at political level (Under-Secretaries), and has thus far mostly been a forum for awareness raising and exchange of information.

The Netherlands, Sweden and Germany have all made substantive progress in putting in place comprehensive, formalised policy coordination–mechanisms - these countries' systems are praised as they place the emphasis on screening policies for incoherence ex-ante (see OECD, 2009). It should be recognised that PCD is a systemic issue, which is strongly conditioned by the country's approach to governance (Concord Denmark 2012). Integrating PCD into (or modelling mechanisms for promoting PCD on) existing policy coordination processes (including EU policy coordination, see below) enables PCD to become part of the administrative culture of the government.

While some formality in policy coordination procedures is necessary, informal working arrangements prove to be equally critical - informal or semi-formal coordination arrangements are prevalent across the Finnish and Irish systems of governance, and have proven critical for developing a 'culture of coherence' where one is not mandated (as in the case of Germany or the Netherlands). Informal or ad-hoc inter-ministerial working groups have supported awareness raising on PCD issues and for disagreements on particular policy dossiers to be addressed ahead of formal meetings or decisions. These arrangements span horizontally across or between line ministries, and occur more readily at the technical or middle layers of government, thereby facilitating steady communication between senior civil servant or technical / administrative desk officer level.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> However, leaving the recognition and promotion of PCD to a large degree dependant upon interpersonal ties feeding into policy coordination processes imposes certain limits on the extent to which a PCD can consistently be promoted. The PCD agenda in effect comes to rely on key individuals' political commitment to the agenda overall or the particular issue at hand, requiring political leaders or senior civil servants to champion the PCD agenda and engage in the difficult trade-off discussions at a political or technical level. Indeed, when senior civil servants such as Director-

At the technical level in line ministry departments, few civil servants are entirely unaware of the effect of domestic policies on developing countries – for example few civil servants in the German Federal ministries of trade or agriculture, for instance, would deny that ‘their’ policies strongly affect the developing world. However, there is little interest for line ministries to invest in quantifying these effects and taking them into consideration in subsequent policy formulation. This is due to the fact that only a limited number of policy decisions are made on the basis of technical considerations alone – instead, it is widely accepted across the countries studied that domestic political and economic interests are more strongly represented than the interests to support development.

Development policy and cooperation are currently not near the top of the political agenda for Belgium, Finland, Germany or Ireland, nor is there any guarantee that any future development minister or state secretary will push for PCD. Furthermore, there is insufficient sustained pressure from civil society and the electorate to raise the profile of PCD – champions for PCD therefore appear in short supply. As such, the cases of Sweden and the Netherlands demonstrate that political leadership for PCD should not concentrate only on thematic or content issues, but focus also on on-going institutional construction efforts to establish the promotion of PCD as part of the national political and administrative culture. Nonetheless, no truly sustainable solutions were found among the countries studied to overcome the negative impact of the loss of political momentum for PCD on the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms.

### **2.2.3. Additional mechanisms and arrangements for promoting PCD**

In addition to the above, there are individual institutional mechanisms and arrangements that can effectively facilitate the awareness and promotion of PCD:

- Inter-ministerial consultations at a technical level bring together experts who concentrate on one field from a national and/or sectorial perspective. Capacity gaps, differing skill sets and divergent interests are prevalent – PCD requires civil servants to confront these issues by venturing into unfamiliar technical areas of policy. Civil servants in Finland and Belgium have voiced this as a concern for the extent to which development interests are heard and understood in inter-departmental coordination. In order to facilitate inter-departmental discussion and raise awareness of PCD issues, the Netherlands and Germany have piloted staff exchanges from the PCD-mandated department or ministry to other ministries to anchor PCD more broadly across the government. Civil servants have expressed that these exchanges are positive for increasing awareness of PCD and exchanging information between ministries.
- Institutionalised ex-ante impact assessments (as such currently in place in the Netherlands and the European Commission) provide a practical addition to informal working arrangements by asking departments involved to consider the development impact of a policy proposal. Whereas this can over time develop awareness of and a ‘reflex’ for PCD, screening and impact assessments of policy proposals cannot be effective without tangible evidence on the impact of non-development policies on developing countries. This will be explored further below and in section (2.4).

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Generals do not want to promote PCD in a particular policy dossier once it has escalated from the technical level in the civil service, there is only limited use for making strong efforts at lower levels.

- Belgium is currently considering implementing an impact assessment comparable to the one in place for promoting policy coherence for sustainable development. This process follows first a 'quick scan' to check for the likely impact on sustainability of policy proposals, based on a number of economic, social and environmental indicators.<sup>41</sup> If the effects assessed are considerable, the dossier is scrutinised by external experts whose report is presented alongside the proposal to the Council of Ministers. In practice however, most policy dossiers only undergo a quick scan, and policy proposals with a significant impact on sustainable development can still be accepted by the Council of Ministers.
- Specific units or departments within the MFA, or inter-institutional committees exist in each country to formulate and coordinate the country's position in international dialogues and forums with clear implications for developing countries, notably environment and climate change, peace and security and trade. These structures often have more capacity than PCD-mandated units or departments to coordinate positions, and to feed back international standards and agreements to relevant line ministries. For instance, the Department for Development Policy of the Finnish MFA houses a Unit for International Environment Policy, coordinating environment policy positions for international forums and organisations with the Ministry for the Environment and other units in the Department for Development Policy.
- Parliaments are currently underutilised across the countries studied, even if they show some involvement, as is the case in the Netherlands, Sweden and Finland, where the parliaments receive an annual report on the government's progress on PCD. However, it requires the interest of a particular parliamentarian, or of a particular policy dossier with PCD implications before the concept is brought to bear in parliament (often ex-post). In countries with designated ministry structures for promoting PCD in government, these are not reflected in parliament, for instance through the appointment of a standing rapporteur on PCD.
- In recent years the idea was raised of having a formalised complaints mechanism, perhaps through an Ombudsman, where individuals or organisations could raise policy incoherencies affecting developing countries. Whereas the idea has been widely promoted by civil society<sup>42</sup> (particularly in the context of the CAP) and the European Parliament<sup>43</sup>, this study found no instance of such a mechanism actually being put into place.
- For assessments of the incoherence or (likely) impact of policies, both ex-ante and ex-post, there is a case to be made for the systematic involvement of non-governmental and civil society organisations. Not only do they contribute to raising public awareness of PCD issues, but NGOs and CSOs often have networks in the field that to a certain extent overlap with those of the country's development agency and foreign representation. Nonetheless, outside of Finland's Development Policy Committee (DPC), there are no structures for promoting PCD in which these actors are systematically involved and even in the DPC their involvement is ex-post. It is a common feature of the countries studied that NGOs and CSOs face similar capacity issues in generating (technical) capacity and knowledge to effectively promote PCD (see section 2.4). Furthermore, NGOs and CSOs are in some cases (notably

<sup>41</sup> Currently, only one of the indicators used to measure Belgian engagement for sustainable development directly refers to development cooperation, referencing the 0.7% commitment to ODA. A proposal for new indicators as part of the national long-term sustainable development strategy proposes to add the Commitment to Development Index as another indicator, potentially incorporating PCD promotion in a parallel system in Belgium.

<sup>42</sup> See <http://tinyurl.com/c92rshg>,

[http://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/EU\\_120206\\_CONCORD\\_REACTION\\_to\\_the\\_2011\\_EU\\_report\\_on\\_Policy\\_Coherence\\_for\\_Development\\_-\\_FINAL.PDF](http://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/EU_120206_CONCORD_REACTION_to_the_2011_EU_report_on_Policy_Coherence_for_Development_-_FINAL.PDF),

[http://aprodev.eu/files/Trade/aprodev%20cap%20policy%20brief\\_monitoring%20complaint%20mechanism\\_final\\_i.pdf](http://aprodev.eu/files/Trade/aprodev%20cap%20policy%20brief_monitoring%20complaint%20mechanism_final_i.pdf),

<sup>43</sup> See [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/deve/pr/804/804536/804536en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/deve/pr/804/804536/804536en.pdf)

in Germany) redirected to the MFA or development agency, rather than to other government departments, an approach that limits the scope for discussions on policy trade-offs.

#### **2.2.4. Conclusions on national institutional mechanisms**

The countries studied have put the emphasis on developing ex-ante awareness raising and policy screening arrangements to promote PCD in policy-making, most commonly by assigning a particular department or unit in the Ministry of Foreign affairs with this mandate. Several limitations restrict these structures' potential for promoting PCD, including varying awareness and understanding of the concept of PCD, limited resources, capacity and skill gaps, high turnover and diverging interests. Furthermore, the country systems still respond to PCD issues on a case-by-case basis. Even in systemic approaches to promoting PCD, such as in Sweden, the lack of shared understanding of the concept and focused leaderships remain considerable obstacles to effective policy coordination.

While national mechanisms for policy formulation and coordination are generally conducive to the promotion and mainstreaming of PCD, political will and leadership for PCD are necessary drivers to operationalize the commitments made in this area. Concentrating on priority issues is an effective way of exploring and manifesting new working arrangements in favour of PCD – however, such endeavours risk remaining one-off exercises if no shared understanding of (and commitment to) PCD or unambiguous divisions of roles and responsibilities emerge from the process.

### **2.3. EU policy coordination mechanisms for promoting PCD**

As is the case of the coordination systems for national policies, all countries studied have comprehensive EU policy coordination systems in place. For PCD, these could serve several purposes: they can 1) promote the coherence and positive development impact of EU policies, 2) promote the concept of PCD in EU forums or 3) implement EU-level PCD commitments at national level. While these objectives overlap to a large degree, they are treated in turn below.

#### **2.3.1. Promoting PCD of EU policies**

All countries studied have a similar structure for EU policy coordination, in which one single Ministry or department is in charge of coordinating EU affairs. However, for each EU policy dossier a 'lead' ministry is designated to take charge of the content, checking and coordinating of the dossier with other relevant ministries and departments. Among those usually consulted are the Prime Minister's Office or equivalent, the budget department of the Ministry of Finance, the relevant EU Affairs department and any ministry with competence on (part of) the policy dossier.

All ministries are therefore involved in the broader EU policy coordination. This process is often more formalised when it concerns topics on which the EU has particular competence (notably trade, agricultural and fisheries policy). This is particularly the case for the Belgian Directorate-General for European Affairs and Coordination (DGE), which is composed of units coordinating the policy formulation process for each of the areas of EU exclusive competence. In Belgium, Germany and Finland, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or EU Affairs department furthermore has a prominent role in the policy coordination process.

