

An aerial photograph of a large rail yard, showing multiple parallel tracks filled with various freight trains. The trains consist of different types of railcars, including boxcars, flatcars, and tank cars, in various colors like red, blue, and grey. The tracks are separated by gravel and some greenery. The overall scene is a dense, organized industrial landscape.

ecdpm

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2025**

In this report

04 From our Board Chair

05 From our Director

About us

06 Who we are and what we do

08 What we offer

10 What sets us apart

10 Our workstreams

A snapshot of our year

12 Highlights in 2025

16 Financing for development: Navigating a system in crisis

18 Global Europe: Shaping the future of EU external action

20 Twenty-five years of AU-EU relations

22 Understanding migration decisions and policies

24 Localising the Global Gateway strategy

26 Investing in climate and conflict sensitivity in fragile settings

28 A new phase of Africa-Europe climate and energy cooperation

30 Bridging research and policy for sustainable food systems

32 Advancing African economic integration through corridors

34 Human-centred AI: Using digital technologies for social good

ECDPM in 2025

36 Outreach and impact

40 Finances

44 Our people

48 Governance

50 Our partners

52 Sustainability

25

— From our
Board Chair

Adebayo Olukoshi



Amid a period of global transition, we are witnessing considerable realignment of interests and priorities in the international system. Europe is raising security spending, as its once rock-solid and predictable alliance with the United States faces new strains and pressures. Across the Atlantic, development cooperation has been downgraded, with resources shifted to rapid rearmament. Issues of common concern, such as climate change, are being sidelined in pursuit of energy security, in some cases leading to a return to coal-fired power generation. At the same time, the Israeli war against Hamas, aided by the United States and others, has added a tragic dimension to the events of 2025, exacting a horrendous cost in human lives and suffering. Meanwhile, economic hardship in Africa and other parts of the Global South has been compounded by worsening debt distress, while citizens elsewhere face a rapidly rising cost of living.

In the face of these developments, organisations like ECDPM have had to make difficult adjustments to remain viable and relevant. The Centre has sought opportunities in periods of adversity, while developing new areas of work and recalibrating thematic priorities that remain germane to changing realities. Most notable is the growing stream of work on digital technologies and artificial intelligence (AI), alongside an increased focus on clean energy and greater emphasis on private sector investment in its work on food security. Furthermore, the Centre continues to explore new vistas for Africa-Europe cooperation, while expanding its reach in Latin America and Asia.

It is heartening that, despite an apparent fatigue and deadlock in the Africa-Europe dialogue, both sides have made efforts to revive a meaningful engagement. Issues such as migration, governance and trade remain high on the agenda. But more importantly, there is an opportunity for Africa and Europe to work together to strengthen the multilateral system and advocate for a more just and equitable rules-based order. This is especially vital in today's highly polarised world,

increasingly characterised by deadly violence, unilateral and destabilising action, and the imposition or threat of sanctions on long-standing partners and weaker members of the international community.

In line with its mission to serve as an honest broker, ECDPM has played an important role in fostering a meeting of minds between Africa and Europe. Their shared interests make this engagement not only necessary, but inevitable. I am pleased that over the last year, the Centre's management and staff have demonstrated a clear sense of urgency and adaptability in these changing times. As ECDPM celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2026, I speak for the Board in saying there is much to take pride in and a future to look forward to.

Adebayo Olukoshi
Chair of the Supervisory Board



In memory of Dieter Frisch

It is with profound sadness that we mark the passing of Dieter Frisch in August 2025. Dieter was a remarkable individual who dedicated his life to serving Europe and advancing a better world.

He joined the European Commission in 1958 and held various positions before becoming director-general of what was then directorate-general VIII on development, serving from 1982 to 1993. He was widely recognised for his expertise throughout his distinguished European career,

spanning more than 24 years in development policy. A highlight was the key role he played in negotiating the Lomé conventions with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states. Beyond his career at the European Commission, Dieter was a highly valued member of the ECDPM Board, serving from 1986 to 1993, and again from 2002 to 2014. He continued to support ECDPM as an honorary advisor to the Board until his passing.

The Board, management and colleagues, past and present, remember him fondly. In honour of his legacy, we are launching the Dieter Frisch Development Dialogues.

— From our
Director

San Bilal



The year 2025 was defined by geopolitical fragmentation, intensified debates over international financing and climate, and a reassessment of the Africa-Europe partnership. In this complex landscape, ECDPM reinforced its role as a leading independent 'think and do tank' and continued delivering the analysis and dialogue required to drive policies towards inclusive and sustainable development.

Much of our effort in 2025 focused on shaping the EU's approach to international cooperation and development, ensuring it aligns with the priorities of developing countries and supports mutually beneficial partnerships. As you will read in this annual report, we worked to improve the EU's Global Gateway strategy, and as negotiations for the EU's next long-term budget gathered pace, our analysis served as a key reference for policymakers, advocating for a framework linking external action with priorities like competitiveness, climate and security. On the global stage, we made significant contributions to the development finance agenda and climate diplomacy, including at the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30).

Marking the 25th anniversary of the Africa-Europe partnership at the seventh summit between the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU), we provided strategic evidence to try to move the partnership beyond diplomatic ritual towards more tangible, mutually beneficial progress. Our work supported shared priorities in green industrialisation, critical raw materials, sustainable food systems, digital transformation and human-centred migration policy. Beyond our focus on Africa and Europe, we expanded our geographical coverage to include EU engagement in Ukraine and with emerging economies such as Brazil and India.

At the end of the year, we welcomed the findings of an independent external evaluation, which concluded that ECDPM remains highly relevant and influential, providing excellent value for money. While acknowledging the challenge of balancing an expanding policy scope with limited resources, the evaluation supported our development of a new strategy for 2027-2031 to ensure the Centre's continued impact in a more geopolitical, competitive and multipolar environment.

The achievements of 2025, as well as those of previous years, are a testament to the dedication, expertise and collaborative spirit of the entire ECDPM team and our valued partners worldwide. To the ECDPM team, who consistently translate complex challenges into actionable policy insights, I extend my deepest gratitude. To our partners - governmental, institutional, academic and civil society - I thank you for your continued engagement. Your contributions complement and amplify our own reach and impact.

As 2026 marks our 40th anniversary, we remain committed to maintaining our independence and making policies work for a more inclusive and sustainable world. The work ahead is significant, but I am confident that ECDPM will continue to deliver relevant and actionable policy solutions in today's turbulent world.

San Bilal
Executive Director

Who we are and what we do

ECDPM is a leading independent 'think and do tank' that wants to make policies in Europe, Africa and beyond work for inclusive and sustainable development.

Good policies are extremely powerful. They can tackle society's biggest problems at the root, lay a foundation for change and play a crucial part in making the global development agenda a reality for all. That is why we want to help institutions and governments in Europe, Africa and beyond create policies that work.

Our independent policy experts contribute sharp analysis, thorough research and fresh ideas. But making policies work requires stepping off the sidelines, too. It means working closely with the people who create, implement or are impacted by policies. We bring different groups around the table, smooth the way for debate and make

sure that everyone's voice is heard. We provide advice and training, and design practical solutions together.

ECDPM has 40 years of experience in international cooperation, development policy and Africa-Europe relations. Our focus areas include climate, energy and food; economy and trade; geopolitics and development; governance; migration and mobility; and peace and security.

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



— About us

What we offer



Research and analysis

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



Partnerships and dialogue

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



Advice, training and support

We offer practical policy advice, training and support.



Events

We organise and speak at debates, conferences and workshops.



Expert information

We provide background information to our partners and the media.

— About us

What sets us apart



We are more than a think tank.

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



We are independent.

Our unique funding situation allows us to maintain operational autonomy and set our own, non-partisan agenda.



We look beyond promises.

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



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

Africa-Europe relations is our main focus. For 40 years we have worked with institutions, governments and partners across Africa and Europe. That has resulted in a broad network, a solid institutional memory of what has and hasn't worked before, and a knack for foreseeing how policy arenas will evolve.



We are in it for the long run.

Making policies work cannot happen overnight. We engage in policy processes from beginning to end and commit to long-term relationships with our partners, to jointly accomplish changes over time.

Our work-streams

People, partnerships and peace

EU foreign and development policy

The EU is facing growing geopolitical pressures while seeking to strengthen its role as a global actor. Our work examines how the EU engages internationally, including through its partnerships, development policies and financing architecture, with a focus on its long-term budget. We aim to connect development, foreign policy, economic, climate and migration agendas for more coherent and strategic EU external action aligned with its broader strategic interests.

Migration and mobility

Migration and mobility stimulate development as drivers of social and economic change, but they can also pose significant challenges. Our migration and mobility team wants to help maximise the development potential of migration and mobility while minimising risks. We work to promote effective and human-centred migration governance in Europe and Africa and aim to contribute to improved Africa-Europe cooperation on migration.

Inclusive governance and accountability

Democratic governance and accountable institutions are essential for inclusive and sustainable development and respect for human rights. Our inclusive governance and accountability team wants to contribute to a context-specific and politically informed understanding of the drivers of governance and accountability.

