20. The European Union and global development cooperation: promoting minority rights?

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INTRODUCTION

Global development cooperation has many guises and motivations in theory and practice, and has significant controversies attached to it. The *Millennium Promise* encapsulated the well-established idea that developed states need to invest in developing states to assist them in overcoming the poverty trap (Sachs, 2005). Others argue that development funding is no more than a minimal return to parts of the world where European action has changed societies while depleting economic and social capital (Moyo, 2009). Still others argue that development funding is both a moral imperative and a pragmatic manner in which to fuel the global economy (Bellavitis et al., 2017). In articulating development as a central concept for 'policy design and implementation aimed at improving the quality of life of the world population', Medeiros's description of development as embracing four main pillars is useful in addressing the European Union's approach to this phenomenon. The four main pillars he identifies are: (i) global governance, (ii) global wealth, (iii) global resources and (iv) global sustainability (Medeiros, 2021). Yet irrespective of these pillars and what each may seek to achieve, it is the rate of unequal development between regions and countries, across each pillar, especially those that can be attributed to forces promoting 'globalisation', that has hastened polarisation and the creation of 'winners' and losers'. While this may be seem to be of little import to the foreign policy of the European Union (EU), such unequal development generates reaction chains that eventually impact the EU, by way of conflict, some of which may lead to refugee flows, resource scarcities on a humanitarian scale, impediments to global supply chains that end in the EU, and the costs of uncertainties in the face of instability. As Medeiros writes elsewhere, unequal global development is also the antithesis of the EU's political agenda, which promotes territorial cohesion in a given territory, another concept that may sit at odds with any activity that could promote 'minority' identities (Medeiros, 2016). While unequal development between regions and states, and within states, has been a facet of history, authors like Amin argue that the attempted integration of the entire world into a single capitalistic system of which the EU is a key driver heightened this polarisation (Amin, 2014). Inevitably, unequal development, especially where countries such as those in the EU become wealthier while others become more impoverished, would in normal times set off mass migratory flows as labour seeks a better return. The maintenance of strong boundary regimes, as with the EU at present, effectively curtails this trend (Maswood, 2018), though the impact of this discussion on the internal politics of European states (as elsewhere) has generated significant domestic tensions, including the fuelling of populist politics (Aiginger, 2020, pp. 38–42).

Medeiros describes a utopia of what development ought to see as its end goal, especially post-2015 (Gore 2015, pp. 417–32): 'humankind would have full control of nature, the capacity to use and produce essential resources in a sustainable way, [and] live a healthy and quality

life in a democratic and safe political environment' (Medeiros, 2021, p. 2). Against this objective the reality of the challenge is stark: 'On a crowded planet (around 7.9 billion inhabitants by April 2021) with a rising population … the main challenge is to produce more food and energy and provide fresh and safe water in a sustainable manner while mitigating and adapting to climate change' (Medeiros, 2021, p. 2). With projections of a world population of 9.7 billion by 2050, in addition to the prospect of a breach of planetary boundaries accompanied by catastrophic loss of biodiversity and climate-related crises, there are significant challenges ahead in combatting state fragilities and mega pollution, with inequality becoming acute as the differences between the haves and have-nots become accentuated (Sachs, 2020).

Irrespective of the justifications for development funding, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which build on the previous Millennium Development Goals, of which the EU is leading sponsor, have added key components and contours to the task through an articulation of Goals, Targets and Indicators. In order to assess the extent to which minority issues feature in the EU's development thinking, this chapter is divided into three parts. The first brief section will reflect discussions around global development funding and the perspective of the EU as an actor within the sphere. The second section will seek to offer insight into motivations that appear to drive the EU towards such action, interpreted mainly through an examination of existing funding streams, pushes for policy developments and calls for actions in support of capacity-building that are encouraged, funded, monitored and evaluated beyond European borders. This analysis of the theory will be cross-checked and validated against the specific experience of Minority Rights Group International (MRG), a 50-year-old organisation that is the world's premier civil society organisation (CSO) working on global minority and indigenous issues, which has submitted tenders and implemented EU actions in many parts of the globe. The chapter ends with some tentative conclusions regarding the extent and importance of EU support for minorities as reflected in development funding. The main contribution of the chapter lies in (i) providing an insight into how development thinking impacts the overall EU agenda, (ii) a methodology outlining how this can be assessed against the goal of seeking to protect and promote the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples beyond Europe, and (iii) offering an analysis of how these principles have translated into practice, in a bid to complement the other contributions in this volume.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING AND THE EU AS AN ACTOR

The controversies that attach to global development are worth briefly touching on, since they are germane to understanding whether the EU, when it acts in this space, is seeking to further its own interests through other means or reaching out in the spirit of global cooperation intended by the drafters of the United Nations (UN) Charter in the aftermath of World War Two. The notion that people living in a specific part of a country, a region or the world may be concerned about another section of the country, region or world, traces back many centuries and has been a driving concern of some of the most notable intellectuals in global history, including Ibn Khaldun and Aristotle. Indeed it could be argued that concern for 'development' per se is intrinsically linked to concepts that view humanity as a collective, with an emphasis on the need to 'progress'. In this sense the notion of development is driven significantly by the human empathy that is equally central to the development of the discourse of minority (and indeed human) rights scholarship (Karshenas, 2016, pp. 664–85).

The distinction that immediately needs to be acknowledged and made explicit is the line that ought to exist but is sometimes hard to discern with a degree of certainty: between a staged intervention of any kind driven by empathy and the need to do good, and the prospect that such an intervention may be motivated by the need to acquire benefits for the giver, over the stated needs of acting to help the receiver of the intervention (Mills, 2020). In the most recent centuries the spectre and long-lasting impact of European colonisation casts a significant shadow over the concept of development funding, in terms of: (i) the impact and devastation of such colonisation and its legacies; (ii) the units (i.e., mostly post-colonial states) towards which such contemporary funding is directed; and (iii) the objectives such funding seeks to achieve. These issues need to be addressed in any discussion about the EU as an actor in the field, and this brief section will seek to touch upon this.