Other than in the Netherlands, there are at present no clear institutionalised linkages between mechanisms and arrangements for promoting PCD and the EU policy coordination system. EU policy coordination mechanisms in all cases predate PCD mechanisms, and have in some cases (the Netherlands, Germany, Ireland) been part of the day-to-day business of governance for over 20 years. As such, arrangements or mechanisms for promoting PCD currently exist in parallel to it. In the case of Ireland and Finland, inter-ministerial structures for promoting PCD are not directly engaged in the EU policy coordination process

though do however, in part mirror the EU policy coordination structures, both in composition and thematic focus. Particularly in the case of Finland, the inter-ministerial network on PCD is considering concentrating on EU policy dossiers, and PCD concerns are addressed in EU policy coordination sub-committees through the representation of the MFA. As these forums are composed of senior civil servants from the various departments collectively involved in EU policy coordination, presumably a degree of information exchange on EU affairs also takes place in these countries given the informal governance arrangements.

An obvious exception to the above is the case of the Netherlands, where efforts have been made to closely align mechanisms for promoting PCD with existing EU policy coordination processes as noted in Box 3. This stems from the Netherlands' early commitment to the concept of PCD and support of the Treaty of Maastricht. In addition to the DEC, the 'lead ministry' scrutinising the policy proposal is tasked with undertaking an impact assessment of the proposal in several areas by means of a standard set of questions, including on PCD. These are then sent to Parliament and inform government's position in Brussels.<sup>44</sup>

The involvement of parliaments in EU policy coordination is significantly higher in the EU policy coordination process than in PCD mechanisms throughout the six countries. Although parliament does not have the power to veto country positions on EU policy dossiers in all cases (e.g. in Finland, Ireland and Belgium), its position must be heard and represented at EU level. Parliament therefore provides an entry point for either linking with the PCD mechanisms, or for raising awareness of PCD issues by NGOs and CSOs.

Furthermore, the lack of institutionalised linkages between the parallel systems does not mean that PCD cannot be promoted through EU or national policy coordination arrangements. For instance, collaboration between the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV) and the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) takes place around regular inter-ministerial dialogue, the result of which feeds into Germany's long-held position of abolishing agricultural export subsidies as part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This position is, in turn, formulated and promoted in EU forums through the Ministry of Economy and Technology's linkages with the German Permanent Representation in Brussels.

Areas of exclusive EU competence, such as agriculture and trade, are priority policy areas for promoting PCD nationally, and can offer scope for developing new arrangements and mechanisms for policy coordination and coherence. For instance, Finland has recently undertaken to pilot the OECD Policy Framework for PCD tool (OECD 2012), as detailed below.

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<sup>44</sup> For more information on the Netherlands' process for promoting PCD in EU policies, see Engel et. al. (2009).



**Box 4: Finland's pilot of the OECD Policy Framework for PCD tool**

In June 2012, the inter-ministerial high-level working group on PCD (chaired by the Under-Secretary of State for Development Policy) launched a pilot to assess Finnish and EU policies impacting food security in developing countries. The pilot process will concentrate on assessing and further developing national institutional mechanisms to promote PCD in EU policies in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, environment and trade, and include a small case-study at country level.

A steering group, chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, coordinates the pilot with representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry, Environment, Social Affairs and Health, Economy and Employment, as well as research institutions and NGOs<sup>45</sup>. While the MFA coordinates the work, individual sections of the analysis are assigned to those participants of the steering group with the most relevant expertise. Early indications are that the pilot process has been successful in bringing different actors together, and has generated an overview of the state of PCD in various policy areas at national and EU level.

EU policy coordination cycles however, tend to move at a faster pace than national ones. This presents a considerable obstacle for undertaking an effective or timely check of a EU policy dossier's potential effect on developing countries. In the case of Finland, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs chairs or has a presence in many of the (over 30) EU sub-committees monitoring their work in relation to Finnish positions on particular issues – however, only one civil servant in the MFA is effectively responsible for promoting the PCD content of such dossiers. Moreover, the MFA is not represented in some sub-committees with clear PCD implications, e.g. the taxation sub-committee.

Involvement of the relevant Ministry or department is no guarantee for an effective PCD-check, however. For instance, the Belgian Directorate General for Development Cooperation is often invited to contribute to the Directorate General for European Affairs' coordination meetings and discussions on policy dossiers, which affect developing countries, though due to capacity constraints it has no weight in the DGE's assessment of the impacts of EU policies.

### **2.3.2. Promoting PCD at EU level and implementing EU-level commitments towards PCD**

Alongside the promotion of PCD in EU policies, certain countries, particularly the Netherlands and Sweden, strongly advocate for PCD – in EU forums - they seek to ensure that the EC and other EU Member States fulfil commitments embodied in EU Council Conclusions on PCD (Council of the EU 2007, 2009 and 2012) and strengthen ownership and awareness of PCD among EU institutions and Member States.

Sweden had been vocal in criticising the lack of ownership of PCD outside the EU's Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation (DEVCO). In response, Sweden drove the development of the PCD Work Programme 2010-2013 (EC 2010) during the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2009, heavily inspired by the Swedish institutional arrangements for promoting PCD, which concentrate on cross-departmental EU processes in designating thematic areas, aiming to mobilise political will, identify objectives and indicators and improve dialogue among the Member States on these policy areas.

Aside from Sweden, Finland also saw a strong surge in political interest for PCD at both the national and EU level when it assumed the rotating Presidency in 2006. The other countries studied have not pushed the agenda very strongly during their most recent respective Presidencies. While each EU Presidency is expected to conduct a mapping of the items on the EU Council agenda with a potential impact on developing countries, the countries studied all concentrated on PCD issues matching their national

<sup>45</sup> For further details on the process, see Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (2012b).

priorities. Indeed, Finland has arguably made little progress in promoting PCD in EU policies in recent years (EC 2009, 2011) despite its strong presence in 2006-2007. This lack of progress in promoting PCD in EU policies is also present in the other countries studied.

Despite the fact that all countries studied have units or departments responsible for raising awareness of PCD, and that each country has a specific department or section within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for dealing with EU development policy and cooperation<sup>46</sup>, awareness of commitments made to PCD at the EU level remains low in other line ministries in the countries. As such, EU-level PCD commitments appear to have little influence on the PCD-relevant processes at the country level.

### 2.3.3. Conclusions on EU policy mechanisms to promote PCD

Aside from the Netherlands, the other countries in the sample have no institutionalised linkages between mechanisms and arrangements for promoting PCD and the EU policy coordination system. Whereas the PCD mechanisms in all countries in part mirror the EU policy coordination structures, in both composition and thematic focus, the real linkages depend on the degree to which a) the 'lead ministry' in charge of assessing the content of EU policy proposals is mandated and willing to involve other ministries or departments, and b) the extent of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or relevant PCD-mandated department or unit is represented at both the technical and political level in coordinating EU policies. Regarding the latter, capacity constraints and assigned competences place a ceiling on the degree to which PCD mechanisms can integrate into the EU policy coordination process. Nevertheless, other ministries may promote PCD in their assigned EU policy dossiers, particularly in the case of the CAP where various linkages between the MFA and the Ministry of Agriculture have generally existed in practice for some time.

At the EU level, assuming the Presidency of the Council of the EU can provide some impetus for supporting the EU agenda and work programme for PCD. Conversely, awareness of commitments made to PCD at the EU level remains low in other line ministries in the countries. This indicates that PCD, even at the level of EU policies, remains very much a matter of national political will.

In addition to the political commitment, promoting PCD in EU policies or PCD at EU level requires considerable coordination capacity and technical knowledge to coalesce in short policy coordination cycles - few countries currently effectively achieve this. Indeed, countries may be seen to hide behind commitments to promote PCD in EU policies or at EU level, noting that outcomes depend on the Member States collectively on which one individual country has only limited influence, without making or realising PCD commitments at national level. Small EU Member States could justify this by reasoning that their national policies only have limited effect on developing countries, so they concentrate on the EU level. In effect, the German government has been reproached for this, given that BMZ's commitments to pursuing PCD in practice hardly extend beyond reducing agricultural export subsidies in the CAP and ensuring fair negotiations in the WTO.

## 2.4. Knowledge Input and Assessment Mechanisms

Without clear, consistent, and relevant knowledge input and impact assessment of national and EU policies, commitments and mechanisms to promote Policy Coherence for Development are not evidence-based, increasing the chances that they remain paper exercises. This severely undermines both the capacity to learn and adapt policies or wider accountability to commitments given. Assessing with a reasonable degree of certainty what has been the exact impact of the lack of policy coherence in cooperation with a

<sup>46</sup> Only in Germany is this somewhat of an oddity, as compared to the other countries studied it has a separate Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) which also has a unit that deals with EU development policy.

developing country or in a particular policy area is a rather difficult and complex task, thus requiring a specific base of knowledge.<sup>47</sup>

Despite this area being noted as one of the three most important PCD mechanisms or building blocks by the OECD, as well as in previous studies and evaluations, the area of knowledge input and assessment has to date been given the least attention or investment in all of the countries studied. This is the case even amongst those countries cited as global leaders in the field of PCD, such as the Netherlands or Sweden. This lack of investment in evidence and research has been consistently noted as one of the most significant factors (along with unsustainable political commitment) hampering the effectiveness of PCD.<sup>48</sup>

#### **2.4.1. Mainstreaming PCD in country knowledge input systems**

Rather than developing specific mechanisms for developing knowledge input and assessment for PCD, a common approach noted in the countries studied has been to utilise existing formal or quasi-autonomous knowledge systems in the development cooperation sphere to provide this sort of analysis (see table 6). On a certain level, this “mainstreaming” of PCD within these knowledge systems is to be welcomed, as it has produced some insightful work on PCD. These systems are furthermore connected to the policy making process, and can as such provide insight and evidence directly into corrective measures. Yet even these investments have not been consistent or consummate with the original policy commitments to PCD.

Nevertheless, a wide range of analysis has been produced, such as specifically commissioned academic analysis (Germany, Ireland) and policy reports produced by quasi-internal bodies (Finland) or through the main evaluation services (Netherlands) (see table 6). National bodies of policy research beyond the development and foreign affairs field rarely look at PCD. For example in the Netherlands with the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) report which noted amongst other aspects on PCD that, “[N]ot much progress has yet been made as regards the practical implementation of policy coherence [for development]. At the same time, the possibilities are enormous.”<sup>49</sup> All in all, the mainstreaming of PCD in country knowledge input systems remains scattered at best.