Peace, security and resilience

Recent years have witnessed a global pandemic, geopolitical instability, new conflicts and widespread climate impacts. Our peace, security and resilience team promotes the transition of fragile and conflict-affected countries towards peaceful and prosperous societies. We examine the interdependencies between geopolitical rivalry and multilateral reform, while promoting strategic peace and security partnerships, focusing on Africa and Europe.

In 2025, we delivered on our strategy through nine workstreams, organised into two clusters: (1) people, partnerships and peace, and (2) sustainable African economies and climate action. We also have departments for shared services, and we house the secretariat of the European Think Tanks Group (ETT).

All our workstreams jointly contribute to our work on Africa-Europe relations, policy coherence, gender and youth.

Sustainable African economies and climate action

Economic recovery and transformation

The EU is working to better articulate its sustainable development ambitions alongside its geostrategic and competitiveness objectives. Our economic recovery and transformation team aims to improve EU tools for trade, development, climate finance and private sector engagement. Focusing on the Global Gateway strategy, we want to ensure that these tools support geostrategic and mutually beneficial partnerships between the EU and the Global South.

African economic integration

Africa's continental free trade area aims to create a single market of goods and services on a continent of 1.5 billion people. Yet, achieving an integrated and prosperous Africa requires building on and coordinating across a range of regional trade agreements, trade and transport corridors and value chains. Our African economic integration team wants to bring the political economy and practical dynamics around regional integration into better focus and understand how policies can adapt to who or what is driving or blocking progress.



Digital economy and governance

The rapid rise of digital technologies is transforming how politics works, how economies grow and how societies connect, at a pace that governance frameworks struggle to match. Our digital economy and governance team aims to support more effective tools for EU international digital policy, advance stronger EU digital partnerships with global democracies like India, Brazil and South Africa, and explore how digital integration can advance Africa's development agenda.

Climate action and green transition

The green transition is reshaping global economic relations, while climate action is evolving amid economic and geopolitical pressures. Our climate action and green transition team explores how these shifts redefine relations between Europe and developing countries. We want to shape coherent approaches to interdependencies in energy, technology and industrial transformation; climate adaptation and resilience; and the finance and trade structures underpinning sustainable transitions.

Sustainable food systems

Global food systems struggle to provide a growing population with affordable and healthy food. Although they employ up to 75% of the workforce in low-income countries, food systems also strain livelihoods and damage the natural environment. Our sustainable food systems team wants to support transitions to sustainable, resilient, equitable and inclusive food systems.

— A snapshot of our year

Highlights in 2025

These pages present highlights from 2025, grouped by key topics that capture the essence of our work. Pages 16 to 35 then zoom in on ten flagship projects.

Future of international cooperation

- We presented our analysis of scenarios for a post-2030 sustainable development agenda at the [Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) Dialogue Forum](#) in Vienna and, at the invitation of the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU, to the Agenda 2030 Working Party in Brussels.
- Following the Trump administration's decision to close the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and slash development and humanitarian aid, we [explored](#) consequences and Europe's potential response, and [compared](#) the US and EU approaches to development. We presented the work at internal EU meetings and published our analysis in [Welternährung](#).



EU foreign and development policy

- With the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), we hosted a [high-level debriefing](#) on the AU-EU ministerial meeting in Brussels. We also published [various commentaries](#) and a [compendium of takeaways](#) to inform discussions around the AU-EU summit in Luanda. *See page 20*
- At a high-level event in Antwerp, featuring the Flemish minister-president, we launched our [joint study](#) exploring how Flanders can develop sustainable and mutually beneficial relations with Africa in the changing world, conducted with HIVA – Research Institute for Work and Society (KU Leuven) for the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office.
- Drawing on candid interviews with senior diplomats and experts from Africa, Asia and Latin America, we [explored](#) how EU international cooperation is perceived by its partners in the Global South.
- We [analysed](#) how the EU and China support green skills development in Africa, with [particular attention](#) to their roles in South Africa, Guinea and Ghana.
- We presented our analysis of EU instruments and decisions related to Ukraine, exploring the challenges of supporting the country's reconstruction, at an informal roundtable chaired by the Danish EU presidency.
- Building on our extensive [work](#) on the EU's next long-term budget, the 2028-2034 multiannual financial framework (MFF), we were among the first to publish a comprehensive and widely referenced [analysis](#) of the Global Europe instrument. This became our most-read work of the year. *See page 18*



Finance

- Building on our [work](#) on the EU's Global Gateway strategy, we helped shape and moderate a [high-level conference](#) on the coordination of external financial tools, organised by the European Commission's directorates-general for international partnerships (DG INTPA) and trade (DG TRADE) and the Danish EU presidency. At the Global Gateway Forum 2025 in Brussels, we [contributed](#) to several sessions as panellists and moderators.
- Ahead of and after the Fourth Financing for Development Conference (FfD4) in Seville, we published [analysis](#) and hosted [events](#) to help align European and Global South interests, often in collaboration with the European Think Tanks Group. *See page 16*
- For Countdown 2030 Europe, we [examined](#) five innovative financing models to advance global sexual and reproductive health and rights and help close the funding gap amid declining official development assistance.



Migration and mobility

- For the EU-funded [DYNAMIG](#) project on migration decision-making, we hosted [policy workshops](#) and a well-received [final conference](#) in Brussels, convening policymakers, researchers and experts from Europe and Africa. *See page 22*
- At the [Pan-African Forum on Migration](#) in Cape Town, we shared research-based insights on migration governance, contributed to high-level policy discussions at the continental level and engaged with AU institutions and member state representatives.
- With the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) Europe and Cities Alliance and for DG INTPA, we [hosted an event](#) exploring how rapid urbanisation and displacement are reshaping mobility and development in the Greater Horn of Africa.



Governance

- With the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI), Oxfam and the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), we [organised a webinar](#) for the Team Europe Democracy (TED) Initiative on how civil society is responding to shrinking civic space.
- At the [Cities and Regions for International Partnerships Forum](#) in Brussels, organised by the European Committee of the Regions and DG INTPA, we presented our mapping of local and regional authorities' involvement in projects under the Global Gateway strategy. *See page 24*



Peace and security

- We [convened a high-level event](#) in Addis Ababa to explore EU-AU cooperation on global peace and security governance reforms, as part of the ['Building bridges in turbulent times'](#) project, jointly implemented with the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) and in partnership with the Global Challenges Foundation.
- We presented our [evaluation](#) of EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa approaches in the Horn of Africa to counter vulnerability and strengthen resilience across the region, undertaken with Particip, at an ['InfoPoint' event](#) organised by DG INTPA.
- With Search for Common Ground, we analysed climate-security links in the Sahel, publishing our findings and recommendations in two policy briefs. The first, on [environmental peacebuilding](#), was presented at a [public event](#), and the second, on [Global Gateway investments](#) in fragile settings, was delivered at an [event](#) later in the year. *See page 26*



Climate, energy and green transition

- We completed a multi-year project on green industrialisation in developing countries, analysing African green energy-intensive industries, critical raw materials as a lever for industrialisation, and measures such as the EU's carbon border adjustment mechanism. *See page 28*
- We co-authored an article published in Nature Climate Change. Led by authors from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), it explored how climate risks ripple across regions and sectors, and why policy coherence is essential.
- At COP30 in Belém, we spoke on high-level panels on financing the energy transition and green industries in the Mediterranean region, as well as on green trade and just energy transition. We also moderated a high-level discussion on the Lobito Corridor at the Italian pavilion, focused on climate action, food security and trade. *See page 28*
- We hosted two high-level side events at the Africa Climate Summit in Addis Ababa: one on Africa-Europe climate diplomacy with the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), and another on green industrialisation and agriculture with the AU Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD). We also took part in an event with the Africa-Europe Foundation launching a study we co-authored with them, the Climate Action Platform for Africa and Bellona, on Africa-Europe cooperation on green energy and industrial development. *See page 28*



Food systems

- For the EU-funded StEPPFoS project on agriculture and food systems, we organised a session at the sixth AU-EU agriculture ministerial conference in Rome with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). *See page 30*
- With the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP) and the Agri-PDB Platform, we organised a side event at the Finance in Common Summit in Cape Town on collaboration between the Agri-PDB Platform and the G7 PDB Collaborative.
- With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), we organised an investment dialogue in Nairobi on an inclusive and sustainable coffee sector in Kenya, culminating in the launch of the 'Kenya Coffee Roadmap'. We later facilitated a ministerial event on coffee value chains at the World Food Forum in Rome.
- With AUDA-NEPAD, we launched a project to align climate and food systems policies and investment along African trade corridors. The initial phase involved analytical mapping and consultations in various African countries. *See page 32*



Trade and African integration

- In a widely read paper, we examined the Lobito Corridor, which links Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Zambia, exploring the balance between geopolitical interests in critical minerals access and the internal interests of the corridor countries. *See page 32*
- With ODI, we analysed the potential for industrialisation under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), zooming in on the textiles and apparel value chain. The analysis focused on the challenges and opportunities of building a continent-wide value chain.
- Building on our work on corridors and trade, and on discussions at the African Trade and Development Forum in late 2024, we explored what it would take to have 'no-stop' borders in Africa. Our analysis fed thinking in organisations like TradeMark Africa on how they engage around borders to promote regional integration and trade.
- We partnered with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Guinean government on a political economy approach to skills for industrialisation, focusing on a planned alumina refinery. The work balanced EU geopolitical priorities and Guinean development imperatives around critical raw materials, related support for technical and vocational education and training, and private sector interests.