The impact and reach of actions perpetrated by European countries (some within and some now outside the EU) in overseas territories had significant exploitative and devastating impacts on diverse geographies and peoples (Castilla-Beltrán et al., 2018, pp. 66–80). Rather than being episodic (like similar actions perpetrated by others in previous centuries) these impacts became systemic, prolonging their durability beyond European action into the present day. This included, at a basic level, the legitimisation and systematisation of theft, through transfer of lands and territories away from those who ought to have been recognised as legitimate title bearers even by European mores (Castellino, 2020a, p. 20). The imposed property regimes deliberately misunderstood notions of *usus* and disrupted principles of the collective good in favour of an individualised notion of property ownership (Domínguez and Luoma, 2020, p. 65). This journey has, as a consequence, overseen and legitimised resource extraction for profit that has depleted global biodiversity and left the planet in an existential crisis approaching the breach of its natural boundaries. The process achieved on the back of empire-building was accompanied by the spread of a dominant religion, Christianity, and for some this may have even been a legitimate spur for territorial acquisition. Whether it was Christianity or the more sinister goal of 'civilisation', it is clear that commerce came to be a dominant feature in ensuring the subjugation of lands and peoples beyond Europe to European influence (Klerman et al., 2011, pp. 379–409). That the process was clothed in civility on occasion and that it was, at various points in time, accompanied by genuinely progressive Enlightenment Era thinking has often been used as justification to foreclose other legitimate questions about the injustice of colonisation (Carey, 2018).

At the macro level these principles translated immediately to the units left behind by the regimes: the 'independent' states that came into being post-colonisation that are outcomes of what Lord Salisbury in 1890 deemed to be 'lines drawn upon maps where no white man's foot has ever trod' (Jennings, 1963). The consequence of this line-drawing, placing communities that may have been antagonistic to each other or with very different trajectories into a single unified 'national' trajectory, brought strangers into houses, forcing renegotiating of cultural and societal mores at a rapid pace (Castellino, 2008). Throughout history conflicts grew as cultures clashed, and the growth in prominence of religions, especially those that believed their path to spirituality was exclusively the best, offered significant scope for dismissal of competing narratives. When religions were combined with martial might and commercially driven quests for wealth, the exploitation, subjugation and dominance of the *Other* became the new normal. The ebbs and flows of history track interludes of war and peace, with the depravity of war measured in genocides and massacres while the episodes of peace were characterised by

trade and intermixing of cultures generating a wider experience of prosperity despite its unjust distribution across the population.

Unlike previous episodes of colonial domination or subjugation, the end of European colonisation was characterised by the spread of the idea of monolithic sovereign independent states, deemed to govern territories attributed to them, usually by the preceding period under colonial rule (Deutsch and Foltz, 1966). This, effectively a privatisation of colonial rule, often privileged the most dominant ethno-religious group or the ones with the best links to the outgoing colonial regimes (Hopkins, 2000, pp. 311–20). The new incumbents slipped into the abdicated seat of power, but were often confronted almost immediately by questions over their legitimacy, the extent to which they could speak with a unified voice for all religions within the emerging entity and the extent to which the rules they would follow would adhere to pre-existing norms and cultures pre-colonial rule. Confronted with the potential chaos that could dismantle colonial structures, the new incumbents were reassured by departing rulers, and the emerging 'international community' dominated by these same powers, of their own legitimacy. Thus early post-colonial rulers steered a conservative line to: (i) consolidate exist-ence of the entity as a legitimate state and (ii) focus on questions of 'development', understood as a process of addressing entrenched poverty that characterised the depletion and exploitation of local resources to earn profit for 'entrepreneurs' in Europe.

Development funding became a means by which richer Westernised states 'assisted' transi-tion processes, ostensibly on the grounds of the emerging values of the post-World War Two order: the maintenance of peace and security, international cooperation and respect for human rights. Development, explicitly stated among the UN pillars and implied through its institu-tions, was a key lynchpin to restoring values after the brutalities of World War Two. While erection of a world order designed to ward off World War Three may have been among its founding norms, the UN in its first few decades was deeply engaged in the process of decolo-nisation, with development funding becoming a means to ensure that entities depleted of their natural resources and traditional structures could be supported as they emerged from colonial rule. This was assisted by UN organisations focussed on such issues (UNCTAD, UNDP, UNICEF and others), but also by exhortation towards wealthier states to ensure the flow of bilateral aid. European countries were often in the vanguard of the movement to provide such aid, for a variety of reasons both explicit and implicit. European countries recently bereft of empire found they still had significant interests within former colonies that needed to be main-tained; others may have been motivated by purer motives of seeking to assist in rebuilding. Other European countries, themselves recipients of significant transition funding through the Marshall Plan that enabled Europe to rebuild after the devastation of World War Two, saw this avenue as key to achieving global solidarity.

Knox and Marston's description of development processes is useful as a backdrop to under-standing how the EU has sought to act on the development stage. The authors suggest that such actions could, in general terms, take the form of seeking to garner (i) changes in the structure of the region's economy (for example, a shift from agriculture to manufacturing), (ii) changes in forms of economic organisation within the region (for example, a shift from socialism to free-market capitalism) and/or (iii) changes in the availability and use of technology within the region (Knox and Marston, 2015). The idea of assessing how any of these changes may impact the protection-oriented rights (such as the right to political participation or against the death penalty) and promotion-oriented rights (such as the right to health, or education) is an underexplored area that would require deeper analysis than is possible in this short piece.

But any assessment of the EU as a development actor would need to pay heed to the extent to which it can overcome its own contradictions, or as McMichael puts it, the tendency for

> official development, in advocating green market solutions, [to recycle] the problem as solution—a problem rooted in the geopolitics of an unsustainable global "metabolic rift" and a discourse of global ecology reinforcing international power relations through monetary valuation, and deepening the North's "ecological debt". (McMichael, 2009, pp. 247–62)

The 'development climate' in the EU, like elsewhere, is itself a market product, with the result that there remains a deep-set tendency to frame development solutions in market terms. Thus even the current 'Green Deal' of the EU remains based on market solutions such as carbon trading, emission offsets and biofuels, with the (albeit less strident than before) assumption that the current consumption will endure. McMichael traces the current market ontology to the politics of the security of the global North, which was framed as 'global ecology' as early as the Rio Earth Summit of 1992. From his perspective the 'goal' (rather than 'right') of the global development project has been 'to sustain energy, capital and commodity flows for purposes of military and political security as the environmental consequences of worldwide industrialization threaten[ed] to destabilize the Northern way of life' (Saks, 1993, p. 20, cited in McMichael, 2009). This leads to the conclusion that the 'recycling of the neoliberal market truth, as convenience for the development establishment and its corporate partners, represents a deeply inconvenient truth for humankind and its ecological foundations' (Saks, 1993, p. 20, cited in McMichael, 2009).

Despite these inherent contradictions and challenges, with transnational cooperation driving the process of European integration commencing from the Treaty of Rome via the customs union towards creation of the EU, the latter organisation came to play an important role in external relations of the Member States. As a consequence the EU today is a key actor in the global sphere. With human rights written into the centre of its mandate, its global engagement is necessarily multi-faceted and is reflected in a range of internal and external actions, as diverse as specific country engagements through Country Teams, formal Global Dialogues and other tools explored in the subsequent section.

