

**Country: Poland**

Poland welcomes the meeting of the European Council on the 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> May in Brussels, discussing the future of the European Union, in particular the relations of ACP countries. Poland looks forward to discussing the post-Cotonou framework for EU-ACP relations and delivering EU development goals.

Poland has been a member of NATO since 1999 and joined the EU in May 2004. With a population of 38.1 million it is the 6th most populated country in the EU. Poland's capital is Warsaw and it has a population of around 2 million inhabitants. Poland became an independent state in 1918, after gaining its sovereignty from Germany. Poland shares land borders with 7 countries: Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany, Russia.

**Financial contributions to the EU:**

Breakdown of Poland's finances with the EU in 2016:

- Total EU spending in Poland: € 10.638 billion
- Total EU spending as % of Polish gross national income (GNI): 2.61 %
- Total Polish contribution to the EU budget: € 3.553 billion
- Polish contribution to the EU budget as % of its GNI: 0.87 %

Poland was the main beneficiary of the EU budget in 2013. It received from the EU budget more than three times its national contribution.

**Poland's view on Issue One – Post-Cotonou Framework for EU-ACP relations -**

**A framework to replace Cotonou must be forward-thinking and cognisant of ongoing contextual challenges, as well as the European Union's broader policy frameworks, and should seek to maintain the EU's position as key partner with the ACP states.**

The Cotonou Agreement has been the framework for the EU's relations with 79 countries from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) since 2000. Poland sees the EU's longstanding relationship with the ACP countries as essential to formulating the framework post 2020. ACP-EU cooperation needs to be adapted to continue to address new challenges including climate

change, food security, regional integration, State fragility and aid effectiveness. This will help building peaceful, stable, well-governed, prosperous and resilient states and societies at our borders and beyond and deliver on our objective of a multilateral rules-based order addressing global challenges (*Geert, 2012*)

Poland supports the Joint Communication presented on 22 November 2016 which sets out the ideas and proposed building blocks for a political partnership with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries post 2020. This builds on the internationally agreed UN 2030 Agenda, which provides a universal set of common objectives and on the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy, which provides strategic guidance on the EU's external interests and ambitions. The Communication is also coherent with the Commission proposal to revise the European Consensus on Development (*European Commission, 2016*)

Poland would like to see a renewed political partnership. Partners on both sides will need to undertake significant changes in order to make their future relationship right for the task in today's world and to forge a powerful alliance delivering on key priorities. Poland supports the EU when considering that decision-making and implementation of the new partnership will require an important shift towards the regional levels. Furthermore, future relations should link up ACP countries and neighboring regions, which are not part of the current CPA, but play a key role in relation to key objectives as peace and security or better managed migration (*Polish Aid, 2018*).

The ideal partnership would be to agree with the ACP partner countries on an umbrella agreement with common values and interests and facilitating increased cooperation at international level. It should go together with regional tailored partnerships for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, to allow better addressing specific regional opportunities and challenges faced. Europe and the ACP share principles which should remain the foundations of our societies: peace, democracy, good governance, the rule of law and the respect for human rights. On top of that, a renewed partnership would strengthen the political dialogue and consolidate our trade agreements.

Poland wants it made clear that Africa is a continent of huge opportunities, but still faces a number of conflict situations and challenges, as poverty, unemployment and inequality remain

high. Priorities in this partnership should focus on good governance, human rights, gender issues and inclusive sustainable growth.

In regards to Brexit, the EU will need to discuss future cooperation with the UK in terms of contributions to the EU-ACP future partnership. Poland would like to see the possible contribution from third parties to the future framework to ensure the budget is able to support the initiatives envisioned by the EU for ACP countries.

Poland proposes that in the next partnership framework improvements to social infrastructures and services need to continue because the population growth is stagnating these initiatives. Population growth hasn't been given sufficient attention and is, in many ACP countries, becoming a significant factor contributing to potential vulnerability. Addressing the issue of population growth would strengthen the ACP framework and ensure that the essential infrastructure and services are being provided.

Any future framework needs to have the Sustainable Development Goals and the EU Global Strategy at the heart of decision making. Poland urges Member States to keep in mind the potential consequences of Brexit when negotiating a new framework as this will impact any future agreement socially, politically and economically.

The framework Poland believes will best suit future relations is Regional agreements between the EU and Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific with an overarching ACP-EU framework. This would mean keeping the ACP Group as a common platform to address issues of common concern to Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. It would address issues per region. For example, from the perspective of the Pacific, climate change, renewable energy and the sustainable development and management of natural resources were identified as key priorities. Climate change is the topic “par excellence” around which common interest could be built in all three ACP regions. In addition there are the challenges regarding natural resources that should also attract the interest of Africa and the Caribbean. The ACP as a Group and the Pacific countries and region are confronted with major challenges in the coming years. There seems to be an increasing awareness that it is not in the interest of the ACP Group to deal with too many objectives. More than ever the slogan “Do less and choose better” seems to be at the order of the day. This is a slogan Poland supports.

The future EU-ACP relationship has the potential to be of great value. It can be of growing importance if it is properly placed in the context of foreseeable global trends.