AI and digital technology

- We conducted a digital public infrastructure (DPI) needs assessment for the East African Community (EAC), supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), identifying cross-border use cases and examining how DPI can support regional integration. We presented the findings at the Global DPI Summit in Cape Town.
- We examined the EU's 'EuroStack' debate on sovereign digital infrastructure, alongside similar global discussions, highlighting India and Brazil. We also spoke at the launch of the EU's international digital strategy, co-hosted an event with the Sciences Po School of International Affairs, and participated in Carnegie India's Global Technology Summit.
- On the sidelines of the EU-India Trade and Technology Council working group meeting on strategic technologies, digital governance and connectivity in Brussels, we hosted a high-level event on EU-India cooperation on AI, featuring India's secretary of the electronics and information technology ministry.
- As part of our 'AI for social good' project, we examined AI use cases in health, education and agriculture in Africa. We launched the series at a public event in Brussels and at a high-level event co-hosted with Research ICT Africa on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Johannesburg. *See page 34*



Knowledge

- We hosted an inaugural meeting of knowledge institutes in the Maastricht area at our historical Pelican House headquarters, as part of a Maastricht Marketing initiative to promote the region as a knowledge hub.



Youth and gender

- With Particip, we started work on the mid-term evaluation of the Youth Action Plan in EU External Action 2022-2027, which has a strong gender component. The final report will be published in the summer of 2026.





— A snapshot of our year

Financing for development: Navigating a system in crisis

In the summer of 2025, leaders met in Seville for the Fourth Financing for Development Conference (FfD4) – ten years after the failed pledge to scale climate and development finance ‘from billions to trillions’. Without reform, the development financing gap is set to widen further, to **US \$6 trillion by 2030. In the wake of Donald Trump’s re-election as US president, the conference also became a make-or-break moment for multilateralism.**

Building on over a decade of expertise in development finance, we sought to shape the EU’s strategic position through a series of targeted publications and events in the lead-up to the Seville conference. For much of this work, we partnered with the European Think Tanks Group (ETTg) – a network of European think tanks focused on international cooperation for sustainable development, of which we are a founding member.

We approached FfD4 from different angles. From a technical perspective, we promoted evidence-based instruments and approaches that should

be championed at the multilateral level, such as country platforms and the evolving role of multilateral and public development banks. We also addressed reforms of the international financial architecture during a high-level dialogue organised by ETTg and the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) in Paris, and offered recommendations for how to reverse the decline in development financing.

From a geopolitical perspective, we aimed to contribute to stronger relations between Europe and the Global South by identifying where interests

converge. For instance, with ETTg, we explored how EU leadership on development finance could create new partnerships with the Global South, as well as priorities for partners in Africa. More specifically, we discussed what an EU offer in the FfD4 context could look like – to effectively bridge the gap between the EU’s geopolitical goals and the urgent development needs of the Global South.

Our insights were sought out by EU member states to help shape their diplomatic positions at FfD4. During the conference itself, we moderated a high-level session on new strategic partnerships for development hosted by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS). In the wake of the conference, we reported directly from Seville and, with ETTg, we outlined the consequences for the EU and its partners.

In 2026, we will zoom in on key issues emerging from FfD4, including the role of public development banks and the post-2030 agenda. Already in early 2026, we contributed to a high-level dialogue organised by ETTg and Elcano Royal Institute – supported by the Spanish foreign ministry and Agence Française de Développement (AFD) – to take stock of the outcomes and where to go next, particularly as multilateralism continues to deteriorate.

Want to learn more about our work on development finance? Visit ecdpm.org/ffd4 or get in touch with Karim Karaki or San Bilal via ecdpm.org/experts.

— A snapshot of our year

In 2025, negotiations over the EU's next long-term budget, the multiannual financial framework (MFF), intensified after the European Commission tabled its proposal in July. The budget will set the EU's priorities for 2028–2034. Its proposed €200 billion Global Europe instrument will be key in shaping partnerships, crisis response and geopolitical strategy.

Throughout 2025, we positioned ourselves as a trusted and independent voice on the future of EU external financing. Our engagement began in 2024 with early reflections on a successor to the EU's financial instrument for neighbourhood, development and international cooperation, NDICI-Global Europe. Dubbing this successor 'NDICI 2.0', in early 2025, we identified critical areas for reform to ensure the instrument remains fit for purpose. Complemented by a range of commentaries, a formal contribution to the European Commission's MFF consultation and facilitation of informal dialogues with member states and the Commission, we advocated for a more strategic and coherent external action instrument.

This work ensured we were ready to react immediately to the July presentation of the Global Europe instrument – the official successor to NDICI-Global Europe. We released a 'companion guide' to the regulation's structure and main features, available in English and French. This became a standard reference for those navigating the new architecture. Widely circulated, it informed high-level briefings, including to the Council working parties on development cooperation and international partnerships (CODEV-PI) and on humanitarian aid and food aid (COHAFA), to members of the European Parliament, NGOs and think tanks, and to several foreign ministries as they prepared their national positions.

Beyond our focus on Global Europe, we sought to connect the dots across the broader MFF architecture. We highlighted the strong links between external action and priorities such as competitiveness, migration, climate and security, underscoring the need for coherence between the EU's internal and external agendas. This integrative perspective became a distinctive feature of our 2025 engagement and helped policymakers approach the MFF negotiations as a systemic exercise rather than a series of isolated budget lines.

In 2026, negotiations will intensify as the European Council and Parliament move towards a final agreement. We will continue to provide thorough analysis on the links between the Global Europe instrument and other MFF pillars, such as the European Competitiveness Fund. Beyond formal negotiations, 2026 will be a decisive year for the political narrative on EU external action, shaping whether it is framed primarily in terms of security and competitiveness or as a strategic investment in mutually beneficial partnerships.

Want to learn more about our work on the MFF? Visit ecdpm.org/mff or get in touch with Alexei Jones or Andrew Sherriff via ecdpm.org/experts.

Global Europe: Shaping the future of EU external action

Twenty-five years of AU-EU relations



— A snapshot of our year

The year 2025 marked the 25th anniversary of the AU-EU partnership and the seventh AU-EU summit, held in Luanda. At a time when the global landscape seems increasingly complex, this milestone year offered an opportunity to move beyond diplomatic rituals and shape a more balanced partnership.

Since the start of the partnership, we have analysed its institutional structures, strategies and dynamics and tracked the evolution of AU-EU relations. In today's complex geopolitical landscape, our role remains to provide the deep analysis needed to address common issues and to bridge differences where priorities diverge.

Throughout the year, we contributed to the momentum surrounding the partnership's 25th anniversary and the summit, [urging the EU](#) to adopt a more consultative approach to tackle underlying power imbalances. Directly following the AU-EU ministerial meeting in Brussels in May, we organised a [high-level debriefing](#) with EUISS. The discussions revealed a significant degree of convergence and a more constructive atmosphere than in past years, which we captured in a [commentary](#). Alongside these reflections, we facilitated informal dialogues between African and European ambassadors in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

We also advanced specific partnership priorities through several projects. For instance, for the [DYNAMIG project](#), we convened researchers and policymakers in Brussels to examine the drivers and policies shaping migration within Africa-EU relations (see page 22). Similarly, through our project '[Building bridges in turbulent times](#)', we partnered with SAIIA

and the Global Challenges Foundation to explore the joint role of Africa and Europe in reforming global peace and security multilateralism, including a high-level event in Addis Ababa.

Bringing all our AU-EU relations work together, we published a [compendium of takeaways](#) and a series of [commentaries](#) ahead of the summit. By bundling our work on different themes – from migration to food systems, climate, sustainable finance and the digital transition – we provided a substantive evidence base for the summit discussions, complemented by a diplomatic perspective from [Bitange Ndemo, Kenya's ambassador to the EU and Belgium](#).

Looking ahead to 2026, our focus will shift towards monitoring implementation of the Luanda commitments. In partnership with the Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) and IDDRI, and with support from the EU delegation in Addis Ababa, we will convene a series of workshops and conferences bringing together African and European think tanks to deepen dialogue on critical areas such as health, the digital transition and the green transformation.

Want to learn more about our work on AU-EU relations? Visit ecdpm.org/au-eu or get in touch with Kathleen Van Hove via ecdpm.org/experts.



— A snapshot of our year

Understanding migration decisions and policies

Migration is a cornerstone of Africa-EU relations, yet it remains deeply politicised. Too often, public and political debates are driven by numbers and simplified narratives rather than a nuanced understanding of how and why individuals decide to move.

Between 2023 and 2025, we participated in the three-year Horizon Europe [DYNAMIG project](#), alongside seven other research institutes and universities from Europe and Africa. The project aimed to create a more nuanced understanding of migration decisions and experiences, and assess the extent to which current policies take these into account and shape behaviour.

As the lead for outreach and impact, our role was to ensure that the project's findings were translated into usable insights for policymakers.