MAINSTREAMING HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS IN THE EU'S GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Human rights and more specifically minority rights form an important part of the EU's external action priorities and objectives, and consequently affect the funding of these. This was immediately germane in the process of the expansion of the Union itself, where minority rights standards, as articulated in the European Commission (EC) Guidelines, formed an important priority in the process of enlargement. The priority was also reflected most clearly in the EU intervention following the dissolution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with the EC Guidelines being central to recognition of the independent states emerging from that process. Minority rights is of continued strategic importance in its Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood Policies (discussed elsewhere in this volume). It is thus not a surprise to see that minority rights features prominently in decisions made with regard to the development funding disbursed through the various strands of EU policy. The prominence of the general human rights mandate is also visible in the EU's last two Human Rights Action Plans,

2014–20 and 2020–27. Reference is also made in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) which effectively incorporates Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, with Article 49 strengthening compliance with the Copenhagen Criteria.

With no bespoke minority rights framework, the EU actively subsumes monitoring of minority rights worldwide (Benedek et al., 2012) under its *Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World*, published by the European External Action Service (EEAS), which includes a specific section on minority issues. The country reports contained within this document include specific analyses of the human rights context, specific priorities of the EU's action *in situ*, highlights of EU funding in that country, and progress made with regional and international human rights protection frameworks. The content of these analyses varies depending on specific socio-political contexts of each country and the EU's priorities in them as specified within the EU's country Human Rights Strategies. Many include commentary on the protection of vulnerable groups, with some explicitly citing specific minority communities and indigenous peoples. This drive by the Commission is reflected to some extent by the European Parliament (EP), which takes a political approach to the promotion and protection of minority rights.[1] Given the scope for divergence of opinions among Member States in this area, the EP has been active in encouraging the Commission to mainstream minority rights in its measures and actions, especially in its relations with third countries, such as in the context of political and/or human rights dialogues.[2] The EP also holds a permanent dialogue with the EEAS, the Council and the Commission on how policy priorities are approached, including addressing whether minority issues are being upheld,[3] and in its resolution regarding the annual report on human rights, the EP regularly addresses minority rights issues.[4]

One method to assess the EU as an actor in support of minority rights is to highlight the organisation's prioritisation of such rights in its funding streams and calls for action. However, to understand what shapes and sets up the priorities of the EU's development cooperation investment, it is fundamental to look at where and how resources are allocated. The EU's

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[1]   See https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/8437/eu-annual-reports-human-rights-and-democracy_en.

[2]   For instance, in the *EU China Diplomatic and Expert Dialogue* in which one of the authors participated, dedicated workshops on minority rights were hosted in Kunming (China) in 2003, designed to assuage suspicion around the content of Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights. For a more contemporary discussion on this dialogue see Max Roger Taylor, 'Inside the EU–China Human Rights Dialogue: Assessing the Practical Delivery of the EU's Normative Power in a Hostile Environment' *Journal of European Integration* (2020), https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2020.1854245.

[3]   Regulations establishing funding instruments often include notes on this; for example, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Regulation includes a Declaration by the European Commission on the strategic dialogue with the European Parliament. The Joint Declaration by the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission concerning funding of horizontal programmes for minorities, as annexed in *Regulation (EU) No 231/2014* of the European Parliament (hereinafter the IPA II Regulation) and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II), is also relevant.

[4]   The Committee for External Affairs (AFET) drafts a statement for adoption by Parliament with specific recommendations to guide EU policy, usually voted on during the December plenary session. The 2019 report, for instance, references indigenous peoples. See: www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2020/651999/EPRS_ATA(2020)651999_EN.pdf. For a report that references minority issues considered by the Parliament, see: www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2017-0365_EN.pdf.

external action funding (assessed here through the lens of the 2014–20 work) operates through a broad context of programs, with three distinguishable types of funding, with instruments and programs within them emphasising a thematic or geographic focus. The three types of funding are: (i) programmes developed under the EU general budget under the auspices of 'Global Europe', (ii) the European Development Fund (EDF; not part of the general EU budget but absorbed in 2021, as discussed below) and (iii) individual members' development funding that is administered by the members themselves. This section will focus on (i) to maintain coherence within the space constraints and reflect the MRG experience, with briefer commentary offered on (ii) to present a wider angle of actions within the scope of such funding, while excluding (iii) entirely as it pertains to members acting in their individual capacity rather than the EU as a whole.

Programmes under Global Europe

In the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014–2020,[5] several financing instruments coexist under 'Global Europe' (Heading 4),[6] most of which expired on 31 December 2020. Each budget line under Heading 4 corresponds to a specific funding instrument, with each funding instrument having its own legal basis, usually through a Regulation adopted by the EP and approved by the Council. Regulations set out the countries and themes to which development funding will be directed while also setting out the rules to do so. Each instrument is composed by thematic and/or geographic programmes, though their purpose varies within the broad objectives of the EU's external action. The EC and the EEAS draft a multi-year strategy and multiannual indicative programme (MIP) to guide implementation of each programme,[7] setting up priorities, objectives, expected results, indicators and internal financial allocation. These are ostensibly developed jointly by EU delegations, partner countries, local authorities and CSOs. Strategies are reviewed and updated half-way through the seven-year period of the MFF.[8] Relevant decisions regarding the content of these instruments are taken in the context of the so-called strategic dialogues between the EP and the EC. Once strategies and MIPs are approved, annual action plans and annual work programmes are drafted, outlining the actions to be funded and the grants to be outlined under each programme. The 'Global Europe' heading provides an umbrella for the following six main cooperation-development funding instruments of the EU's external action, which represent 6 per cent of the total EU general budget:[9]

1. European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)
2. Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)
3. Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)

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5   See generally https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2014-2020/funding-programmes_en.

6   See generally https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2014-2020/funding-programmes/heading-4-global-europe_en.

7   'MIP' is the technical term used for thematic programmes. Geographic programmes are called 'National Indicative Programmes' (NIPs) or 'Regional Indicative Programmes' (RIPs).

8   European Parliament and Council Regulation *(EU) No 236/2014* laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action [2014] L 77/95, Art 17.

9   Established by (EU) *Regulation No. 236/2014*.

4. European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)
5. Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)
6. Partnership Instrument (PI)

The following sub-sections will focus on each of these instruments, drawing out their specificity in protection and promotion of human and minority rights and offering a brief commentary about their efficacy. It should be noted prior to this analysis that there are other instruments under Heading 4 which impact development funding, but will not warrant commentary here due to relevance, coherence and space issues. These include: Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation (INSC);[10] macro-financial assistance for restoring sustainable financial situations while encouraging economic adjustment reforms;[11] external lending mandate in support of small and medium-sized enterprises in targeted third countries and the development of social and economic infrastructure and support of projects related to climate change;[12] guarantee fund for external action;[13] European Fund for Sustainable Development;[14] Humanitarian Aid Instrument[15] to provide relief and protection to victims of natural or man-made disasters outside the EU; Common Foreign and Security Policy; the Instrument for Greenland; and the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community.