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<sup>47</sup> See for example, King, Michael et al. (2012).

<sup>48</sup> King, Michael et al. (2012).

<sup>49</sup> See Lieshout van. P, R. Went and M. Kremer (2010). P. 189.

**Table 7: Examples of inclusion of PCD or PCD related themes in internal or semi-internal overarching policy systems (national level) since 2008**

	<b>Knowledge Entity/System(s)</b>	<b>Systematic PCD focus</b>	<b>Specific PCD activities</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	Service Special Evaluation (DBE)	No	None yet
<b>Finland</b>	Development Policy Committee (DPC)	Its mandate covers enhancing PCD, among other topics.	PCD is addressed in the regular reports on Finland's development policy.
<b>Germany</b>	Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)	Conceptual research undertaken and following general debates, but little focus on concrete PCD topics.	Commissioned by BMZ to write a high-profile evaluation report on the concept of PCD but this was in 2004. <sup>50</sup>
<b>Ireland</b>	Advisory Board of Irish Aid <sup>51</sup>	No specific mandate but has looked at PCD	Commissioned and financed studies on PCD.
<b>Netherlands (1)</b>	Independent Inspection Development Cooperation and Policy Evaluation (IOB)	No	Coverage in major 2008 Africa Strategy evaluation, Study commissioned on how to evaluate coherence in 2012 <sup>52</sup>
<b>Netherlands (2)</b>	Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR)	No but has looked at PCD in seminal Report on Development Cooperation: Less pretension, more ambition	Formulated recommendations on how to mainstream PCD throughout the line-ministries in report
<b>Sweden</b>	Office of Public Management, Swedish Agency for Administrative Development, 2011 <sup>53</sup>	No	Evaluation of Swedish development cooperation, very limited references to PGU/PCD.

#### 2.4.2. Knowledge and the connections to policy making process

The lack of specific PCD knowledge systems should however not be interpreted as a sign that there has been no significant work undertaken to build PCD knowledge. Although largely *ad hoc* in the countries studied, there are examples of government departments (usually MFAs) utilising reports and studies to promote PCD by drawing on existing knowledge systems (see table 7). A consistent challenge however, with many of the excellent *ad hoc* reports that have undertaken, is the extent to which they genuinely feed in and influence official policy commitments or connect directly into the institutional mechanisms at either the bilateral or multilateral level. This connection between evidence and change seems to have been difficult to make in all the countries studied. Furthermore, there is a common desire to acquire knowledge inputs to provide insight into developing effective PCD systems and, more recently, on assessing impact and measuring PCD, including at the partner country level.

<sup>50</sup> See Ashoff, G. (2005).

<sup>51</sup> This body ceased to exist in 2011 and its mandate was split between the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group (IAEAG) for the advisory activities and Irish Aid's Policy, Planning and Evaluation Unit for the research activities.

<sup>52</sup> See Keijzer, N., and J. Oppewal (2012).

<sup>53</sup> See Statskontoret (2011).

**Table 8: Examples of officially commissioned studies designed to provide a knowledge input for PCD**

Country's commissioning/ holding	PCD Systems	Methodological Reports on Indicators and Measurements	Thematic Focus (bilateral)	Thematic focus (multilateral)	Developing Country Focus
<b>Belgium</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Finland</b>	Development Policy Committee's Reports	Pilot study for OECD tool on food security (expected in 2013)	-	-	-
<b>Germany</b>	-	Measuring PCD Report, 2012 <sup>54</sup>	DIE study in 2005 <sup>55</sup>	DIE study in 2005 <sup>56</sup>	-
<b>Ireland</b>	Policy Coherence for Development: The State of Play in Ireland. A Scoping Report (2009) <sup>57</sup>	Policy Coherence for Development: Indicators for Ireland (2012) <sup>58</sup>	Agriculture <sup>59</sup> (2007)	-	-
<b>Netherlands</b>	External Evaluation of the Netherlands Policy Coherence for Development Unit 2011	Measuring PCD Report, 2012 <sup>60</sup>	-	Background studies on the Common Agricultural Policy, the Common Fisheries Policy, and the General System of Preferences, 2011	Pilot country studies of PCD impact (Ghana, Bangladesh, Mali) due later in 2013.
<b>Sweden</b>	MFA: Govt/ comm on PGU	Bi-annual governmental communication report on PGU	6 global challenges	-	-

Between 2004 and 2008 a variety of studies were commissioned under the auspices of The group of Heads of the EU Member States' development cooperation evaluation services and the European Commission (EUHES) specifically looking at evaluating Coordination, Complementarity and Coherence. See, <<http://www.three-cs.net/>>

It is clear that, within the studies conducted, little knowledge has actually been generated on (how to assess) policies' real impact on developing countries or indeed measuring national performance on PCD. Despite the undoubted methodological challenges, this knowledge gap has meant that PCD remains on shaky evidence-based foundations, relying mostly on *ex-ante* (before the fact) inputs from policy mechanisms (see section 2.2). Ireland has probably gone the furthest in terms of supporting the developing indicators for Irish and EU policies (see box 5). Yet this research, along with the other reports assessed, could not find evidence of a direct causal link between these types of *ad hoc* knowledge products and a formal change in a particular thematic policy, originating outside of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Development department. Given the small number of studies designed with the specific purpose of obtaining the buy-in across government and feeding directly into policy-making systems, this is perhaps an unsurprising observation.

<sup>54</sup> See King, M., N. Keijzer, E. Spierings and A. Matthews (2012).

<sup>55</sup> See Ashoff, G. (2005).

<sup>56</sup> See Ashoff, G. (2005).

<sup>57</sup> See Barry, F. (2009).

<sup>58</sup> See King, M. (2012).

<sup>59</sup> See Matthews, A., H. Chaplin, T. Giblin and M. Mraz (2007).

<sup>60</sup> See King, M., N. Keijzer, E. Spierings and A. Matthews (2012).

**Box 5: The Advisory Board for Irish Aid and PCD research**

In 2007 the Advisory Board for Irish Aid commissioned a four-year research project to Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin on PCD in Ireland, which resulted among others in the 2012 report “Policy Coherence for Development: Indicators for Ireland”. The report represents the first effort to develop a portfolio of national PCD indicators (including outcomes, policy outputs, policy inputs, and partner country strength) for Irish and EU policies in the areas of international trade, agriculture, fisheries, migration, environment, finance and enterprise, security and defence and development aid. Even though the study was commissioned and discussed both in the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development and the Parliament, Ireland’s inter-ministerial committee for promoting PCD) it has so far not been integrated into policy formulation and coordination processes. Additional resources and capacity are needed to operationalize the indicators and assess Ireland’s performance on PCD on an (bi-)annual basis. However, there are concerns regarding the willingness of government departments to adopt the indicators in their work.

While it would be naive to conclude that all that is missing is ‘evidence’ of the negative or potential impact to change policies, how knowledge connects to the other PCD mechanisms and parts of government that can use them to promote change remains a significant and pressing concern for the advancement of PCD. Particularly since one of the implications of this knowledge gap is that the baseline for PCD – development proofing – cannot effectively be supported with evidence.

**2.4.3. The role of civil society in knowledge inputs**

Civil society has not only conducted principled advocacy but has also been a provider of analysis and knowledge on PCD. While one could question whether the advocacy agenda of NGOs strongly influences the findings of such studies, civil society inputs have served a very useful purpose in raising wider public and policy awareness of PCD related issues, as well as filling a gap left by the lack of independent research, or research specifically linked to policy processes. These knowledge inputs go beyond advocacy pieces in most cases, and have in all countries not only assisted in putting PCD on the agenda but also in advocating and articulating how the issue can be taken forward. Beyond NGOs, the media could also provide a role in bringing credible evidence of policy incoherence. On issues such as taxation and arms sales, the media in the past has provided knowledge in the public domain that has raised more general political awareness.

**Table 9: A selection of influential civil society reports related to PCD issues**

	Civil society report	Influential on
<b>Belgium</b>	11.11.11. (2009). Belgian Development Policy in 2008, Brussel. several impact studies	Set PCD on the political agenda. In general, 11.11.11.-work on PCD formed considerable input for the All-Stakeholder Meeting on PCD in May 2012, fed into the 2013 policy note and are closely involved in working groups on the set up of the PCD-architecture.
<b>Finland</b>	KEHYS' Policy Coherence for Development "Call for Coherence" (2006)	Finnish Presidency of the EU and producing the first written commitment to PCD in the 2007 Development Policy Programme.
<b>Germany</b>	Gemeinsame Konferenz Kirche und Entwicklung (GKKE)	Annual PCD reports spark some debate in ministries and the Parliament.
<b>Ireland</b>	Christian Aid: Tax of life: how tax dodging undermines Irish support to poor nations (May 2010)	Incentivised further studies and NGOs' advocacy work on taxation and led to a debate on taxation's impact on developing countries and PCD-related issues in the Parliament's Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Evert Vermeer Stichting (Fair Politics Netherlands and Europe), ViceVersa and The Broker.	General momentum on PCD, raising awareness on the impact of incoherencies with a negative impact on developing countries.
<b>Sweden</b>	PGU/PCD Barometern bi-annually	Post-2003 bi-annual CONCORD Sweden reports (which serve as the model as well as provided initial funding for the CONCORD Europe spotlight reports).

#### 2.4.4. EU and OECD level knowledge assessment and inputs

In addition to what has been done at the national level, all the countries concerned have also provided inputs to the bi-annual reporting on Policy Coherence for Development at the EU level. However, this process has its weaknesses and is at present largely an internal process rather than one nourished by external analysis or robust independent assessment of the inputs of the EU Member States. The lack of progress in setting targets and measuring progress has been noted as an "Achilles heel" of EU-level efforts to promote PCD, although the same could be said for most countries.<sup>61</sup> The European Commission has also commissioned its own PCD related studies on specific topics but again the ability of these to feed into genuine policy change is questionable<sup>62</sup>. In addition, NGOs have focussed on addressing PCD impact on the EU level.<sup>63</sup>

On the cross cutting knowledge issues, the OECD constitutes, through its Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) Peer Review system, one of the only external accountability reminders, monitoring progress on PCD at the national level. Indeed the OECD has consistently developed and championed PCD through the development of knowledge (including on best practices) that have been widely appreciated and often used by the countries studied.<sup>64</sup> That is not to say the EU has not undertaken comparable efforts, as for instance in the case of the 2007 evaluation of the EU institutions' and Member States' mechanisms for promoting PCD (ECDPM, ICEI and PARTICIP GmbH. 2007), which involved all participating countries' evaluation departments and the European Commission's Joint Evaluation Unit for External Relations.