Throughout the first two years, we developed the project's outreach and impact strategy, steered the production of early [research papers](#), [commentaries](#) and [multimedia content](#), and guided team members across the consortium. We also hosted a series of [policy workshops in Brussels](#) and spoke at workshops in [Rabat](#) and [Nairobi](#), which aimed to ensure the project's research took into account the priorities of policymakers.

In 2025, the final year of the project, the DYNAMIG team released multiple [research papers](#) based on

qualitative and quantitative studies in Morocco, Nigeria, Kenya and Senegal. We supported the team in synthesising and disseminating the findings, and hosted a new series of [workshops](#) and a well-received [final conference](#) in Brussels. These events brought together European and African migration experts, researchers and policymakers to examine the drivers and policies shaping migration within Africa-EU relations. We also produced a special [DYNAMIG magazine](#), which tied together the project's results in a clear narrative for a wider audience.

The research generated substantial interest among migration researchers and experts, as well as high-level engagement beyond the events we organised for the project. For instance, the DYNAMIG team was invited to present research to the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) Board, and our findings were subsequently included in the EUTF's final evaluation. We also engaged

with German federal ministries and European Parliament leadership, and we were invited to present our research at the [Pan-African Forum on Migration](#) in Cape Town.

While the project officially ended in 2025, we will continue building on the network of partners, researchers and policymakers it established to ensure the research remains a cornerstone of Africa-Europe migration dialogue. By continuing to share these insights, we hope to contribute to an evidence-based and human-centred approach to migration policy.

Want to learn more about our work on migration and mobility? Visit ecdpm.org/migration-mobility or get in touch with Anna Knoll via ecdpm.org/experts.

— A snapshot of our year

The EU's Global Gateway strategy is largely driven by central governments and financial institutions. However, its investments ultimately land in cities, regions and communities. There, insufficient involvement of local and regional authorities can lead to weak ownership and lack of sustainability.

In 2025, building on our work on the EU's Global Gateway strategy and our involvement in the EU-funded 'Partnerships for Sustainable Cities' project (2022–2024), we analysed the limited role of local authorities in the Global Gateway approach. We also provided recommendations for enhancing local authorities' role in investment-driven projects.

At the request of DG INTPA, we undertook an extensive mapping exercise to assess the depth of engagement of local and regional authorities across the Global Gateway portfolio. This was particularly timely, as the strategy's emerging '360-degree approach' highlights that infrastructure investments must be accompanied by an enabling environment. It also underscores the importance of governance reforms, capacity development and local economic ecosystems for long-term impact and durability.

Launched in December 2025, the exercise covered 264 flagship projects and included over 50 interviews with EU delegations, development banks, and local and regional authority networks and associations in the EU neighbourhood, Africa, Latin America and Asia. This resulted in 46 case studies across 40 countries. While we found that local and regional authorities were involved in at least a consultative role in nearly 90% of the projects analysed, there was a clear need to move beyond minimum participation towards genuine co-creation. By identifying structural bottlenecks, such as centralised governance and limited local capacity, we provided

practical entry points for EU institutions and financial institutions to engage local and regional authorities more systematically.

This work directly informed policy engagement in Brussels, most notably at the Cities and Regions for International Partnerships Forum, organised by the European Committee of the Regions and DG INTPA. We shared our analysis with decision-makers and practitioners from 71 countries across 4 continents and reflected on the discussions in a subsequent commentary. Beyond the forum, the work was presented in various Council working groups, as well as the European Parliament's development and foreign affairs committees. Throughout these engagements, our work helped shift the narrative from portraying local authorities merely as implementers of infrastructure to recognising them as co-investors in enabling environments that ensure an investment's success and sustainability.

In 2026, we will focus on operationalisation of the mapping. For example, our work will inform ECDPM's contributions to discussions on the 2028–2034 MFF (see page 18), with a view to embedding multi-level governance more systematically in EU programming and financing.

Want to learn more about our work on governance? Visit ecdpm.org/governance or get in touch with Amandine Sabourin via ecdpm.org/experts.

Localising the Global Gateway strategy



— A snapshot of our year

Climate change is a known ‘threat multiplier’ in fragile regions, but environmental challenges can also offer chances for peace through better resource management. Infrastructure is central to this. When built with climate and conflict sensitivity, it can foster social cohesion. With its Global Gateway strategy, the EU can promote investment in the right kinds of infrastructure, benefitting fragile regions while advancing its own interests.

In 2025, together with Search for Common Ground, we analysed the intricate links between climate, peace and security in the Sahel. In addition to research in Mali and Niger conducted by two research partners, we carried out interviews with EU officials, representatives of international organisations, and peacebuilding and climate resilience practitioners. We combined these expert perspectives and country-level analyses in a [policy brief](#) exploring environmental peacebuilding as a ‘climate-security priority’ for the EU.

Our analysis showed that environmental peacebuilding can help address the Sahel’s interlinked crises of conflict, climate change and fragility. In addition, it demonstrated that investments in environmental peacebuilding in fragile regions protect Europe’s own security and economic interests. At the same time, the balance between the EU’s economic interests and investments and its support for peacebuilding, security and responses to fragility is shifting with the consolidation of the Global Gateway strategy.

We presented our findings on the current state of environmental peacebuilding in the Sahel to policymakers, practitioners and investment actors at a [public event](#), offering practical recommendations

for EU policymakers to promote climate-sensitive peacebuilding. We then presented the findings again at a meeting with SECORES, the Belgian Network on Social-Ecological Resilience, organised by Enabel.

Building on this work, we analysed how the EU can integrate conflict and climate sensitivity into its Global Gateway investments in fragile contexts. These often coincide with regions that are rich in critical raw materials central to the EU’s strategic goals and that hold significant potential to drive a regional green energy transition. In a second [policy brief](#), we outlined recommendations for EU policymakers to ensure Global Gateway investments support long-term peace and resilience rather than instability. We presented the brief to fragility and peace experts, researchers and policymakers at another [public event](#).

Looking ahead to 2026, we will continue to examine how Global Gateway investments and partnerships can be delivered in a climate- and conflict-sensitive manner, particularly in fragile settings.

Want to learn more about our work on conflict, peace and security? Visit ecdpm.org/peace-security or get in touch with Sophie Desmidt or Sara Giancesello via ecdpm.org/experts.

Investing in climate and conflict sensitivity in fragile settings



A new phase of Africa–Europe climate and energy cooperation



— A snapshot of our year

The Africa–Europe partnership is entering a strategic new phase, as Africa’s renewable energy and industrial potential intersects with Europe’s demand for clean energy and raw materials. Amid global competition and economic security concerns, tensions are also emerging between African and European priorities. Meanwhile, climate adaptation and resilience – vital for long-term competitiveness – risk being sidelined.

In 2025, we analysed these shifts and argued for a more coherent approach to Africa–Europe climate and energy cooperation. Focusing on green industrialisation and energy, we completed a [multi-year project on green industrialisation](#) in developing countries. In a joint [study](#) with the Africa–Europe Foundation, the Climate Action Platform for Africa (CAP–A) and Bellona, we explored how to build Africa–Europe cooperation around mutually beneficial value chains and presented that work at the Africa Climate Summit in Addis Ababa. We also strengthened our focus on the Middle East and North Africa region by contributing to positioning the Mediterranean as a clean energy and industrial hotspot through the [TeraMed initiative](#), with a focus on financing and integrated [energy and industrial value chains](#).

We also expanded our work on adaptation and resilience as core elements of economic transformation. For instance, we [examined](#) how Europe can improve its support for Africa’s climate adaptation needs and [contributed](#) to new initiatives, such as the Climate Justice Impact Fund for Africa (CJIFA). With two fellow think tanks, E3G and CONCITO, we [explored](#) how the EU could strengthen its position on the climate adaptation finance agenda.

Bringing together these strands of work, we released a [paper](#) on ways to realign Africa–Europe climate and energy cooperation, ahead of the AU–EU summit in Abidjan and COP30 in Belém. Recognising that both continents are invested in renewing their partnership, we

argued that a credible alliance requires a shift in narrative. That means moving beyond a narrow focus on supply-chain security towards co-created green value chains, and reframing adaptation not as a cost but as a strategic investment in economic transformation.

We brought our analysis into key climate and energy debates throughout the year. At the Africa Climate Summit, we convened [high-level discussions](#) with the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) and AUDA–NEPAD, focused on the need to place climate justice at the centre of cooperation and on the links between green energy, climate adaptation and agricultural modernisation. At [COP30](#), we engaged in high-level exchanges on financing the energy transition and green industries, as well as on green trade and infrastructure corridors (see page 33).

In 2026, we will deepen this work by analysing the evolution of green industrial value chains and the broader green transition. We will focus in particular on how international partnerships, including but not limited to Africa–Europe cooperation, can support economic transformation, resilience and more balanced, mutually beneficial forms of interdependence.

Want to see all our work on climate action and green transition or learn more about what we do? Visit ecdpm.org/climate-action-green-transition or get in touch with Hanne Knaepen or Alfonso Medinilla via ecdpm.org/experts.