European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights

As the instrument that funds human rights work, in the framework of the EU's Development Aid,[16] the EIDHR is the main EU funding instrument integrating human rights into the EU's external action.[17] As a consequence, global minority rights work is supported significantly through this action, with the current iteration[18] established by *Regulation (EU) 235/2014* for 2014–20 (hereinafter the EIDHR Regulation). The aim of the instrument is clearly stated: to promote democracy and human rights in non-EU countries, with a broad range of actions falling within this remit. Unlike more traditional development aid that accrues to government, the EIDHR's assistance does not need the consent or collaboration of national authorities of the countries where it is provided.[19] This characteristic grants the instrument special independence, flexibility and efficiency, especially in addressing human rights issues in hostile environments, politically sensitive issues and/or complex cross-border challenges. Given its worldwide geographic focus, the EIDHR has an overarching role within the EU's international

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[10]   Established by *Regulation (EURATOM) 237/2014* on promotion of a high level of nuclear safety.
[11]   Usually adopted as a financial instrument used on a case-by-case basis to help countries that are mainly geographically close to the EU dealing with serious balance-of-payments difficulties.
[12]   Defined by *Decision (EU) 2018/412* amending *Decision No 466/2014/EU.*
[13]   Established by *Regulation (EC/EURATOM) 480/2009)*.
[14]   Established by *Regulation (EU) 2017/1601*.
[15]   Established by *Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96*.
[16]   EP and EC Regulation *(EU) No 235/2014* establishing EIDHR [2014], L 77/85, Article 1.
[17]   The instrument references Article 2 and 21 of the TEU, the *EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2014–2020)*, the EU Guidelines, and *Tool-Box: A Rights-Based Approach*, encompassing human rights for EU development cooperation and related Conclusions adopted by the Council 19 May 2014.
[18]   The preceding instrument was the *European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (2000–06)*, followed by the 2007–13 EIDHR established by *Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006.*
[19]   EP and EC *Regulation (EU) No 235/2014*, Point (1).

assistance policy: it is drawn upon to support countries where no other EU development cooperation exists, but is also used in a complementary manner when supporting countries that simultaneously benefit from other EU funding instruments. The EIDHR falls under the framework of International Cooperation and Development EU Policy, and has become a prominent instrument of the EU's foreign policy, with its thematic and worldwide geographical focus. Funds devolved under the EIDHR mainly accrue to CSOs (90 per cent) and international organisations (10 per cent), generally managed by EuropeAid/the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO). In the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020, the EIDHR was allocated €1,332.75 million (0.12 per cent of the MFF) (Dobreva, 2015).

With the regulation citing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,[20] the EIDHR is explicitly designed to support the promotion and protection of minority rights. This is further specified as an exhortation to encourage promotion of 'the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities',[21] and to:

> fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination based on any ground, including sex, race, colour, caste, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity.[22]

The EIDHR is also purported to promote 'freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief' and political pluralism, including through the support of 'members of marginalised and vulnerable groups'. Thus in comparison with every other EU regulation of funding instruments, this is the one that most directly references minority issues. The general scope contains five core objectives in Annex 1 that support: human rights and human rights defenders (HRD); other EU priorities in line with the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy; democracy; EU Election Observation Missions (EOMs); and key actors and processes, including international and regional human rights instruments and mechanisms, such as the promotion and monitoring of those mechanisms by civil society.[23] This enables the EIDHR to support CSOs and HRD working to promote respect and protection of human rights, fund electoral observation missions and development actions linked to promotion of democracy, and provide direct support to international, regional and local human rights instruments and mechanisms. While the description of the thematic objectives of the EIDHR are rather general,[24] in the context of the annual action plans of the instrument, we find actions such as Support Calls for Proposals targeting local civil society through Country-Based Support Schemes (CBSS)[25] aimed at local civil society and meant to promote human rights, including the promotion of indigenous peoples' rights, non-discrimination, and the rights of persons belonging to minorities, of persons with disabilities and of other vulnerable groups.

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[20]   UN Doc. A/RES/47/135 (3 February 1992).
[21]   EP and EC *Regulation (EU) No 235/2014*, Point (vii) of Point (b) of Point (1) of Article (2).
[22]   Ibid. Point (iv) of Point (b) of Point (1) of Article (2).
[23]   EP and EC *Regulation (EU) No 235/2014*, Annex 1.
[24]   Annex 1 of Regulation (EU) No 235/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for democracy and human rights worldwide (EIDHR).
[25]   See EIDHR Annual Action Plan for 2014–2020.

As a consequence, a variety of projects funded under this framework have had or are having a direct and/or indirect impact on the rights of minorities. It should be noted that, based on an overall review of the EEAS country human rights year reports, depending on the EU's human rights priorities in each country and their specific context, work on minority issues may be referred to under the overarching term of 'vulnerable groups' and addressed in the context of the promotion of freedom of religion or belief, or under the framework of actions addressing non-discrimination. Illustrative examples include projects in Cameroon (2019), focussed on protection of vulnerable populations living in conflict-affected areas in the northwest and southwest regions (linguistic minorities); and in Eritrea, where three new EIDHR contracts were awarded (€1 million) to strengthen civil society, including the rights of vulnerable groups. MRG, as the leading organisation working within this field, implemented the following EU projects funded under the EIDHR during its last strategic period (2016–20):[26]

1. Empowering Indigenous Land Rights Defenders to Prevent Climate Change;[27]
2. Ethnic Minority Defenders: Amplifying the voices of indigenous HRD to advocate for the rights to health and education;[28]
3. MARC – Turkey (Minorities, Accountability, Rights, Collaboration);[29]
4. Mobilising Civil Society for Monitoring Equality for Roma People in the Education and Housing Systems in Turkey;[30]
5. Pour un environment favourable a l'éradication de l'esclavage en Mauritanie;[31]
6. Pour la Consolidation des Capacités de la Société Civile Tunisienne dans la Lutte Contre les Formes de Discrimination;[32]
7. Protecting and Promoting the Human Rights of Discriminated Minorities in Egypt;[33]
8. Safeguarding Tribal Rights in the Context of Extractive Industries in India;[34]
9. Securing Recognition of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples and Their Rights in Botswana;[35]
10. Stratégie pur éradiquer esclavage en Mauritanie;[36]
11. Strengthening Human Rights Defender Organisations Working with Vulnerable Civilians in Iran and Iraq;[37]
12. Strengthening the Capacity of CSOs, HRDs and Media Houses to Challenge Discrimination Against Historically Marginalised People and Promote Their Human Rights in Rwanda;[38]