<sup>61</sup> See Keijzer, N. (2012).

<sup>62</sup> Most recently, in 2013 the European Commission's DG for Development and Cooperation undertook a study: 'Assessing the impact of biofuels production on developing countries from the point of view of Policy Coherence for Development yet this is not a public document'. In the 2009 Staff Working Document the European Commission on Policy Coherence for Development produced a summary of analysis of impact studies it commissioned on the MDGs – see European Commission (2009).

<sup>63</sup> See for example the work of Fair Politics which has conducted three "impact studies" on EU policies in particular countries - [http://www.fairpolitics.nl/europa/index\\_kopie](http://www.fairpolitics.nl/europa/index_kopie).

<sup>64</sup> OECD publications in this realm are significant – a listing of many of them can be found at <http://www.oecd.org/pcd>

Involving national or official evaluation departments indeed has more weight than the more ad hoc attempts to generate knowledge on PCD and, presumably, the impact of policies.

At present, there is an increased interest at the OECD to develop more focused impact assessments for PCD at the level of recipient countries, particularly in specific policy areas such as food security. While such work is still in its initial stages, a focus on country level impact in specific areas has generally been lacking. Working collectively through the OECD may offer some promise to countries wishing to partner with others to share costs and hopefully have a greater impact. Finland is currently conducting a pilot study on food security making use of the OECD tool for Policy Coherence for Development to analyse the impact of Finnish and EU policies on food security in developing countries. In the Netherlands, an inventory of available information on policy incoherencies was requested to the delegations in 2011, in preparation for a pilot study assessing the impact of Dutch, EU and domestic policies on its partner countries. Based on these results, three partner countries were selected and a conceptual and methodological approach was developed to guide the actual impact research. Results are yet to be presented to parliament however.

**Box 6: Developing countries knowledge input and accountability mechanisms**

In addition to what is done at the level of countries, the EU or the OECD there is the question of how developing countries can engage in a policy dialogue on policy incoherence. There seem to be no real examples of this or clear mechanisms of where this can feed in to any parts of the PCD systems of the countries looked at. This constitutes a significant structural weaknesses and accountability gap. While there are some multilateral vehicles such as Article 12 of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement between the European Union (and its member-states) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of countries these have been utilised only very rarely.

Despite such initial attempts to map the impact of policy incoherencies at partner country-level, impact assessment for knowledge-based, development-friendly policy making is by far the least developed building block. Investment in impact assessment remains a top priority for those advancing PCD in the coming years.

**2.4.5. Conclusion on knowledge input and knowledge assessment systems**

There seems to be a remarkable accountability gap given the significant under-investment in knowledge input and knowledge assessment systems – this means national PCD systems have to rely on internal *ex ante* impact-assessments, rather than on *ex post* evidence. Whereas one could conclude that the countries studied fare rather well in comparison to other OECD members in terms of their investment in knowledge input and knowledge assessment, the lack of investment in this part of the PCD system was clearly identified as a problem in a more comprehensive evaluation of country systems in 2007,<sup>65</sup> and there seems to have been little progress since then – with only recent nascent work on impact assessments seeming to break new ground.

Furthermore, while a number of (OECD) studies are being undertaken to analyse the potential impact of the lack of PCD (rather than the impact of PCD systems and processes in place), and others are in the pipeline, the question of how these will feed into the PCD system remains an additional concern. The failure to develop a system providing knowledge inputs that feed into the policy processes does undermine Policy Coherence for Development, particularly in an era of “Results Based Management” whereby showing the actual impact or lack thereof is an increasingly common public accountability request.

<sup>65</sup> See, Mackie, James. et al. 2007.



## 3. Key dilemmas for advancing PCD

### 3.1. Introduction

In this report the policy statements, institutional mechanisms and knowledge-inputs and –assessment practices to promote PCD of six EU countries have been assessed. Whereas there have been some notable changes in the PCD landscape in Europe, many of the key lessons and conclusions of a more comprehensive 2007 study conducted by ECDPM, ICIE and Particip (endorsed by EU Member States' evaluation departments) remain valid. Despite the fact that the countries studied represent some of the more advanced OECD DAC countries in terms of the development of their approach to Policy Coherence for Development, progress on advancing PCD has been limited. Systematic, meaningful and sustained progress for PCD would appear difficult to achieve, with even the 'front-runners' of the PCD field facing challenges. The potential benefits of effective PCD however remain unquestioned.

The below sections present an overview of the broad trends on the recent developments in the promotion of PCD for the six country cases. From these broad trends, key dilemmas and challenges for advancing PCD are derived and laid alongside possible or employed responses to address them.

### 3.2. Commitment to PCD – conflicting interests or seeking synergies

All countries have in recent years made, restated or refined policy commitments to PCD, which vary to a great degree in their nature (specificity, priorities noted, implementation). Critical drivers for such commitments were political leadership, pressure from civil society and international commitments. For commitment to PCD to be sustained, long-term and sufficiently high-level political support is required in order to anchor this commitment across government. **The key dilemma for countries is how to develop and sustain the level of political interest in and support for PCD**, firstly to put a commitment to PCD on the agenda, and secondly to make those commitments meaningful for promoting PCD at both the national and the EU level.

In this regard, the questions raised on promoting PCD over the long-term in the 2007 study still stand: *“How does one, for instance, sustain political support for PCD over a period of a couple of decades? What can be done to build multi-party consensus in parliament to ensure continuing commitment to PCD when government changes? What are the implications for forward planning of work on promoting PCD? What level of impact can one hope to achieve over different shorter and longer periods of time? Can one envisage a PCD promotion strategy that evolves over time through various phases?”* (ECDPM, ICIE, Particip 2007, p.100) These are questions PCD champions must ask themselves once they set out to develop national PCD systems.

**Table 10: Key dilemmas and possible responses regarding policy commitments towards PCD**

Key dilemmas	Possible responses
1) Sustaining political interest, will and support for PCD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise the limits of what can be achieved on PCD without political sponsorship, focus and leadership;</li> <li>• Invite and respond to sustained pressure from champions for PCD in civil society and cross-party support in parliament: this in turn implies that any sustained campaign to promote PCD must be able to count on widespread public support over time.</li> </ul>
2) Making PCD commitments at national level meaningful.	<p>Policy commitments towards PCD should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearly expressed priority policy areas or objectives to achieve through PCD, preferably those which have national political resonance or enjoying political sponsorship;</li> <li>• clear indications on how the commitment should be implemented in terms of assigned responsibilities, new arrangements and mechanisms;</li> <li>• clear indications on how progress both for developing the national PCD system and whether national policies are coherent with development objectives should be measured, monitored and evaluated (see section 3.5 on knowledge inputs);</li> <li>• provisions for regular review of the commitment, in part in order to include arising policy priorities.</li> </ul>
3) Making PCD commitments for EU policies and at EU level meaningful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include commitments for PCD towards EU policies and at EU level in PCD policy statements;</li> <li>• Engage in dialogue with other EU capitals in addition to the EU PCD Work Programme to build common support for priority policy areas for PCD best pursued at EU level.</li> <li>• Look to promote PCD in general EU policy coherence dialogue, outside the EU PCD Work Programme.</li> </ul>
4) Ensuring that there is a common understanding and a shared ownership of what is meant by 'development' and a broad knowledge of development policy objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt and promote an unambiguous, all-of-government understanding of development linked to all of government policies on development with clear objectives;</li> <li>• Actively consult all ministries whose mandate may affect developing countries in the policy consultation process.</li> </ul>
5) Ensuring that there is a common understanding and a shared ownership both of the concept of PCD and the PCD policy commitments in place beyond those mandated to promote it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt and promote joint or inter-ministerial policy commitments and strategies for the medium- to long-term that seek synergies between interlinked policy areas;</li> <li>• Seek out high-level political sponsorship on specific thematic issues to create momentum for PCD;</li> <li>• Integrate PCD into commitments and practices that aim to ensure policy coherence, clearly noting the distinction.</li> </ul>

The impression was gained that the various countries have taken lessons from the EU and OECD discussions on PCD, and in response made more pragmatic commitments and efforts towards achieving PCD either by concentrating on a limited number of priority policy areas, or by making practical, procedural commitments to PCD. Nonetheless, political leadership, sponsorship and focus have waned in recent years for all countries.

The reality remains that development cooperation remains lower on the political agenda than issues clearly framed as direct economic or political interest, particularly in the recent years of financial crisis. However, the need for clear, unambiguous policy statements for PCD has not diminished, nor has the need to restate and refine such commitments over time – both require a measure of sustained political pressure. As in the 2007 study, there was limited evidence of parliaments or civil society exerting strong, continuous political pressure on government to make (new) commitments to PCD and subsequently implement and maintain them. This is not to say that civil society hasn't been important as a champion of PCD. In some instances among the countries studied, even development policy commitments and objectives are to some degree ambiguous such as Germany.

As such, understanding or recognition of the concept of PCD promoted in the various policy commitments does not often extend very far beyond a small group of core PCD promoters (usually those civil servants or NGO staff actively working on the issue). Even in the case where explicit policy statements or legal commitments exist, there remains (perhaps wilful) confusion about the difference between 'policy coherence' and PCD. This may in part be due to the term 'PCD' itself, which can be perceived as overly technical and broad concept to be of concretely integrated in policy statements.

### 3.3. Institutional arrangements and mechanisms for PCD

The 2007 study described the PCD mechanisms developed at that time as 'experimental', noting that they could be characterised by newness, lack of clarity on the impact sought and the various roles of actors involved, limited discussion on the need for monitoring and evaluation, and little long-term vision and planning on how to promote PCD. Whereas the newness of some of the countries' systems has worn off, the other characteristics identified still very much apply to the six countries studied.

Many of the issues affecting the potential of specific arrangements and mechanisms for promoting PCD already arise in policy statements and commitments towards PCD. Notably, most commitments made in the countries studied lack both provisions for implementation including clearly assigned responsibilities and clearly stated objectives in terms of achieving PCD. The effectiveness of such mechanisms are never constant, instead they match the ebb and flow of government and political support. Whereas there is generally a degree of compromise involved in national policy consultation and coordination processes, with different policy areas seeking to be 'more coherent than others', the balance of such compromise has swung more towards more narrowly defined national political and economic interests in recent years. Institutional mechanisms have therefore become constrained by the lack of political support and also the lack of knowledge-inputs.