— A snapshot of our year

Bridging research and policy for sustainable food systems

Nutrition, food security and sustainable agriculture have long been priorities for African countries and the AU-EU partnership. However, putting plans into practice has remained difficult. Closing this gap requires innovation, research and capacity to ensure that data and evidence guide steps to transform African food systems.

Since 2024, ECDPM has been part of the Horizon Europe [STEPFoS project on agriculture and food systems](#), alongside 17 other research institutes and organisations across Africa and Europe. The project seeks to ensure that agriculture and food systems policies in the Africa-Europe partnership are based on solid evidence. It provides decision-makers and experts with science-based recommendations to help turn policies into practical solutions. In particular, it supports the Pan-African Network for Economic Analysis of

Policies (PANAP), which brings together African (agri-)policy institutes to facilitate evidence-based policy interventions.

In 2025, we organised several high-level events and training sessions for the project. We organised a [virtual roundtable](#) with bilateral, multilateral and private donors to discuss how they can better connect research with policy and support the adoption and scaling of new scientific and innovative solutions across African food systems.

A highlight was a [thematic session](#) at the [sixth AU-EU agriculture ministerial conference](#) in Rome, which we organised with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). It showcased recent PANAP successes and explored policymakers' perspectives on the gap between science and policy. The session further examined how the network can support the Kampala Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Declaration and the EU's vision for agriculture, identifying clear opportunities for stronger Africa-Europe partnerships. Participants at the event included the AU and EU commissioners for agriculture and the Irish and Nigerian agriculture ministers.

In 2026, we will continue organising a series of events. With the West and Central African Council

for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), we will lead collaborative policy labs using a co-creation methodology to help West African partners, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to turn the Kampala CAADP Declaration into concrete regional agricultural plans. To support the PANAP network, we will also provide training in political economy analysis. Finally, we will host another donor roundtable and partner with the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) on an event to strengthen AU-EU collaboration in translating agricultural research into policy.

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

Advancing African economic integration through corridors



— A snapshot of our year

African trade and transport corridors are crucial to boost trade, investment, food security and market integration. They are also rising on policy agendas, thanks to frameworks like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the EU's Global Gateway strategy. Yet, differing interests within and between African countries continue to shape border management and industrialisation prospects.

Our work on African corridors has spanned more than a decade. In 2025, we zoomed in on the Lobito Corridor, which links Angola, the DRC and Zambia and is one of the flagship corridors under the Global Gateway strategy. In a [widely read paper](#), we analysed the balance between international competition for critical raw materials and the internal development interests of the corridor countries themselves. We further explored these issues in [our podcast](#) 'Europolis: The Global Europe Podcast'.

We also launched a [two-year project](#) with AUDA-NEPAD to help align climate and food systems policies and investment along African trade corridors. In 2025, we completed the initial phase of analytical mapping and consultations with policymakers, financiers and businesses in Angola, the DRC, Zambia, Kenya and Uganda. In the DRC, we [met the minister of foreign trade](#) and were featured on national television. On the global stage, we showcased the project at COP30, moderating a high-level session on the Lobito Corridor at the Italian pavilion.

We engaged in several broader corridor initiatives as well. We provided expert input on the political economy of African corridors to the G20 Platform on SDG Localisation and Intermediary Cities, organised by the OECD. Additionally, we contributed to the debate on green industrial policies and the role of critical raw materials as part of the [Remaking the Global](#)

[Trading System for a Sustainable Future project](#). Finally, we facilitated a strategic discussion between DG INTPA and EU member states to assess whether a new EU Aid for Trade strategy is needed to address the corridor-focused priorities of the Global Gateway strategy.

Complementing our work on corridors, we undertook broader analysis on regional integration. For example, we authored a chapter in the [Routledge Handbook of African Borderlands](#), contributed to the latest [African Union Yearbook](#), and published a [paper](#) exploring the feasibility of implementing 'no-stop' borders in Africa to enhance regional trade.

In 2026, we will continue our work on the project with AUDA-NEPAD and launch a new initiative funded by the EU, undertaken with researchers from the Mandela School of Public Governance at the University of Cape Town. The project will establish a practice hub on African economic integration, with corridors as one of three research pillars. We will build on existing political economy analyses and undertake new studies to identify ways to translate the AfCFTA and broader regional integration agendas from policy into practice.

Want to learn more about our work on African economic integration? Visit ecdpm.org/african-economic-integration or get in touch with Bruce Byiers or Poorva Karkare via ecdpm.org/experts.



Human-centred AI: Using digital technologies for social good

— A snapshot of our year

AI has emerged as a transformative force in global geopolitics, offering unprecedented opportunities for innovation while simultaneously posing complex challenges. In Africa, AI could offer a host of benefits for development – from increasing crop yields and improving healthcare access to revolutionising education. Yet, it also risks widening digital inequalities and economic exclusion.

Since 2024, we have expanded our work on digital cooperation to include AI, with a specific focus on its potential for development in Africa and the Africa-Europe partnership. In 2025, our 'AI for Social Good' project explored opportunities and challenges of AI in three critical sectors in Africa, resulting in a series of targeted papers.

The sectors analysed were health, education and agriculture. In the health sector, we examined the role of AI in medical imaging for diagnosing prevalent diseases like tuberculosis and malaria, as well as its use in prenatal and maternal diagnostics. In education, we explored the balance between private sector innovation and public goods, providing recommendations on how African and European policymakers could reshape education systems without deepening digital divides. Finally, in agriculture, we identified strategic entry points for AI to support smallholder farmers.

We discussed the findings on an episode of our podcast 'Europolis: The Global Europe Podcast', and presented some of our results to representatives of international organisations, institutions and private companies.

We brought these insights into the heart of policy debate through two major events we organised. In Brussels, we convened policymakers, think tanks and the private sector to launch the studies and discuss EU-Africa cooperation on AI, while in Johannesburg, we co-hosted a high-level event in partnership with Research ICT Africa. Held on the sidelines of the G20 summit, this discussion brought together government delegates, private sector leaders, academics and civil society to facilitate a substantive exchange on inclusive AI pathways.

Looking ahead to 2026, we will continue to build on this momentum, identifying and spotlighting AI use cases that promote inclusive social and economic development. We will also build on our past work assessing emerging AI governance frameworks in Africa and their role in promoting inclusive development. Finally, we will explore how all this connects with the EU's Tech Business Offer, which aims to help European companies roll out secure and reliable digital solutions in partner countries.

Want to learn more about our work on digital cooperation and AI? Visit ecdpm.org/digital-cooperation or get in touch with Melody Musoni or Chloe Teevan via ecdpm.org/experts.

Outreach and impact

Our outreach and impact department aims to strengthen the quality, policy relevance, practical usefulness and impact of ECDPM's work. It is structured around two core functions: communications and learning and quality.

Communications

Communication is essential for ECDPM to perform its role as a strategic broker for informed policy dialogue. We stimulate dialogue with our partners and ensure that our work and ideas reach the right people, in the right way, at the right time. In addition to external outreach, we provide in-house training for staff. Our expertise spans social media, media relations, multimedia production, digital and online communications, AI, graphic design and writing.

Learning and quality

We lead ECDPM's strategic and operational planning and facilitate progress reviews of the work we do, considering our strategy and the evolving contexts we work in. We strengthen monitoring and reporting, and provide advice to elevate the quality of ECDPM's outputs. We also help the Centre's workstreams refine their theories of change and research methodologies, including on [gender](#), [political economy analysis](#) and [policy coherence](#).



WORK AND OUTREACH IN 2025

Website



378,642 page views*

145,040 visitors*

* Visitors who decline cookies are not reflected in these numbers

Most-read in 2025



- (1) [A companion guide to the Global Europe instrument proposal](#)
- (2) [The Lobito Corridor: Between European geopolitics and African agency](#)
- (3) [Turmoil in USAID and the challenge for the EU's response](#)
- (4) [The EU's competing strategic interests in Africa: Priorities for the next MFF](#)
- (5) [The EU's partnerships around critical raw materials: Do its ambitions match reality?](#)
- (6) [The future of EU external financing under the next MFF: Merging or refining instruments?](#)
- (7) [Perceptions of the EU's international cooperation: Navigating troubled waters](#)
- (8) [Scaling up Global Gateway: Boosting coordination in development and export finance](#)
- (9) [The broken promise of loss and damage finance: Can Europe help?](#)
- (10) [US vs. EU development approach: One is dead, what's next for the other?](#)

Media



Interviews and articles on our work appeared in Africa in Fact, Africa Confidential, Devex, EURACTIV, Euronews, Forbes Afrique and Tech Policy Press, among others



38 media mentions and interviews

Work



42 commentaries



20 papers



22 briefs



2 guides



5 reports



1 study



39 events organised or co-organised

Social media



15,218 LinkedIn followers (+34%)



10,619 X followers



701 Bluesky followers



9,645 Facebook followers

Multimedia



8 podcasts in our new series 'Europolis: The Global Europe podcast'



2,200+ audio plays



100+ videos produced



17,500+ video views on YouTube and 20,000+ on LinkedIn

AI use

We implemented Centre-wide training in AI to ensure its appropriate use and to increase the efficiency, accuracy and quality of our work. We follow European Commission guidelines for AI in research organisations and an internal code of practice on ethical AI use.