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[26]   Non-exhaustive list.
[27]   *EIDHR/2018/400-410*.
[28]   *EIDHR/2020/414-374*. EIDHR–CBSS programme.
[29]   *NEAR-TS/2020/419-945*. EIDHR–CBSS, Near Thematic Strategy (ENP).
[30]   *NEAR-TS/2015/369-375*. EIDHR–CBSS, Near Thematic Strategy (ENP).
[31]   *EIDHR 2017/383-549*. Thematic programme for civil society organisations and human rights, which overlaps directly with the Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities (CSO-LA) programme of the DCI.
[32]   *NEAR-TS/2017/393-592*. EIDHR–CBSS, Near Thematic Strategy (ENP).
[33]   *NEAR-TS/2016/2016/379-930*. EIDHR–CBSS, Near Thematic Strategy (ENP).
[34]   *EIDHR/2020/419-923*.
[35]   *EuropeAid/136116/L/ACT/BW (EIDHR-CBSS)*.
[36]   *EIDHR/2019/413-857*. Thematic programme for civil society organisations and human rights, overlaps directly with CSO-LA of the DCI.
[37]   *EIDHR/2016/376-911*.
[38]   *EIDHR/2018/396-163*. EIDHR–CBSS programme.

13. Supporting Religious Pluralism and Respect for Freedom of Religion or Belief across South Asia.[39]

Development Cooperation Instrument
The DCI is considered the main financial instrument in the EU budget for funding aid to developing countries,[40] and the second-largest instrument for funding EU development cooperation,[41] after the EDF, which as stated above used to be funded outside the EU budget and therefore out of the scope of this commentary. The DCI was established[42] to address several of the EU's external action objectives, with a key priority being poverty reduction, sustainable development and implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. As a consequence, the instrument is focussed on sustainable economic, social and environmental development; and the promotion of democracy, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights. Unlike the EIDHR this instrument falls under the policy framework of cooperation in third countries and international agreements and has both a geographic and thematic focus (for general insight, see Parry and Segantini, 2017). It is structured to cater for three types of programmes:

1. Geographic programmes supporting bilateral and regional cooperation with 47 countries in Latin America, South Asia, North and South East Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East; and 'other countries' that exclude beneficiaries of the EDF, ENI and IPA;
2. Thematic programmes, further sub-divided into (i) Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC), and (ii) Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities (CSO-LA);
3. The Pan-African Programme, focussed on Official Development Assistance (ODA) partner countries and international organisations, with a small percentage reserved for CSOs.

Like the EIDHR, the DCI is managed by the EEAS, with the support of the Commission through EuropeAid/DG DEVCO. In the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020, the DCI was allocated €19,661.64 million (1.82 per cent of the MFF) (Parry and Segantini, 2017). As the main development funding instrument of the EU budget, the main focus of the DCI, poverty alleviation, requires that in working towards this objective, cooperation should contribute to 'consolidating and supporting democracy, the rule of law, good governance, human rights and the relevant principles of international law'.[43] The protection of human rights is thus among the main general objectives of the instrument. Explicit reference to the protection and promotion of minority and indigenous peoples' rights is contained mainly under thematic programmes.

   The thematic area dedicated to human development has included focus on decent work, social justice and culture,[44] which enables explicit focus on inclusion and the protection of the rights of persons belonging to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including women and girls, persons belonging to minorities, religious minorities, people with disabilities and

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[39]   *EIDHR/2018/400-439*.
[40]   The SDGs and Agenda 2030 are specifically referenced to this instrument.
[41]   The preceding DCI was established by *Regulation No 1905/2006* under the previous MFF (2007–13).
[42]   *Regulation (EU) 233/2014*.
[43]   EP and EC *Regulation (EU) No 233/2014* establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation for the period 2014–2020 [2014], L 77/44, Point (b) of Point (1) of Article (2).
[44]   This GPGC is structured in five thematic areas.

indigenous peoples. Activities funded have thus included the promotion of social dialogue, non-discrimination, HRD and inter-cultural dialogue.[45] Other activities under the CSO-LA programme (previously known as NSA-LA), were specifically aimed at strengthening civil society and local authorities in partner countries, and included interventions in partner countries in support of vulnerable and marginalised groups through provision of basic services delivered through CSOs and local authorities. Despite its overarching coverage of human rights issues, including minority rights, the DCI has been criticised for insufficient human rights mainstreaming (MacKellar et al., 2017).

MRG has implemented the following projects under the DCI: [46]

1. Empowering Thai CSOs Representing Marginalised Communities in the Southern Border Provinces;[47]
2. Enhancing Political and Civil Rights of the Muhammasheen Community in Yemen;[48]
3. Reporting Effectively on Development, Minorities and Migration.[49]

Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
IPA II is a funding instrument dedicated to enlargement countries, and is the successor of the IPA programme established for 2007–13, replacing several former pre-accession assistance programmes.[50] The instrument helps current and potential candidate countries to cope with political and economic reforms necessary to progressively align to with EU rules, standards, policies and practices en route to EU membership.[51] Its major objective lies in harmonising national legislations to implement the *acquis communautaire* and facilitate accession to the EU. Its main beneficiaries are Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Kosovo) and Turkey. IPA II is generally managed by the EC through EuropeAid/DG DEVCO and the Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). In the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020, IPPA II was allocated €11.56 million (1.08 per cent of Heading 4) (Svášek, 2017).

We can state that the granting of support under this instrument is clearly linked to the respect of human and minority rights principles. Additionally, IPA II funding of programmes is aimed at enhancing respect for and protection of minorities and the integration of minority concerns as cross-cutting issues in all planned activities.[52] The instrument clearly states the rationale for assistance as being to:

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[45]   EP and EC *Regulation (EU) No 233/2014*, Part A of Annex II.
[46]   Non-exhaustive list.
[47]   *DCI-NSAPVD/2015/370-321*. DCI CSO-LA thematic programme.
[48]   *DCI-MED/2014/353-019*.
[49]   *CSO-LA/2017/388-349*. DCI CSO-LA thematic programme.
[50]   Established by the IPA II Regulation and *Regulation (EU) No 447/2014*. Preceding instrument the *Pre-accession Assistance* established by *(EU) Regulation No 1085/2006*.
[51]   The instrument references the Copenhagen Criteria and Article 212 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).
[52]   Joint Declaration by the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission concerning the funding of horizontal programmes for minorities, in the European Parliament and Council *Regulation (EU) No 231/2014* establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) [2014], L 77/11, Annex III.