**Table 11: Key dilemmas and possible responses regarding institutional arrangements and mechanisms for promoting PCD**

Key dilemmas	Possible responses
1) Ensuring that PCD is seen as the responsibility of all or various cross-cutting government departments and involved both the political and the technical layers of government (thus creating a 'culture of coherence').	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve all cross-cutting offices of government (including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Ministers Office, inter-ministerial structures and permanent geographic/thematic desks) into the PCD mechanisms;</li> <li>• Mandate relevant units or departments to do more than awareness-raising on the concept of PCD;</li> <li>• Integrated PCD checks into the inter-ministerial policy consultation process as well as the policy escalation process in case of disagreement.</li> </ul>
2) Integrating (new) PCD arrangements and mechanisms into existing governance arrangements, and balancing formal with informal arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and adapt PCD arrangements and mechanisms as part of existing policy formulation, consultation and coordination procedures;</li> <li>• Promote mutually reinforcing formal and informal arrangements.</li> </ul>
3) Ensuring that components and actors in the PCD arrangements and mechanisms have the resources, capacity and skills necessary to effectively promote PCD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curb the high turnover and rotation of staff in PCD-mandated units and departments in order to promote the development of capacity, technical expertise and institutional memory;</li> <li>• Implement cross-government PCD-targeted staff exchange and training programmes to raise awareness and develop capacities;</li> <li>• Regularly monitor and externally evaluate the effectiveness of PCD-mandated units or departments in addition to the OECD DAC Peer Reviews.</li> </ul>
4) Ensuring that PCD is an equal-status priority rather than a matter of compromise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to bring together a variety of stakeholders through PCD mechanisms (both at different levels in government, across different policy areas and outside government).</li> </ul>

Most cases, with the exception of Sweden, have modelled and developed their PCD mechanisms on existing governance arrangements. All country cases noted the mutually reinforcing interaction between formal and informal linkages, with policy coordination processes being driven more by one of the two with a clear role for the other. The exact 'shape' of the PCD systems and mechanisms studied depends on both the administrative / governance culture and on the existing arrangement of government. Regarding the latter, permanent geographic or thematic desks in the various ministries are the veins of policy coordination, but are rarely involved in PCD mechanisms.

The results of this assessment re-confirm the finding of the 2007 study that one single institutional mechanism driving the PCD agenda is insufficient – notably, a 2009 evaluation of the Netherlands’ unit for promoting PCD (the Department for Effectiveness and Coherence or DEC) revealed a number of constraints to such an arrangement. Chief among these is the lack of opportunities to retain and develop skills and capacities due to insufficient resources and regular staff rotation within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Continued discussion at OECD and EU level on efforts to promote PCD should thus not leave much space for governments to underestimate the effort and resources necessary to promote PCD at a national level.

### 3.4. Promoting PCD in EU policies – at national or at EU level

All countries studied have to some degree included references towards achieving PCD in EU policies and/or promoting PCD at EU level in their national policy commitments for PCD. Indeed, all countries participate in the EU’s Work Programme for PCD and have established systems for coordinating national positions on EU policies, including development policy. At present however, very few linkages have been put in place to link existing institutional arrangements for EU coordination with mechanisms for promoting PCD. The key dilemma is therefore how to effectively link the well-established and powerful systems for EU policy coherence at the national level with those for PCD (and vice-versa).

**Table 12: Key dilemmas in promoting PCD in EU policies and at EU level**

Key dilemmas	Possible responses
1) Establishing and strengthening linkages between existing PCD arrangements and mechanisms and the national EU policy coordination mechanisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively involve PCD-mandated structures in the EU policy coordination process;</li> <li>• Mirror PCD arrangements and mechanisms to the EU policy coordination by developing expertise on areas of EU competence (such as the CAP).</li> <li>• See to ensure EU policy coordination mechanisms have PCD “on the agenda” or relevant joint sessions with PCD mechanisms</li> </ul>
2) Ensuring capacity for relevant departments and units to promote PCD in EU policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in training programmes, awareness raising and priority setting for personnel involved in relevant departments;</li> <li>• Undertake staff exchanges between civil servants from the development department and those in departments coordinating EU policy dossiers (CAP, trade, fisheries etc.).</li> </ul>
3) Assuming an active role in promoting PCD at the EU level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote dialogue on best practice in promoting PCD in EU policies at the national level;</li> <li>• Seek alternative alliances beyond official EU structures with other EU member-states (and other key promoters in the European Parliament and civil society) to push progress on PCD on thematic policy issues</li> </ul>

In part, this lack of integration is due to the fact that PCD-mandated departments and units do not have sufficient resources or capacity to integrate and assert themselves in the faster-paced EU policy coordination cycles. Promoting PCD in EU policies or PCD at EU level requires considerable coordination capacity and technical knowledge to coalesce in short policy coordination cycles - few countries currently effectively achieve this.

There is a need to ensure that pursuit of PCD in EU policies or at EU level does not imply abandoning PCD at the national level. In promoting PCD at EU level (e.g. during the term of a Rotating Presidency or in the context of the PCD Work Programme), countries are most active in those areas that have national resonance or are national priority issues for PCD. Efforts to promote PCD at EU level are hence equally, if not more effectively fulfilled by promoting PCD in the national EU policy coordination system and in bilateral relations with other EU Member States. Countries could consider the EU as a knowledge-sharing platform for best practice in development cooperation, specifically for achieving PCD at EU level through national commitments and mechanisms. Yet relegating the EU level to knowledge-sharing would be a missed opportunity and one of rather low ambition, also as this knowledge sharing can equally be done at the OECD level.

### 3.5. Missing evidence and accountability drivers for promoting PCD – knowledge-inputs and -assessment

Knowledge-inputs and –assessment are the critical component that should drive both the political commitment and institutional practice for PCD by rendering an otherwise abstract concept more concrete and tangible. Whereas knowledge inputs in particular can demonstrate the value and impact of PCD, it is still by far the least developed aspect of the PCD systems of the six countries studied.

While some effort has gone towards research on PCD, these are often limited to studying and promoting the concept at an abstract or policy-making level, e.g. describing what PCD is, how it could theoretically benefit developing countries, and pointing towards glaring policy incoherencies, discussions on mechanisms. These studies commonly utilise existing knowledge systems in the (national) development cooperation sphere to derive insights. Although mainstreaming PCD within these systems is to be welcomed, countries are still to seriously invest in developing and integrating methodologies and practices for gathering information at the level of developing countries on how national policies affect development outcomes.

**Table 13: Key dilemmas in developing knowledge-inputs and –assessment mechanisms**

Key dilemmas	Possible responses
1) Ensuring that PCD issues are systematically assessed throughout policy coordination processes rather than treated on an ad-hoc or case-by-case basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate PCD assessment into policy consultations and existing policy impact assessment and evaluation systems, as well as knowledge management systems, used throughout the relevant ministries and departments.</li> </ul>
2) Developing evidence of national and international policies and policy incoherencies on developing countries or development objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in assessing impact at the country level or on themes – joining international initiatives (such as those sponsored by the OECD);</li> <li>Positively respond to efforts of civil society and independent organisations to research the development impact of policies;</li> <li>Support critical, independent research on PCD and the impact of national policies on developing countries.</li> </ul>
3) When can it be said if development proofing / policy coherence for development has been achieved? What constitutes an appropriate amount of effort and outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise that development proofing / achievement of PCD requires the three elements and is beyond merely knowledge input alone. For government's and the EU it means having narratives that illustrate credibly how the three mechanisms have delivered change and safeguards for PCD generally and in specific cases. For civil society, media, and knowledge input mechanisms (academia / think tanks / accountability bodies) role is to interrogate how credible and effective these are generally, and in specific cases.</li> </ul>

It remains unclear, however, to what extent research presently undertaken feeds into and influences the policy and practice for PCD. Ideally, such research and evidence would feed directly into the national policy coordination and assessment process. As such, it is critical that any effort to devise clear indicators linked to PCD objectives are derived explicitly from the national development policy framework rather than only from international guidelines in order for national ownership of the concept and practice of PCD to ultimately be increased.

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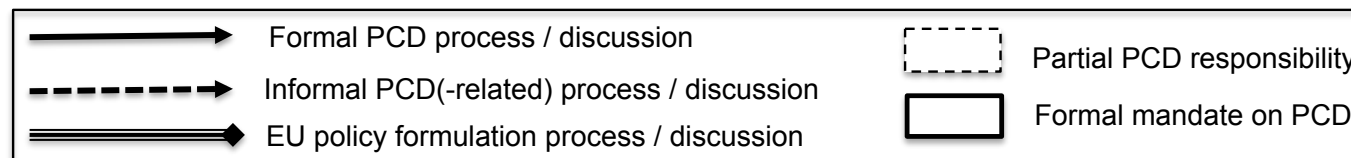
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## Annex I – Graphical mapping of national PCD and EU policy coordination systems