Data protection

To ensure compliance with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we have implemented various policies and procedures, which we review and update annually. There were no data breaches at ECDPM in 2025. See our privacy policy at ecdpm.org/privacy.

— Box 2

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF ECDPM'S FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

In 2025, we undertook an internal assessment of our 2022–2026 strategy implementation. This assessment then served as a key input for an external evaluation of our strategy, conducted by an independent team from Scanteam and supported by an independent reference group of experienced evaluation professionals. The review covered the period from 2022 through October 2025.

The evaluation concluded that ECDPM provides excellent value for money and has been a highly successful and influential organisation, despite operating with modest funding and personnel. It found our work highly relevant to the fast-evolving and demanding policy agenda, thanks to our ability to adapt quickly to global shifts while remaining focused on long-term outcomes and core values.

The evaluation further recognised that ECDPM possesses a depth of knowledge and an EU-wide network that is unrivalled in the field. It found us to be exceptionally effective across our strategic goals, particularly regarding the role of the EU and Africa on the global

stage. Furthermore, it rated the uptake and implementation of our work by key policy constituencies as very good.

The evaluation also identified challenges for the future. It pointed to the need to continue and further develop the 'do' dimension of our work, while adapting to the rapidly changing and volatile global context. It also underscored the importance of maintaining the flexible resources required to respond effectively to the changing global landscape and retain our independence. Moreover, it recommended that we continue to focus on Africa and Europe, while selectively extending our geographical reach where we can add value. Finally, it suggested we rethink our results reporting, given limitations of the theory of change approach for the type of work we do.

We will take these challenges into account in our new strategy for 2027–2031. In particular, we will further develop our 'think and do' focus, put renewed emphasis on ensuring the quality and flexibility of our funding, clarify our geographic ambition, and develop a clearer results framework for uptake and influence.



— Box 3

GENDER MARKER



ECDPM's gender marker, introduced in 2022, guides staff to incorporate gender equality throughout our work. It promotes the use of a gender lens and helps staff rank their research according to five categories, from 'gender blind' to 'gender transformative'. Our target is for all our work to rank at least 'gender sensitive'.

In 2025, we used AI to help assess our publications, comparing the results against a human assessment of samples to triangulate and validate our findings. The large majority of our publications was categorised as 'gender aware', and there was a continued reduction in 'gender blind' publications.

Uptake of the marker is guided by our gender coordinator, our two cluster focal points and the outreach and impact department. They encourage staff to consider gender and use the gender marker when planning their work, while strengthening the visibility of ECDPM's work on gender. In 2025, they organised a session for ECDPM staff on how to mainstream gender equality in the increasingly challenging geopolitical landscape.

Finances

The international development landscape continues to shift. Geopolitical tensions, changing alliances and tighter public budgets are increasingly shaping how and where funding is allocated. While priorities such as climate action, resilience and equitable partnerships remain important, there is a clear move towards more interest-driven cooperation, particularly within the EU. At the same time, funding is becoming more competitive and often more short-term in nature.

These developments continue to affect organisations such as ECDPM. There is strong demand for policy-relevant and practical work, but also intensified competition for funding, especially flexible, institutional funding. Expectations around visibility, partnerships and demonstrating impact have also increased.

In response, ECDPM has adapted how it works. We maintain a focused core team, while making more use of networks and partnerships to remain flexible and responsive. We also keep a close eye on costs, without compromising on the quality and independence of our work.

Our income for 2025 amounted to €8.6 million, reflecting a slightly reduced position compared to the previous year. Institutional funding totalled €4.9 million and remained under pressure. Total expenditure amounted to €8.5 million, reflecting our continued attention to cost control. Our balance sheet remained strong, with total assets of €11.6 million.

Looking ahead, we are in the final stages of preparing our new strategy for 2027–2031. The strategy builds on what we learned over the current period and will position ECDPM to operate effectively in a complex and competitive environment. Our focus remains on delivering meaningful policy impact, working with the right partners and ensuring the organisation remains financially sound.

Accountability

We continue to strive for the highest standards of accountability and transparency. Annually, an external auditor reviews our finances, financial procedures and internal control mechanisms. Our current auditor, EY, confirmed that our 2025 financial statements give a true and fair overview of the Centre’s financial position. The detailed financial report is available for review at our headquarters in Maastricht.

ECDPM funding overview 2025

Amounts represented in euros

INSTITUTIONAL FUNDERS		Total funding
Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs*	Netherlands	2,991,741
Belgian Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation*	Belgium	455,880
Irish Aid, Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*	Ireland	400,000
Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*	Denmark	299,634
Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Defence, Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade*	Luxembourg	273,370
Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs*	Finland	257,224
Austrian Development Agency (ADA) / Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs	Austria	200,000
Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs / Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)*	Sweden	179,228
Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*	Estonia	6,913
TOTAL		5,063,980

* Also includes medium- and short-term funding. For a breakdown of institutional, medium-term and short-term funding, download our detailed funding overview at ecdpm.org/funding.

OTHER FUNDERS

Gates Foundation	United States	624,601
European Commission – DG INTPA F5 Digital Transformation	Belgium	344,047
Foundation to Promote Open Society (FPOS)	United States	310,869
European Commission – DG INTPA	Belgium	230,860
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	Germany	220,801
African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)	South Africa	187,226
Stiftung Mercator	Germany	136,642
European Climate Foundation (ECF)	Netherlands	128,183
TradeMark Africa (TMA)	Kenya	119,905
European Commission – DYNAMIG – Kiel Institute for the World Economy	Belgium	111,023
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	Italy	103,735
European Commission – SEA 2023 LOT 17 – Particip	Belgium	97,263
Agence Française de Développement (AFD)	France	80,258
European Commission – SIEA 2018 LOT 3 – International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)	Belgium	73,251
Search for Common Ground	Belgium	61,421
ODI	United Kingdom	59,010
European Commission – StEPPFos – European Research Executive Agency (REA)	Belgium	51,482
Global Challenges Foundation	Sweden	50,972
Africa-Europe Foundation	Belgium	49,086
European Commission – EVA 2020 – Particip	Belgium	47,321
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)	Austria	39,341
Open Society Foundation (OSF) Services Berlin	Germany	38,426
European Investment Bank (EIB)	Luxembourg	35,000
European Commission – DG INTPA G5	Belgium	34,032
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Senegal	29,770
European Commission – SEA 2023 LOT 16 – Particip	Belgium	28,460
Stichting Aids Fonds – Soa Aids Nederland	Netherlands	25,600
Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)	United States	20,000
Save the Children Europe	Belgium	18,200
European Commission – SEA 2023 LOT 17 – Particip	Belgium	17,030
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	Italy	16,369
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)	United Kingdom	15,000
International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)	United Kingdom	14,732
Enabel	Belgium	12,704
SED Consultants	Greece	12,250
European Commission – DG INTPA G4	Belgium	11,251
Ngo-federatie	Belgium	11,000
ACODEV	Belgium	9,000
European Commission – SIEA 2018 – Altair Asesores	Belgium	8,253
Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA)	Sweden	8,250
Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA)	Netherlands	5,760
Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)	Belgium	5,000
ODI Global	United Kingdom	4,688
United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	Belgium	4,500
Particip	Germany	4,200
Ifok	Germany	3,825
Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland (RVO)	Netherlands	3,035
University of Birmingham	United Kingdom	2,969
Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)	Italy	2,728
Various other funders < Euro 2,500	Various	938
TOTAL		3,530,267

GRAND TOTAL

8,594,247

Balance sheet

As of 31 December 2025
In thousands of euros

	2025	2024
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Intangible fixed assets	1	55
Tangible fixed assets	1,834	1,914
Financial fixed assets	5,181	4,989
Total non-current assets	7,016	6,958
Current assets		
Receivables	1,075	1,563
<i>Payments in advance</i>	112	124
<i>Trade debtors</i>	963	1,439
Taxation contributions	33	17
Cash	3,520	2,961
Total current assets	4,628	4,541
TOTAL ASSETS	11,644	11,499
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Payables	333	502
<i>Trade creditors</i>	104	269
<i>Employee-related creditors</i>	31	47
<i>Employee-related taxation due</i>	198	186
Other liabilities	2,174	2,224
Provisions	529	529
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,036	3,255
EQUITY		
Retained reserves from prior periods	8,608	8,244
TOTAL EQUITY	8,608	8,244
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	11,644	11,499

Income and expenditure account

From 1 January until 31 December 2025
In thousands of euros

	2025 actual results	2025 budgeted results	2024 actual results
INCOME			
Institutional funding	4,851	4,668	5,204
Other funding received	3,743	3,973	3,743
Other income	6	2	50
TOTAL INCOME	8,600	8,643	8,997
EXPENDITURE			
Direct operational expenses	(1,155)	(1,164)	(1,150)
Salaries and other personnel costs	(6,062)	(6,567)	(6,790)
Accommodation expenses	(375)	(367)	(328)
General and administrative expenses	(562)	(396)	(490)
Information technology expenses	(106)	(129)	(108)
Depreciation	(155)	(136)	(145)
Other miscellaneous items	(39)	(37)	(38)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(8,454)	(8,796)	(9,050)
OPERATING RESULTS	146	(153)	(53)
INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO			
Interest and dividend income	75	*	133
Result of sales	173	*	72
Result on market value	(26)	*	200
Banking costs	(4)	*	(13)
TOTAL RESULT OF THE INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO	218	0	392
TOTAL RESULT	364	(153)	339
ALLOCATION OF RESULTS			
Contribution to retained reserves from prior periods	364	(153)	339

* The investment portfolio results are not taken into account in ECDPM's budgeting process.