pursue … achievement of the […] promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, enhanced respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, promotion of gender equality, non-discrimination and tolerance, as well as freedom of the media and respect for cultural diversity[53]

as well as the 'promotion of social and economic inclusion, in particular of minorities and vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, refugees and displaced persons'.[54]

This is logical since implementation of the Copenhagen Criteria is also identified as core to this instrument. The 'teeth' of the instrument as a tool to promote and protect minorities rights also lie in its monitoring mechanisms, where the establishing regulation states:

Progress towards achievement of the specific objectives […] shall be monitored and assessed on the basis of pre-defined, clear, transparent and, where appropriate, country-specific and measurable indicators [that cover] progress in the areas of strengthening democracy, the rule of law and an independent and efficient justice system, [and] respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities and vulnerable groups.[55]

This is also in line with a thematic priority of this instrument with regard to the functioning of institutions in line with the rule of law, which again explicitly cites minorities:

Interventions in this area shall aim at: […] promoting and protecting human rights, rights of persons belonging to minorities—including Roma as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons—and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of the media.[56]

IPA II assistance is structured around five policy areas linked to the enlargement strategy, viz. (i) reforms related to institution- and capacity-building; (ii) socio-economic and regional development; (iii) employment, social policies, education, promotion of gender equality, and human resources development; (iv) agriculture and rural development; and (v) regional and territorial cooperation, with (i) and (iii) tending towards the more pertinent for minority protection.[57]

The setting of the priorities and objectives for the seven-year period of assistance ending 2020 was conducted through strategic planning documents derived from Country Strategy Papers. These allowed for the tailored framing of financial assistance for each beneficiary, captured in Multi-Country Strategy Papers that outlined priorities and conditions for horizontal support to sector policies and reforms.[58] The Strategy Papers also enabled the identification of results expected to be achieved by 2020 through the assistance, actions necessary to reach them and indicators showing progress towards the results.[59] The identified priorities, translated into detailed actions, were included in annual or multiannual Action Programmes, with IPA II Action Programmes taking the form of Financing Decisions adopted by the EC.[60] Protection

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[53]   EP and EC *Regulation (EU) No 231/2014*, Point (ii) of Point (a) of Article 2(1).

[54]   Ibid. Point (iv) of Point (a) of Article 2(1).

[55]   Ibid. Point (ii) of Point (a) of Article 2(2).

[56]   Ibid. Annex II, Point (b).

[57]   Overview available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en.

[58]   Overview available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en.

[59]   Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, *Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Revised Indicative Strategy for Turkey (2014–2020)* (European Commission 2018).

[60]   Overview available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en.

for minority rights is implied in several of the nine priority sectors for funding of IPA II: democracy and governance; the rule of law and human rights; competitiveness and innovation; education, employment and social policies; transport; environment, climate action and energy; and agriculture and rural development.[61] The most explicit minority references are identified under the 'rule of law' priority. Depending on the country, the strategic papers contain indicators explicitly targeting minorities and/or offering a detailed references to minority issues,[62] normally subsumed under the more generic concept of 'vulnerable or disadvantaged groups', including children, women, people with disabilities and LGBTQ people – though explicit references are often made to Roma, national minorities[63] or sexual minorities,[64] depending on the country.

Many projects supporting the promotion and protection of minority rights have been funded in the framework of IPA II. In 2019, a number of IPA-funded projects were implemented in Serbia to support anti-discrimination policies and improve the situation of vulnerable persons, including the Roma, refugees and internally displaced persons, to a total value of €30 million, with €3.48 million dedicated to strengthening of protection of human rights and the rights of persons belonging to minorities in the framework of a reginal programme.[65] In Kosovo two IPA Civil Society Facility projects were funded to promote (i) fundamental rights of vulnerable and marginalised groups (€900,000), and (ii) the employability of vulnerable groups towards their inclusion in education and employment (€900,000). In Montenegro two projects (worth approximately €1.7 million) were supported: (i) the designing of sustainable solutions for internally displaced Roma, the promotion and protection of the human rights of Roma, Egyptians and other vulnerable groups, and gender equality; and (ii) a €3 million grant scheme to implement quality social services for the most vulnerable groups. In the framework of the IPA Sector Operational Programme for Education Employment and Social Policies (SOPEES), a further grant of €300,000 was awarded to strengthen the role of Roma mediators in the sector of inclusive education, and €300,000 was awarded to support/fund an awareness campaign against discrimination of ethnic minorities. With the focus of the grants being on beneficiaries in the region, MRG has only been supported by this instrument to work on initiatives led by local partners. Concretely, MRG supported the implementation of one IPA II project in North Macedonia, entitled 'From Action to Equal Rights for Roma'.[66]

European Neighbourhood Instrument
The ENI is the EU's main instrument for financing its so-called Neighbourhood region.[67] The ENI falls under the policy area related to cooperation with third countries and international

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[61] Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, *Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Indicative Strategy for Albania (2014–2020)* (European Commission 2014).

[62] Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, *Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Revised Indicative Strategy for Kosovo (2014–2020)* (European Commission 2018).

[63] Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, *Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Revised Indicative Strategy for Montenegro (2014–2020)* (European Commission 2018).

[64]   Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, *Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Revised Indicative Strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2014–2020)* (European Commission 2018).

[65] European Union External Action Service, *EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World: 2019 Country Updates* (European Union 2019).

[66] *IPA/2015/382006*. IPA II Macedonia.

[67] The ENI was established by *Regulation (EU) No 232/2014*.

agreements,[68] and directly contributes to the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The ENI sets out a framework for efforts to advance democratisation, good governance, political cooperation and economic integration with its beneficiaries. Its main objective is to bring the EU and its neighbouring countries closer by enhancing political cooperation and progressive economic integration between the Union and neighbouring countries (Perchoc, 2015). Its geographic scope includes 16 countries and territories east and south of the EU, structured into an Eastern Partnership (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and the Southern Neighbourhood (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Syria[69] and Tunisia) (Parry, 2016). The ENP is complemented by two broader regional initiatives, the Union for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Synergy, which includes ENP countries and other third countries not officially part of the ENP (Parry, 2016). The main beneficiaries of this instrument are international organisations, CSOs and partner countries, and like others the instrument is managed by the EC through EuropeAid/DG DEVCO in conjunction with DG NEAR and the EEAS. In the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020, the ENI was allocated €15.58 million (1.43 per cent of the MFF) (Parry, 2016).

The protection of minority rights is explicitly identified as a clear cross-cutting issue within this instrument,[70] falling within the priorities for cooperation, good governance, democracy, the rule of law and human rights, economic development for stabilisation, security, and migration and mobility. The instrument also stresses the 'fight against discrimination' as an underlying key concept to enhance establishment of 'sustainable democracy, promoting good governance, fighting corruption, strengthening institutional capacity at all levels and developing a thriving civil society including social partners'. However, as discussed below, it is not clear whether this is properly mainstreamed or if there are the necessary tools in place to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the actions taken in the ENI's framework towards these aspects.