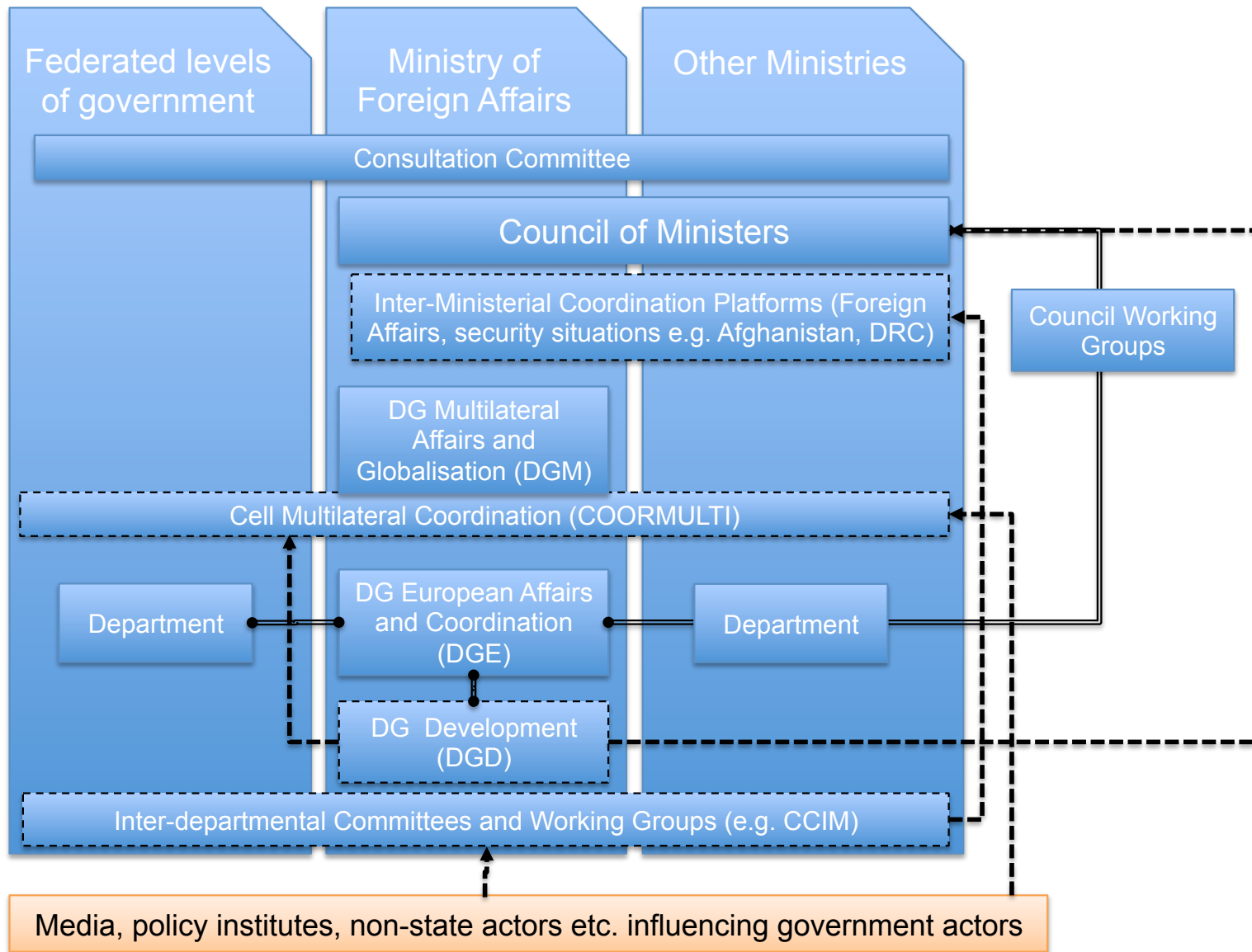
Please note that the following graphical mappings have been drawn up by ECDPM based on our research and do not constitute officially produced, sanctioned or agreed documents by the countries themselves. These mappings are meant to give a schematic overview of the various actors, organisations and institutional structures which make up the six respective national systems for promoting PCD and coordinating EU policies, and the linkages between them.

Importantly, the solid lines and arrows indicate structures and processes with a formal mandate for promoting PCD, e.g. a dialogue between departments or a PCD report issued from one structure to another. The dashed lines and arrows, meanwhile, indicate structures and processes which may have implications for PCD or link to the formal processes, but which are not explicitly mandated as such. Please consult the legend below.