**Poland's views on Issue Two – Delivering EU's Development Goals -**

**The modalities by which developmental goals incorporated into a post-Cotonou framework are to be achieved must be at the heart of our discussions.**

With regards to Poland's contribution to the 11th EDF the outlook is cautiously positive. As Poland is a relatively new EU member state as well as a new donor state, Poland has just recently finalized its own development cooperation policies to suit its new role on the global stage (*Werner, 2011*). Poland has taken steps to increase its activities in terms of development by introducing new policies and including Non-Government Organizations in its discussions.

Being new to the EDF process, Poland has not taken a strong stand on many of the issues at hand. While MS contributions to the EDF are somewhat related to their contributions to the overall EU budget, the EU 12 countries which include Poland, chose to negotiate a lower initial contribution for the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF, as they adjusted to their new role as donor states. Poland currently contributes to the EDF 1.3% or €294.8 million. In discussions over contributions to the next EDF Poland will likely attempt to negotiate a similar amount (*Werner, 2011*).

The 12<sup>th</sup> EDF will be a renewed effort to achieve the objectives outlined by the Cotonou Agreement, which will reiterate its position and relationship building role with ACP countries. The EU will involve non-state actors to insure accountability, transparency and effectiveness of aid challenged through the EDF. It is of top priority that steps be taken to ensure matters involving development, poverty eradication and democratization of ACP countries are of top priority (*Joint Communication to the European Parliament and Council, 2016*).

**The EU remains the leading donor of ODA, but is ODA sufficient for achieving development outcomes, or should emphasis be placed on other drivers such as trade?**

From Poland's beginning of building a democracy and market economy in 1989, to its ascension into the EU in 2004, Poland may serve as an example of how to secure sustainable

economic development. Although ODA is an imperative aspect of ensuring sustainable development of a country, there are many other factors at play when it comes down to ensuring sustainable and independent economic and political growth for developing countries.

It is inherently important to ensure political development in unstable countries within the ACP. Without stable, democratic government, ODA cannot be effective in terms of insuring development of any kind to the country in question. ACP diversity and exclusions need to be taken heavily into consideration. Although Poland does recognize that there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach, Poland provides an example of how with the correct support, it is possible to reform politically and economically and ascend to ‘developed’ status.

An effective formula to reach out to developing countries should highlight the delivery of knowledge and experience, as well as co-ownership of the development process. For example; it may include the appointment of ‘modernization ambassadors’ including top level experts or former political leaders with hands on experiences in policy making and implementation (*International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2015*).

To ensure that Poland’s ‘lessons learned’ stay relevant to other countries, it is vital to take into account the uniqueness and specifically each country’s political and economic environments. In which case the EU may have to diversify its advice and prepare different approaches for; A. countries struggling with transitioning from authoritarian to democratic rule. B. for developing countries in need of structural reform and C. for countries which are in various ways similar to Poland, and so may be willing to exchange experiences and strategies. The example of Poland should be seen as a model guideline, as opposed to a literal ‘steps to take’ guide to transition and establishment (*International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2015*).

Parameters and considerations need to be put into place to ensure optimum impact and prevent the ACP countries emerging potential in the global market from becoming over-stretched. Poland could draw lessons from its most innovative institutional models, such as local self-government reform, pension reform, fiscal discipline or its bank guarantee fund (*International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2015*). To further provide knowledge and experience, Poland may also draw from its experiences with its integration with the EU, and ideas about the most efficient ways of investing in reforming structural funds and

how best to use development assistance during transition. However, these lessons are best taken on by middle income countries that have already ascended from the status of ‘developing nation’. These countries might include; Chile, Colombia, Uruguay, Brazil and Mexico. EU integration lessons may be useful for countries such as Chile, Colombia Peru and Mexico (*Carbone, 2013*).

**Relatedly, the presidency urges Member States to consider the ‘budgetisation’ of the European Development Fund as a mechanism for ensuring geographic and policy consistency.**

For maximum effectiveness of the new EDF budget, the EU needs to reconsider its complex procedures for aid fulfillment, as well as re-shaping some of its less practical methods of delivering aid to recipient countries, as such internal hurdles often cause delay in the delivery of what would otherwise be considered relatively effective aid programs (*Carbone, 2013*). It is important to realize that while the €30 billion budget for the 12<sup>th</sup> EDF is substantial, it will be spread over 79 countries and five years. It is therefore important that this money be spent considerably and efficiently on programs that will work best in promoting sustaining development for receiving countries (*Werner, 2013*).

**Finally, recognising the expansiveness of the SDG framework, the presidency urges Member States to consider the issue of prioritisation within the global goals, consistent with existing EU development and other policy frameworks.**

EU/ACP priorities in terms of SDGs should include -

- Promoting peaceful and democratic societies, good governance, the rule of law and human rights.
- Promoting inclusive sustainable growth and decent jobs for all
- Turning migration and mobility into opportunities and addressing these challenges together.
- Ensuring human development and dignity
- Protecting the environment and tackling climate change
- Alliance on common challenges

(*Joint Communication to the European Parliament and Council, 2016*).

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While economic integration and trade have an important role to play in development for ACP countries, a more balanced approach that includes social and political divisions is much needed to ensure stable and sustainable growth. Regional and political integration, as well as promoting good governance and peace should be at the forefront of discussions for the 12<sup>th</sup> EDF.

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