While the ENI funds regional,[71] Neighbourhood-wide[72] and cross-border cooperation,[73] most of its funding is earmarked for bilateral cooperation, funding investment projects. This is based on the Single Support Framework (SSF),[74] a multiannual programming cycle that defines areas of focus for EU assistance, and specifies general objectives, expected results, indicators of achievement, indicative budgets and potential risks for each of the partner coun-

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[68]   The ENP references Article 8 TEU, section 5 and Articles 216–9, and was preceded by the *European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument* (ENPI).

[69]   The EU suspended bilateral cooperation with the Syrian government, including Syrian government participation in regional programmes, following the outbreak of civil war in 2011.

[70]   EP and EC *(EU) No 232/2014*, Point 21.

[71]   See generally https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/southern-neighbourhood/regional-cooperation-with-the-mediterranean-partners_en.

[72]   See generally https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/neighbourhood-wide_en.

[73]   EEAS, *Programming of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) – 2014–2020 Programming Document for EU Support to ENI Cross-Border Cooperation (2014–2020)* (European Union 2014).

[74]   Access to ENI country information, including all Partnership Priorities, the Single Support Framework and Action Plans: Countries of the Region – European Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement Negotiations – European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/countries_en.

tries.[75] The SSF is in line with the Partnership Priorities (PP) and bilateral ENP Action Plans. The Action Plans – eventually association agreements (AA) – are mutually agreed between the EU and each partner country, comprising a mix of legal, social and economic reforms that set the political framework for cooperation priorities. ENI assistance is conditional, which means support is directly linked to progress towards agreed reforms and EU standards.[76] Thus ENI programmes are designed based on partner interests, country priorities and characteristics, and progress achieved so far.

All ENP Action Plans/AA contain specific provisions for the protection of human rights, with occasional references to minority rights, in provisions such as 'to strengthen respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including media freedom and the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and to contribute to consolidating domestic political reforms'.[77] However, these provisions are few, and in general it is not clear what 'persons belonging to minorities' exactly entails. Similarly, all corresponding country PP and related SSF explicitly cite the protection of human rights, equality and fundamental freedoms. However, almost none (with few exceptions, such as Georgia) include explicit reference to minorities,[78] though some include references to 'protection of most vulnerable sections of society and/or protection of the most marginalised groups',[79] freedom of religion and belief,[80] or address issues of non-discrimination.[81]

Thus despite human rights protection being among the key principles for this instrument, minority protection is not the focus of the instrument, and is treated more as a cross-cutting issue. Furthermore, the ENI is an uneven instrument, with each country agreement being different impacting the prioritisation and presence of minority issues within each partnership (Benedek et al., 2012). Despite this, some actions funded under the ENI have had important impacts in the protection of human rights, especially in the context of strengthening rule of law; for example, financial support for Jordan under the ENI for 2017–20 included implementation of the justice sector reform through a dedicated programme. This did yield achievements, including improved access to justice, an increase in judicial inspections and

[75]   EEAS, *Programming of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) – 2017–2020 – Single Support Framework for EU Support to Egypt (2017–2020)* (European Union 2017).

[76]   'Conditionality is a route to enduring acceptance of values as precondition for the discussion of interests. The ENP uses certain enlargement instruments in the pursuit of regional foreign policy and must steer a course between making the promotion of values a precondition and striving for it as an effect.' See Perchoc (2015) op. cit., 79.

[77]   This, from the AA for Georgia, presents similar wording in some AP/AA. Other AP/AA containing explicit reference to minority rights are the AP for Israel and AA for Ukraine.

[78]   Access to ENI country information, including PPs, the SSF and Action Plans: Countries of the Region – European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations – European Commission
   https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/countries_en.

[79]   See *Euro-Mediterranean Agreement Between the European Communities and their Member States, of the One Part and the Arab Republic of Egypt, of the Other Part* (European Union 2004). Also see the Association Council, *EU–EGYPT Partnership Priorities 2017–2020* (European Union 2017).

[80]   See *European Union–Palestinian Authority Action Plan* (European Union 2013).

[81]   See *Relations Tunisie-Union Europeén: Un Partnerariat Privilégie D'action 2013–2017* (European Union 2013); *Programmation De L'Instrument Européen De Voisinage (IEV) (2014–2020) Cadre Unique D'Appui UE-Algérie (2018–2020)* (European Commission 2018) and *Cadre Unique D'Appui 2014–2020 Maroc* (European Commission 2014).

better-quality training by the Judicial Institute.[82] MRG implemented one programme under this stream, working in conjunction with local Roma groups in Ukraine on 'A Partnership For All: Developing Strategies for Socio-Economic Cooperation between Roma Communities and Local Authorities in Ukraine'.[83]

Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace

The IcSP was established as the main external funding instrument for peace-building and conflict prevention through provision of effective, consistent and integrated responses to emerging and full-blown crises in partner countries (Dobreva and Wegner, 2017).[84] Falling within the area of foreign policy and international cooperation and development, it encompasses a global programme with a thematic focus,[85] structured in three main areas/types of action: (i) conflict prevention, crisis preparedness and peace-building (9 per cent); (ii) global-transregional and emerging threats (21 per cent), and (iii) exceptional assistance (70 per cent) (Dobreva and Wegner, 2017). Actions in line with foreign policy priorities are managed by the EEAS through the Common Foreign & Security Policy (CFSP), with actions in line with cooperation development priorities directly managed by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development. This instrument devolves short- and long-term assistance in emerging and existing crises, conflict prevention, peace-building conflict prevention; and under DEVCO it draws long-term assistance addressing global and transregional threats and emerging threats, normally related to terrorism and organised crime. Humanitarian aid is not funded under this instrument (Dobreva and Wegner, 2017). In the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020, the IcSP was allocated €2.30 million (0.22 per cent of the MFF) (Dobreva and Wegner, 2017).

Aimed at supporting security initiatives and peace-building activities in partner countries, the protection of human rights and minority rights is, like the ENI, a cross-cutting issue within this instrument. Explicit encouragement is given for inclusion of issues such as the promotion of human rights and humanitarian law, and non-discrimination of vulnerable groups, including women rights, children's rights and indigenous peoples' rights.[86] It has three priority areas: (i) assistance in a crisis or emerging crisis to prevent conflict, which is non-programmable crisis response assistance and accounts for the largest proportion of the IcSP budget; (ii) assistance for conflict prevention, crisis preparedness and peace-building, which is the IcSP area in which civil society work tends to be funded; and (iii) addressing global, transregional and emerging threats,[87] the programmable part of the IcSP. Cooperation with partner countries and regions is based on the IcSP's thematic strategy papers and an MIP. Ideally jointly developed with partner countries, civil society, and regional and local authorities, these instruments provide the framework for assistance and focus areas for funding in the programmable part of the

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[82]   EEAS, *EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World: 2019 Country Updates* (European Union 2019).