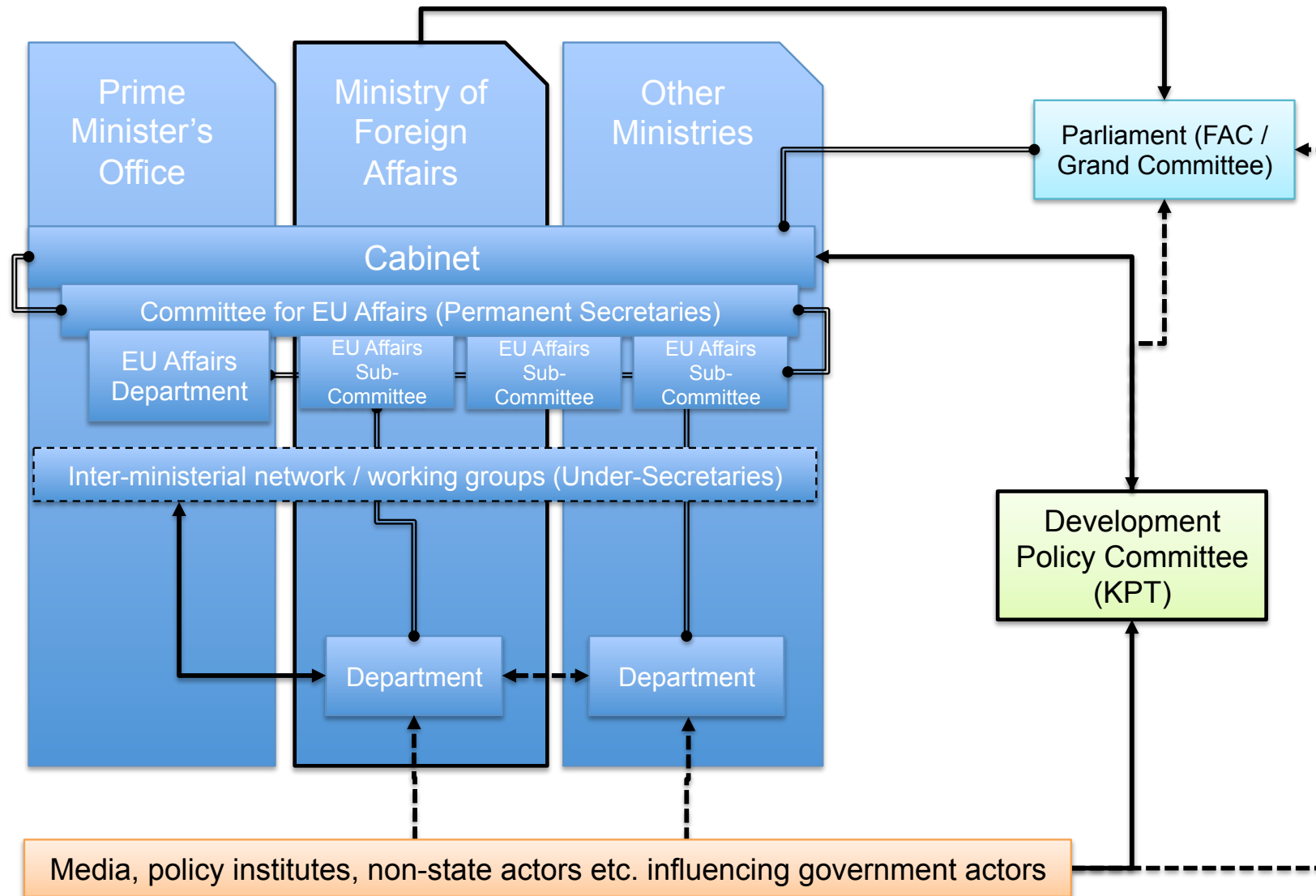
### Legend



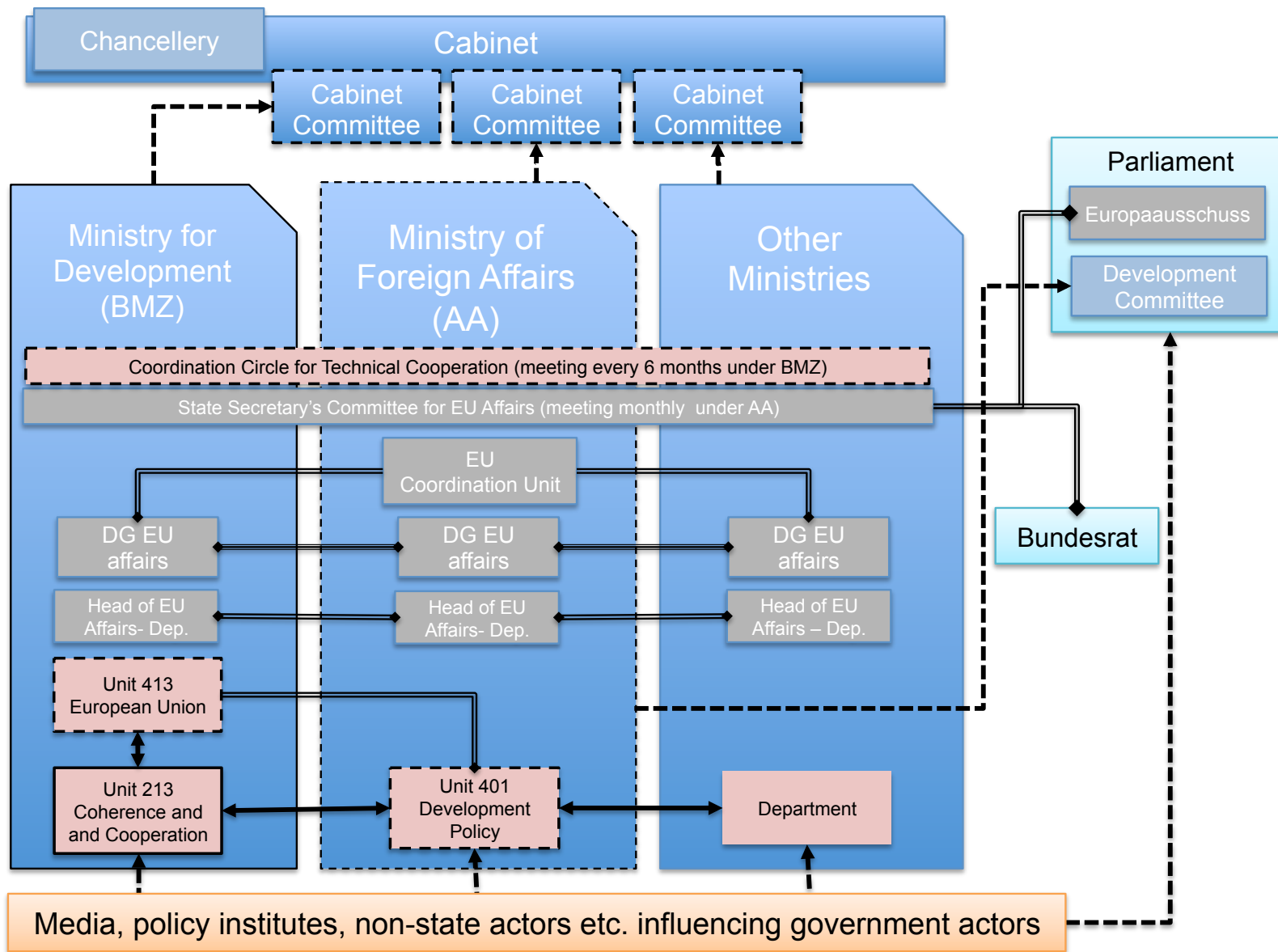
Annex I-i Belgium



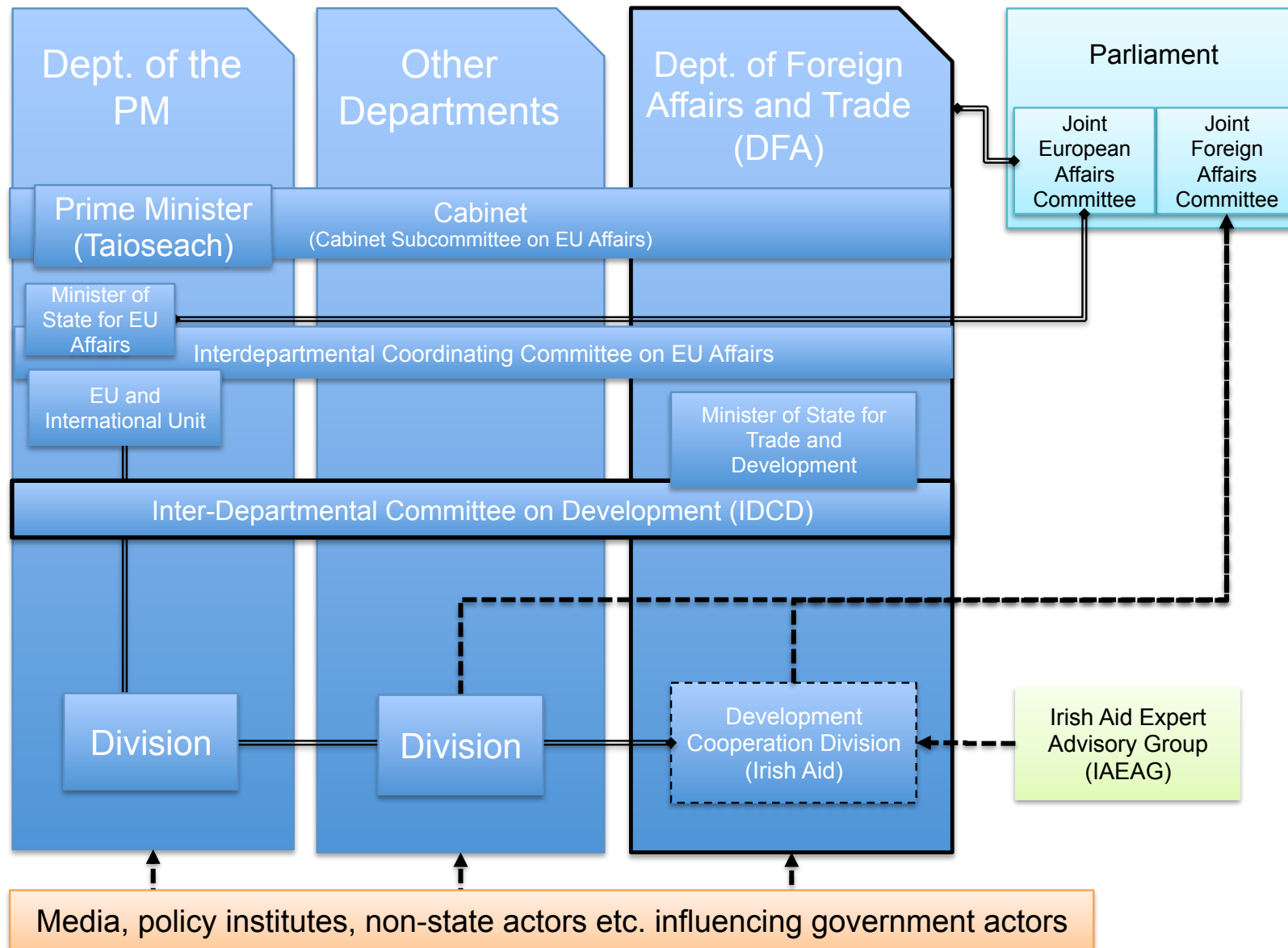
Annex I-ii Finland



Annex I-iii Germany

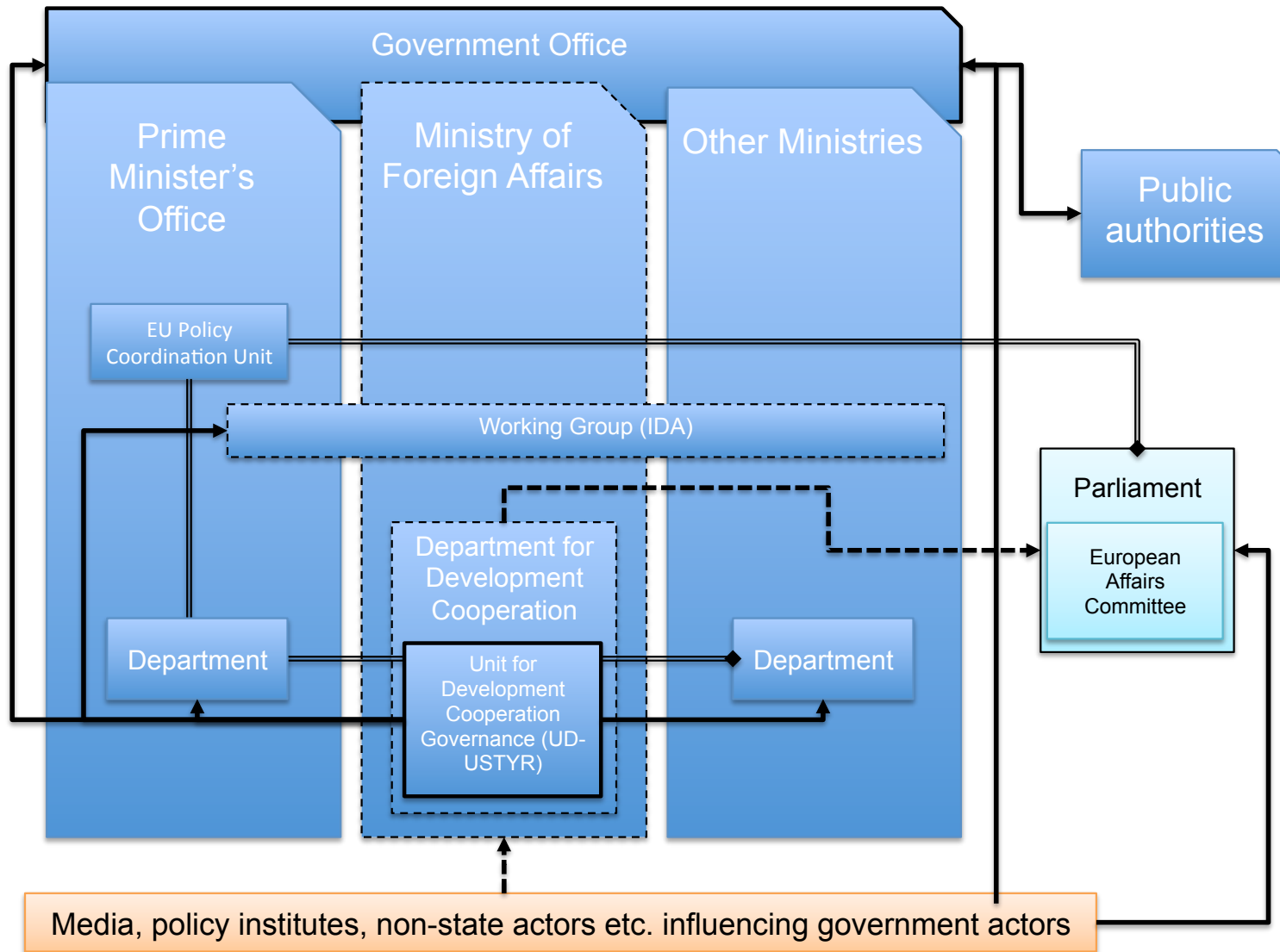


Annex I-iv Ireland





Annex I-v Sweden



## Annex II ECDPM – Danida Public Seminar Report

### Event Report Promoting Policy Coherence for Development – Assessing issues and common challenge: insights for a Danish approach

Public Seminar at Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Copenhagen, 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2013.

Report produced by ECDPM

European Centre for Development  
Policy Management

*ecdpm*



**'Promoting Policy Coherence for Development –  
Assessing issues and common challenges: insights for a Danish approach'**

**PROGRAMME**

Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2013, 10.30 – 15.30

Location: Eigtveds Pakhus Sal 2. Asiatisk Plads 2 DK-1448 Copenhagen K, Denmark

**10.30-10:45 Opening address and welcome – Charlotte Slente,**  
Under-Secretary of State for International Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**10.45-11.30 Recent thinking on PCD and PCD mechanisms – what insights for Denmark?**

*Presenter: Andrew Sherriff, ECDPM*

*Brief comments: Ebba Dohlman, Senior Advisor PCD, Office of the Secretary-General OECD*

**11.30-12.30 Insights from ECDPM commissioned study – Dilemmas, Challenges and Possible Approaches**

*Presenters: Florian Krätke, Brecht Lein and Andrew Sherriff, ECDPM*

*Questions from the audience*

**12.30-13.15 Light lunch**

**13.15-13.30 Translating PCD from commitments to results- by Christian Friis Bach - Minister for  
Development Cooperation, Denmark**

**13.30-14.30 Panel discussion: Dealing with the dilemmas of PCD from the national to the EU level**

*Moderator: Paul Engel, Director, ECDPM*

**Panel:**

**Ms. Anne Sipiläinen**, Under-Secretary of State: Development cooperation, Finland

**Ms. Ebba Dohlman**, Senior Advisor PCD, Office of the Secretary-General OECD

**Mr. Laust Leth Gregersen**, Head of CONCORD Denmark

**Ms. Nicoletta Merlo**, Deputy Head of Unit – EuropeAid, European Commission

*Questions from the audience*

**14.30-14.45 Coffee break**

**14.45-15.30 Analysing Key Issues from the Day and Future Priorities**

**Presenter and Discussion Moderator: Paul Engel, ECDPM**

*Questions and discussion with audience*

**15.30-15.45 Closing remarks – Ms Nathalia Feinberg**, Head of Department for Development Policy and Global  
Cooperation

## Context

As stated in Denmark's Development Cooperation Strategy from 2012 "The Right to a Better Life": "*Denmark will work for stronger coherence between policies in the many areas that affect developing countries*". In order to fulfil this engagement, the strategy further commits to the development of an Action Plan on Policy Coherence for Development and to the promotion of PCD at the level of the European Union. As an input to the on-going reflection and preparations for drafting the Action Plan, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) requested ECDPM to undertake a study on how other EU member states have addressed PCD at the national and EU level.