— ECDPM in 2025

Our people



ECDPM is home to an international team of policy, communications and support staff.



— ECDPM in 2025

Our people

Investing in our people

We encourage staff to grow professionally. To facilitate this, we allocate each staff member a yearly budget. This year, our staff took part in a range of training programmes to improve their skills and efficiency. These covered languages and communications, ICT and AI, finance and project management, human resources and mental well-being, and occupational health and safety. In addition, staff participated in training to broaden their thematic knowledge.

Diversity and inclusion

We believe that a gender-balanced and diverse group of staff from Europe, Africa and beyond encourages new ideas and different ways of thinking and working. We aim to be an equal opportunity

employer and promote diversity and inclusion among our staff and candidates – irrespective of gender, age, nationality, race, culture, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disability. That commitment is detailed in our [diversity and inclusion strategy](#).

Throughout 2025, we implemented and actively monitored our action plan for 2024–2025, with support from a dedicated working group. We also published a wider [gender equality plan](#), which highlights our ongoing commitment in this area.

Safety, health and well-being

In 2025, no serious incidents or accidents occurred at our ECDPM offices or during our travels. We continue to take all necessary steps to ensure a safe and healthy workplace and travel practices. Multiple procedures and safety measures are in place:



- Providing ergonomic office furniture and equipment to minimise occupational hazards associated with computer use.
- Facilitating staff requests for evaluations aimed at preventing or limiting health-related risks at work, in line with the Dutch Occupational Health and Safety Act.
- Providing training for a team of emergency response officers who are certified on an annual basis.
- Conducting travel risk assessments and security briefings, and having emergency protocols in place for those visiting potentially high-risk areas.

The mental well-being of our staff remains a top priority. We continue to implement initiatives to ensure our staff feel supported, both in and out of the workplace. For instance, we partner with the OpenUp platform to provide our staff with online tools to support their mental well-being. To foster social connection and a sense of community, we organise regular events and activities that bring colleagues together in informal, non-work settings.

In 2024, we conducted a staff survey to assess mental well-being and identify areas where ECDPM can provide enhanced support. Led by the human resources team and a dedicated mental well-being task force, the survey provided valuable insights that informed a 2025 action plan to improve employee well-being, enhance productivity and reduce work-related stress.

Sick leave

In 2025, our average sick leave was 5%.

Staff confidential advisers

We have two confidential advisers whom staff can approach to discuss any concerns or difficulties they face.

Our works council

Our works council represents staff on a variety of matters, especially personnel policy and employment conditions. Throughout the year, the works council had constructive dialogues with the management team and informed the Supervisory Board on a range of topics, including:

- Staff well-being
- ECDPM's hybrid working policies
- ECDPM's structure and strategy
- ECDPM's external evaluation

As the formal two-year term of the works council ended in December 2025, we organised elections towards the end of the year. In January 2026, a new five-member works council was constituted.



Governance

Members of our Supervisory Board in 2025



Adebayo Olukoshi (Nigeria)
Chair of the Supervisory Board
 Distinguished Professor at the Centre for the Advanced Study of Democracy and Development (Wits School of Governance, University of the Witwatersrand), Senior Associate Fellow at the Nordic Africa Institute, and Honorary Professor at the University of Edinburgh



Koos Richelle (The Netherlands)
Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Board (until November 2025)
 Member of the Dutch Advisory Council on International Affairs and Chair of its Commission on Development Cooperation, and former Director-General at the European Commission in the areas of development, employment, social affairs and inclusion



Marie-Roger Biloa (Cameroon)
 Chief Executive Director of the Africa International Media Group and its branch MRB Productions, editorial writer, and consultant on public policy and economic intelligence



Said Djinnit (Algeria)
 Senior Advisor to the European Institute of Peace and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, former Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, former Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and Head of the UN Office for West Africa, and former AU Commissioner for Peace and Security



Richard Dohmen (The Netherlands)
 Director at Grouwels Vastgoed, member of the Board of Stichting de Weijerhorst, and former financial auditor at PwC



Bience Gawanas (Namibia)
 Chancellor of the University of Warwick, former Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa to the UN Secretary-General, former Special Advisor to the Namibian Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare and the Minister of Health and Social Services, and former AU Commissioner for Social Affairs



Roeland van de Geer (The Netherlands)
 Advisor to several think tanks and non-governmental organisations across Africa and Europe, former EU Special Representative to the African Great Lakes Region, and former Ambassador to South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, the East African Community and Afghanistan



Ruth Jacoby (Sweden)
(until November 2025)
 Former Director-General for International Development Cooperation at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, member of the UN High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, former Executive Director of the Board of the World Bank, and former Ambassador of Sweden to Germany and Italy

In November 2025, Koos Richelle and Ruth Jacoby stepped down as members of the Supervisory Board. The Board, management and staff thank them for their years of outstanding service, dedication and commitment. As of November 2025, they serve as honorary advisors to the Supervisory Board.

Members of our management team in 2025



San Bilal (Switzerland)
Executive Director



Mariella Di Ciommo (Italy)
Associate Director of Europe and Africa in the World (until April 2025)



Sophie Desmidt (Belgium)
Associate Director of People, Partnerships and Peace



Bruce Byiers (United Kingdom)
Associate Director of Sustainable African Economies and Climate Action



Andrew Sherriff (Scotland)
Associate Director of Institutional Relations and Partnerships



Marleen Ackermans (The Netherlands)
Head of Human Resources



Virginia Mucchi (Italy)
Head of Outreach and Impact



Riaan Paul (South Africa)
Chief Operating Officer



For more information about our management team and Supervisory Board, visit ecdpm.org/about/governance.

Our partners

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

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

Institutional partners

Austrian Development Agency (ADA) / Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs

Belgian Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Irish Aid, Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Defence, Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs / Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Programme and project partners

Aapti Institute

ACODEV

Adelphi

Africa-Europe Foundation

Africa Nenda Foundation

African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET)

African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC)

African Union Commission (AUC)

African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)

Afrobarometer

Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

Agrinatura

Agri-PDB Platform

AKADEMIYA2063

Ambrela

Bellona

Bertelsmann Stiftung

Better Than Cash Alliance

Bioversity International

Caribou Digital

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Carnegie India

Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP)

CEBRI – Brazilian Center for International Relations

Center for Global Development (CGD) Europe

Centre for Ecological Research and Forestry Applications (CREAF)

Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)

Centre for Future Generations

Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana

CESO Development Consultants

Cities Alliance

Climate Action Platform for Africa (CAP-A)

Clingendael Institute

CONCITO

CONCORD

Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

Council of the European Union

Countdown 2030 Europe

DAI Global

Danish Church Aid

Delegation of the EU to the AU

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

E3G

East African Community (EAC)

Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF)

ECCO Climate

Elizade University

Enabel

European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI)

European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA)

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

European Climate Foundation (ECF)

European Commission

European External Action Service (EEAS)

European Investment Bank (EIB)

European Parliament

European Partnership for Democracy (EPD)

European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)

European Research Executive Agency (REA)

European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)

European University Institute (EUI)

Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)

Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)

French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)

Fundaç o Getulio Vargas (FGV) Brazil

Gates Foundation

Global Challenges Foundation

Good Food Finance Network

Gor e Institute

Groupe ODYSSEE

HIVA – Research Institute for Work and Society (KU Leuven)

Ifok

INCLUDE Platform

Institute of Development Studies (IDS)

Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

Institute for Technology and Society of Rio de Janeiro (ITS Rio)

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

Interface

International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

Invest International

Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Joint European Financiers for International Cooperation (JEFIC)

Kiel Institute

King Baudouin Foundation

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)

Maastricht School of Management (MSM)

MDF Training & Consultancy

Mediterranean Alliance of Think Tanks on Climate Change (MATTCCCh)

Middlesex University Higher Education Corporation

Migration Policy Institute (MPI) Europe

Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P)

Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town

Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA)

Netherlands Food Partnership (NFP)

New Climate Initiative

Ngo-federatie

Open Forum Europe

Open Society Foundation (OSF)

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA)

Particip

Policy Center for the New South (PCNS)

Pooled Fund for International Energy

Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation

Pranava Institute

Research ICT Africa (RIA)

Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland (RVO)

Save the Children Europe

Sciences Po Paris

Search for Common Ground

SED Consultants

SNV Netherlands Development Organisation

South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)

Stichting Aids Fonds – Soa Aids Nederland

Stiftung Mercator

Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)

TeraMed initiative

Thinking and Working Politically (TWP) Community of Practice

TradeMark Africa (TMA)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

University of Birmingham

University of Luxembourg

Wageningen University & Research (WUR)

Wemos

European Think Tanks Group (ETTG)

Elcano Royal Institute

ECDPM

German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI)

Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)

ODI

Are you interested in partnering with us? Get in touch with Andrew Sherriff or Kathleen Van Hove via ecdpm.org/experts.