The study covers six EU Member States: three smaller states (Belgium, Ireland and Finland) one larger state (Germany) and two "early adopters" and promoters of Policy Coherence for Development (Netherlands and Sweden). In its comparative analysis of the different approaches to promoting PCD undertaken by the countries, the study looks at three mechanisms and their interaction: i) explicit political and policy commitments; ii) administrative and institutional mechanisms for policy coordination; and iii) knowledge input and knowledge assessment mechanisms.

Although the study does not pretend to constitute a full-scale evaluation of the concerned countries' PCD systems, its cross-cutting findings do offer a variety of insights and considerations that can serve as "food for thought" for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in developing the Action Plan. As such, the study aims to feed into internal discussions at the Danish MFA. Its findings were presented at a public seminar jointly organised by ECDPM and DANIDA in Copenhagen on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2013. Participants originated from Danish civil society, academia and the MFA, the OECD and the European Commission, as well as from research institutions and MFA's of some of the Member States covered in the study.

## Keynote speech

Following presentations on recent thinking in the field of PCD and the study's findings, the second part of the seminar began with a keynote speech by Mr Christian Friis Bach, Danish Minister for Development Cooperation.

The Minister was keen to stress overall PCD-relevant achievements, among others in the area of export dumping of beef, climate change, health, illicit financial flows and migration. The question remains whether these achievements have been due to PCD mechanisms and discussions or due to the stronger voice of developing countries themselves. As a consequence, development policy is already increasingly integrating into other, policy areas. These policy areas have in turn become as important for global development as development policies and strategies.

Denmark has promoted PCD at the EU level in the past, particularly during its Presidency of the European Council in 2012, and will continue to do so guided by a stronger dialogue with partner country and evidence-based decision-making. The high score on the Commitment to Development Index is a sign that the Danish government tries to engage internationally on all fronts of its policies, making PCD "the name of the game". Denmark's continued work to promote PCD will concentrate on EU policy processes. Denmark will develop a PCD action plan which is forward-looking and with concrete political objectives.

## Main messages

This report tries to frame the debate and summarises main messages raised by participants regarding the dilemmas and challenges associated with the respective three “building blocks”/PCD mechanisms. As such, it aims to identify areas for future investment in research and resources in order for PCD to gain the necessary traction, both domestically at the national level, as well as at the level of the EU.

### 1. Developing and sustaining the necessary level of political interest

- Participants recognized PCD as a **fundamentally political issue**, driven by political leadership and trade-offs between government departments, ministries and countries. As such, in order to make progress on PCD, policy makers and advocacy workers should target their efforts for PCD strategically, while accepting that national and policy-specific interests are not always reconcilable with development objectives.
- Since PCD is such a political issue, encompassing a variety of national policy interests, it is not straightforward for NGOs to table common demands at EU level, as **national priority areas for PCD advocacy differ** as well. Nonetheless, advocacy of development concerns remains a major driver for PCD in terms of sustaining political pressure by creating a ‘demand’ for PCD.
- Despite recent disappointments regarding the PCD component of EU policy dossiers, e.g. multiple references were made to the on-going reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), participants noted that overall, **some progress** had been made over the years, in the sense that the mere questioning of the external impacts of fundamentally inward looking policies such as the CAP has not always been self-evident.
- Whereas PCD used to be part of a donor-driven aid effectiveness agenda, the issue became part of a broader framework “beyond aid” that considers non-development policy areas. The driving arguments for PCD often come from **increasingly vocal developing countries**. Participants stressed that progress on PCD was not just a matter of policy commitments and institutional mechanisms, but also relates to the fact that a number of emerging countries from the South are becoming increasingly vocal in making their case at international negotiations.
- PCD is at risk of becoming a monolithic concept. In order to sustain political interest, the **rationale for PCD needs to be better communicated** to the line-ministries, as well as to the broader public. To do so, responsible departments and ministers could be more proactive and tactical in focussing on windows of opportunity in specific policy processes. When political leadership and/or public sentiments are favourable, chances emerge to really address and explain the cost of incoherencies, particularly when these costs are experienced “at home” too, e.g. health and illicit financial flows. Discussing PCD in the context of specific policy areas and examples can generate more interest in and understanding of the concept. Participants suggested that PCD could benefit from a rebranding exercise to make it more accessible and understood.
- Initiatives like the Center for Global Development’s **Commitment to Development Index (CDI)** could be used more proactively to raise awareness and stimulate debate on Member States’ track record on PCD and the effects of national policies on developing countries.

- PCD is part of the report of the UN system Task Team on the **post-2015 development agenda** (“Realizing the future we want for all”). A global commitment on PCD could be a major breakthrough, as any new development agenda has to be signed off at the level of the heads of state.

## 2. Establishing functional institutional arrangements and mechanisms

- Participants agreed that **development policy is already increasingly integrating into other policy areas**. These policy areas have in turn become as important for global development as development policies and strategies. The discussion is now how to development proof such policy areas in the short and long-term. Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that not all work on development proofing or promoting PCD occurs under the label of ‘PCD’.
- There is some ambiguity regarding the mainstreaming of political commitments towards PCD throughout line ministries. Under EU treaty legislation, as well as according to some policies at the national level, PCD is the responsibility of all concerned policy areas. It is therefore worth considering why concerned line ministries do not bear the burden of proof to demonstrate that its policies are development-proof, instead of assigning a unit in the MFA or Development department to manifest development-proof policies across the government. **Reversing the burden of proof** would enable PCD-mandated departments and structures to better target their interventions in inter-departmental negotiations. Such departments should also proactively engage with other ministries, without assuming that they would not have an interest in PCD.
- An effective PCD Action Plan requires **clear and binding priorities**, coupled to indicators for progress measuring. For purposes of ownership, it is favourable if all concerned ministers not only sign off the overarching policy commitment but also the operationalizing strategies. In order for PCD implementation plans to gain the necessary ownership throughout the entire government, it is important that objectives are agreed to jointly. Transparency and inclusiveness toward partner countries and CSO can be maintained through public hearings that feed into the drafting process of the plan.
- The panel confirmed that **capacity and resources** dedicated to PCD are not adequately matched to the demands of the policy commitments. Staff rotation, either due to the MFA’s human resources policy or as a result of personal career opportunities, continues to hamper progress on PCD, even in such for a as the OECD’s network of PCD focal points. While arguing for more resources remains essential, policy makers’ ambitions for PCD should be realistic and aligned with the allocated resources.
- Participants stressed that due diligence should be given to **ownership and division of labour** in inter-ministerial meetings. Finland is currently piloting the OECD’s Policy Framework tool for PCD in the area of Food Security, which will analyse the impact and role of both Finnish and EU policies on food security and the right to food in developing countries. The pilot demonstrates how complex it can be to operationalise PCD commitments - food security touches upon a wide variety of policy areas and different levels of governance, all of which need to buy-in.
- **At the level of the European Commission**, Unit A1 at DG Development – EuropeAid (DEVCO) is tasked to proactively promoting PCD throughout the Commission services. Although PCD belongs to the mandate of all thematic units within DEVCO, not all of them are as dedicated to the issue as they should be. DEVCO A1 therefore organises training programs on PCD throughout the Commission to raise awareness on PCD - there are plans to expand this initiative to the EU Delegations in the partner countries.

- It was noted that in most Member States, PCD is rarely a prominent concern among national **parliaments**. Specific parliamentary committees that look at the development consequences of policy processes could however play a key role in sensitizing and informing both policy-makers in the line-ministries and the public opinion.

### 3. Securing the right type of knowledge input and accountability mechanisms

- It was generally acknowledged that progress on PCD should be guided by partner country priorities, **evidence-based decision-making** and an evaluation culture in all departments involved. Recent efforts in this regard by the Netherlands, Finland and the OECD were welcomed, and anecdotal case studies can be used to stimulate the development of a culture of evidence-based policy analysis for PCD.
- Participants noted that a lot of information on policy impacts on developing countries is already available at the OECD. While the latter could perhaps do a better job communicating and **exploiting the available material**, Member States were encouraged to issue concrete requests for studies or data on the impact of their policies on developing countries. Such evidence should be generated, gathered and subsumed at the national level.
- PCD is a moving target with changing priorities. It is thus not always straightforward for Member States “on a budget” to invest in systematic monitoring exercises. Much remains to be done in this regard to better engage with national and international **research networks**. Some participants believed that research institutions are in general rather eager to work with the government on coherence issues, incl. impact assessments, whereas MFA’s often lack the capacity to do this type of work.
- It was broadly acknowledged that the use of ex-ante **impact assessments** to development-proof EU policy-making has largely failed. The Commission is now looking how to improve its procedures, though the development of a robust methodology is not a straightforward exercise and would not in itself constitute a guarantee for development-proof policies.

### About ECDPM

ECDPM was established in 1986 as an independent foundation to improve European cooperation with the group of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). Its main goal today is to broker effective partnerships between the European Union and the developing world, especially Africa. ECDPM promotes inclusive forms of development and cooperates with public and private sector organisations to better manage international relations. It also supports the reform of policies and institutions in both Europe and the developing world. One of ECDPM's key strengths is its extensive network of relations in developing countries, including emerging economies. Among its partners are multilateral institutions, international centres of excellence and a broad range of state and non-state organisations.

### Thematic priorities

ECDPM organises its work around four themes:

- Reconciling values and interests in the external action of the EU and other international players
- Promoting economic governance and trade for inclusive and sustainable growth
- Supporting societal dynamics of change related to democracy and governance in developing countries, particularly Africa
- Addressing food security as a global public good through information and support to regional integration, markets and agriculture

### Approach

ECDPM is a “think and do tank”. It links policies and practice using a mix of roles and methods. ECDPM organises and facilitates policy dialogues, provides tailor-made analysis and advice, participates in South-North networks and does policy-oriented research with partners from the South.

ECDPM also assists with the implementation of policies and has a strong track record in evaluating policy impact. ECDPM's activities are largely designed to support institutions in the developing world to define their own agendas. ECDPM brings a frank and independent perspective to its activities, entering partnerships with an open mind and a clear focus on results.

For more information please visit [www.ecdpm.org](http://www.ecdpm.org)

### ECDPM Discussion Papers

ECDPM Discussion Papers present initial findings of work-in-progress at the Centre to facilitate meaningful and substantive exchange on key policy questions. The aim is to stimulate broader reflection and informed debate on EU external action, with a focus on relations with countries in the South.

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