Sustainability

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

Integrating sustainability

Our Maastricht office – known as the Pelican House – is the only Art Nouveau building in Maastricht and is listed as a national monument by the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. In 2021, we received a five-year grant from the agency for the building's preservation. Due to its historic value, we are somewhat limited in the types of changes we can make to the building's interior and exterior. However, we remain committed to implementing sustainability improvements wherever possible.

We have integrated environmentally aware principles into our procurement and office processes. For example, we exclusively source office furniture made from sustainable materials. At our Maastricht office, we have introduced several smart solutions, including low-power light sensors and a temperature control system. These allow for real-time monitoring and reduce unnecessary energy consumption.

In 2026, we will relocate our Brussels office to a new multi-company building that meets passive building standards and incorporates cutting-edge technology and sustainable design principles. It holds BREEAM Excellent certification, is easily accessible by public transport and features offices furnished with high-quality, sustainably sourced materials.

Travel

We aim to reduce travel through intelligent use of electronic communications and video conferencing. We also incentivise public transportation, in particular by rail, to minimise our travel footprint. However, travel by plane is unavoidable, given the nature of our work. We therefore continue to participate in the Bluebiz CO2ZERO service, which contributes to the reforestation project CO2OL Tropical Mix in Panama and holds a 'Gold Standard for the Global Goals' certificate.

In 2025, our CO₂ emissions – based on the number of journeys undertaken and total distance travelled – decreased by 8%.

Sustainable sourcing

Our purchasing policy emphasises sustainable products and services. Whenever possible, we work with local suppliers who stand by this commitment. We also aim to offer healthy, sustainably sourced catering. Our cleaning services provider, too, is dedicated to environmentally friendly practices, including the use of natural cleaning products. This approach not only ensures a clean and healthy work environment for our staff and guests but also minimises our environmental impact.



Concept

The concept for this report was developed by Nina Thijssen, Virginia Mucchi and Yaseena Chiu-van 't Hoff.

Texts

This annual report includes texts by Nina Thijssen, alongside contributions from colleagues. During the drafting phase, AI served as an editorial aid, while subsequent language editing was provided by Michelle Luijben. Proofreading was carried out by Jackie Dias, Annette Powell and Nina Thijssen.

Art direction and design

The original design concept was developed by Yaseena Chiu-van 't Hoff. Art direction and design for this report were led by Robin van Hontem and Nina Simons.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the report.

Photo credits

Front cover and page 3

Railway aerial. Photo: [AerialPerspective Works via iStock](#).

Page 4

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

Page 4

The late Dieter Frisch, former ECDPM Board member. Photo: ECDPM.

Page 5

ECDPM Executive Director San Bilal. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 6 and 7

ECDPM's San Bilal moderates a session at the Global Gateway Forum in Brussels. Photo: © European Union 2025.

Page 8 and 9

ECDPM's Virginia Mucchi moderates a fireside conversation at the DYNAMIG conference in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 12

Top – ECDPM's Andrew Sherriff speaks at the SDG Dialogue Forum in Vienna. Photo: © Martin Krachler, BKMC.

Bottom – ECDPM's Koen Dekeyser, Geert Laporte, Jean Bossuyt and Pol Vijverman with researchers from the HIVA - Research Institute for Work and Society (KU Leuven) at a high-level event in Antwerp, organised by the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office. Photo: © Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office.

Page 13

Top – ECDPM's San Bilal moderates a session of a high-level conference on the coordination of external financial tools, organised in Brussels by the European Commission and the Danish EU presidency. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Middle right – ECDPM's Amandine Sabourin at the Cities and Regions for International Partnerships Forum in Brussels. Photo: Estelle Hercot for the European Committee of the Regions and the European Commission.

Middle left – ECDPM's Sophie Desmidt speaks at an event organised by ECDPM and Search for Common Ground in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Bottom – ECDPM's Anna Knoll at a DYNAMIG policy workshop at ECDPM's Brussels office. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 14

Top right – ECDPM's Francesco Rampa facilitates a consultative meeting on the Lobito Corridor and agribusiness, organised by AUDA-NEPAD and ECDPM and hosted by the Government of Zambia in Lusaka. Photo: AUDA-NEPAD.

Bottom – ECDPM's Hanne Knaepen moderates a panel discussion at the Africa Climate Summit in Addis Ababa. Photo: Koen Dekeyser, ECDPM.

Page 15

Top – ECDPM's Poorva Karkare speaks at a closed-door discussion on skills development for critical raw materials in Guinea, organised by ECDPM and UNIDO in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Middle – Gautam Kamath moderates a high-level discussion on EU-India cooperation on AI, organised by ECDPM in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Bottom – ECDPM's Sara Ganesello speaks at an event organised by ECDPM and Search for Common Ground in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 16 and 17

ECDPM's San Bilal at an FfD4 side event in Seville, hosted by FEPS and the UN Brussels Office. Photo: © Marcelo Del Pozo / FEPS Europe.

Page 19

ECDPM's Alexei Jones speaks at an event organised by ETTG and the OECD at the ECDPM office in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 20

ECDPM's Kathleen Van Hove speaks at a high-level debriefing on the AU-EU ministerial meeting, organised by EUISS and ECDPM in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 22 and 23

ECDPM's Anna Knoll moderates a policy panel at the DYNAMIG conference in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 25

ECDPM's Amandine Sabourin at a public hearing on the Global Gateway, organised in Brussels by the European Parliament's AFET and DEVE committees. Photo: © European Union 2025 – Source: European Parliament.

Page 27

ECDPM's Sara Ganesello presents at an event organised by ECDPM and Search for Common Ground in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 28

ECDPM's Alfonso Medinilla speaks at an event on EU-India clean tech cooperation, organised by ECDPM and the Indian Embassy to the EU in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 30 and 31

Former ECDPM policy officer Daniel Adeniyi at a session ECDPM organised with the JRC and FARA at the sixth AU-EU agriculture ministerial conference in Rome. Photo: © European Union 2025, licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Page 32

ECDPM's Bruce Byiers presents at the 2024 Africa Trade and Development Forum in Kigali, organised by TradeMark Africa. Photo: TradeMark Africa.

Page 34

ECDPM's Melody Musoni speaks at a high-level event organised by Research ICT Africa and ECDPM in Johannesburg. Photo: ECDPM - Keneilwe.M Photography for Research ICT Africa and ECDPM.

Page 36

ECDPM's San Bilal and Chloe Teevan record a podcast at the ECDPM office in Brussels. Photo: Aruuke Asylbekova, ECDPM.

Page 39

ECDPM's Virginia Mucchi moderates a session at a high-level debriefing on the AU-EU ministerial meeting, organised by EUISS and ECDPM in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Page 44

Top left – ECDPM's Volker Hauck during a visit to the Gorongosa District Administration in Sofala Province, Mozambique, for the external strategic evaluation of the EU's support to Mozambique (2014-2024). Photo: ECDPM.

Top right – ECDPM's Chloe Teevan speaks at a roundtable discussion on AI in diagnostics, organised by ECDPM in Brussels, with financial assistance from the EU. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Bottom left – ECDPM's Philomena Apiko speaks at a roundtable discussion on AI in diagnostics, organised by ECDPM in Brussels, with financial assistance from the EU. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Bottom right – ECDPM's Poorva Karkare meets with the DRC's foreign trade minister, Julien Paluku Kahongya, in Kinshasa. Photo: Communication Unit of the DRC Ministry of Foreign Trade.

Page 45

Top – ECDPM's San Bilal and Kathleen Van Hove at an informal dialogue between African and European ambassadors, organised by ECDPM and UNDP in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Middle left – ECDPM's Amandine Sabourin at a roundtable on democratic trends in Africa, organised by Afrobarometer and ECDPM in Brussels. Photo: Jonathan Hunter, ECDPM.

Middle right – ECDPM's Koen Dekeyser takes part in a panel discussion on technology for sustainable agrifood systems transformation in Africa, organised by the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office and FAO in Brussels. Photo: Birgit Engelen, with thanks to the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office.

Bottom – ECDPM's Alfonso Medinilla moderates a panel discussion at the Africa Climate Summit in Addis Ababa. Photo: Koen Dekeyser, ECDPM.

Page 47

Verengai Mabika and ECDPM's Katja van der Meer, Philomena Apiko, Sasha Pearson and Melody Musoni at a high-level event organised by Research ICT Africa and ECDPM in Johannesburg. Photo: Keneilwe.M Photography for Research ICT Africa and ECDPM.

Page 49

ECDPM's board members at ECDPM's head office in Maastricht. Photo: Nina Thijssen, ECDPM.

Page 53

ECDPM's head office in Maastricht. Photo: Ernst van Loon.

Contact us

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

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

Maastricht office

The Pelican House (head office)
Onze Lieve Vrouweplein 21
6211 HE Maastricht, the Netherlands
+31 (0)43 3502900
info@ecdpm.org

Brussels office

Rue Guimard 9
1040 Brussels, Belgium

linkedin.com/company/ecdpm
bsky.app/profile/ecdpm.org
x.com/ecdpm
facebook.com/ecdpm

ecdpm

www.ecdpm.org