[83]   *ENI/2016/376-039*. ENI Ukraine Civil Society Support Programme.

[84]   *(EU) Regulation 230/2014 2014*.

[85]   Other policy instruments relevant to this instrument cite Articles 209–12 TEU, the thematic strategy papers and multiannual indicative programme and the *Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*. It was preceded by the *Instrument for Stability* established by *(EU) Regulation 1717/2006*.

[86]   EP and EC *Regulation (EU) No 230/2014* L 77/1, Point (4) of Article (2).

[87]   Ibid. Articles 3–5.

IcSP, including specific objectives for the priority areas, performance indicators, the period of assistance and financial allocations per action. Under priority area (ii) relating to post-conflict and post-disaster recovery, explicit reference is made towards the 'protection, participation and empowerment of local communities, with focus on vulnerable and minority groups'.[88]

Overall, without being among its focus priorities, by contributing to create, restore or consolidate appropriate tools and mechanisms at local, national and regional level to prevent conflicts and contribute to durable peace, actions under this instrument may be conducive to a greater push for the protection and promotion of minority rights and indigenous peoples.

However, it is important to note that despite its cross-cutting approach, the programmatic mechanisms of this instrument do not seem to include indicators or any other tools that may support monitoring and assessing the impact of its actions on vulnerable groups such as minority groups and indigenous peoples.

Partnership Instrument

The final instrument, included for completeness, has had no direct bearing on minority and human rights. The PI supports measures that respond to objectives from the EU's bilateral, regional and multilateral relationships with third countries,[89] and falls under the EU policy areas of trade policy, and economic, financial and technical cooperation with third countries, with the main beneficiaries being partner countries. Considering the importance attached to promoting EU standards in other countries, human and minority rights ought to be among the principles promoted through this action. However, the protection and promotion of human rights are neither a focus nor a cross-cutting element of this funding instrument (Parry and Wegner, 2020).

European Development Fund

Founded in 1958, the EDF is the oldest and largest development-funding instrument of the EU[90] that most closely resembles equivalent schemes from other non-European actors such as the United States of America and Canada. Although the EDF has been subsumed within the budget for the next funding period (2021–27), between 1985 and 2020 it was not part of the EU budget and used to be funded by direct voluntary contributions from Member States and managed by the EC. EU countries disburse an important part of their ODA through the EDF, which falls under the framework of EU's Development Policy. The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries modernised the EDF as a development instrument (Visser et al., 2017). The overall objective of this instrument is poverty eradication in ACP countries, and the fostering of sustainable development, support for democracy, the rule of law, good governance and human rights in the countries where it is active. The EDF has a geographic focus and finances EU cooperation devolved under two specific headings: (a) Overseas Countries and

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[88]   European Commission, *Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) Thematic Strategy Paper 2014–2020* (European Union 2014).

[89]   *Regulation (EU) 234/2014*.

[90]   The founding instrument references the Treaty of Rome (1960); *EU Agenda for Change*, Articles 198, 208–11 of the TFEU; and the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (2000), successor to the Lomé Convention (1975).

Territories (OCTs),[91] and (b) ACP countries that are signatories of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. In the context of ACP countries, the EDF supports: national and regional programmes, covering three or four thematic areas per country; intra-ACP and inter-regional cooperation; and thematic actions common to many or all the ACP countries. The EDF also includes an investment facility (4 per cent) managed by the European Investment Bank and aimed at funding higher-risk operations. Partner countries are the main beneficiaries of the EDF, but CSOs may also be funded, especially in ACP countries (D'Alfonso, 2014).

The EDF builds on the European Consensus on Development, which identifies human rights as a key EU cooperation objective.[92] It is intrinsically linked to the ACP, and in line with principles enshrined within it, including Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement that opens the door to discussing EU human rights and fundamental freedoms with partner countries. The EDF is also shaped by the principles set up in the EU Agenda for Change,[93] which includes human rights as a key policy area. Under the 11th EDF (2014–20), Member States allocated €30.5 million (Bossuyt et al., 2013). Human rights have prominence within the EDF as a core part of its objective and principles for development cooperation. This means that human rights standards are a factor guiding allocation, and are directly addressed by programming (Visser et al., 2017, p. 26). For example, 97.5 per cent of the total amounts allocated to national programmes and all the regional and intra-ACP envelopes of 2016 corresponded to human rights and good governance.[94] From the year of its creation until 2020, the EDF was not an EU budget instrument (Pouwels, 2021), with the EC and the EP having no scrutiny over the EDF budget or priorities, and though it overlaps with the DCI and the EIDHR, the EDF lacks complementarity with the funding instruments discussed under 'Programmes under Global Europe' above.[95] At the same time, given that its funding may not be regarded as external support but as domestic financing, the EDF may lead to financing where no other EU instrument could provide support, such as to CSOs and human rights activities in countries where external funding in such areas is not allowed.[96]

Minority rights are referenced as a cross-cutting issue for the EDF. However, the lack of specific data on impacts makes it difficult to assess, with limited evidence from a few cases showing that minority rights may be subsumed under the broader label of 'vulnerable people'. Accordingly, while minority rights projects and/or projects that include minority rights as a cross-cutting issue may be funded under this instrument, minority rights do not feature as a focus among EDF priorities, with no direct programming, and no monitoring in place to evaluate progress or impacts in this regard.

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[91]   The EU is associated with 13 OCTs in the Atlantic, Antarctic, Arctic, Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific regions as defined per *Council Decision 2013/755/EU*. See https://ec.europa.eu/international -partnerships/where-we-work/overseas-countries-and-territories_en.

[92]   A landmark agreement between the EC, EP and Member States, setting out a common EU vision for development cooperation (2005). See *Joint Statement (2006/C 46/01) on European Union Development Policy: 'The European Consensus' [2006]*, C 46/1 and *The European Consensus on Development* (Care International 2016), www.care-international.org/files/files/CARE_the_European _Consensus_on_Development.pdf.

[93]   Agenda for Change|Capacity4dev, https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/public-fragility/wiki/agenda -change.

[94]   Visser et al., 2017, p. 4.

[95]   Ibid., p. ix.

[96]   Ibid., p. 25.

CONCLUSION

The EC's first proposal for a new MFF (May 2018) was revised significantly in May 2020, to include Next Generation EU (NGEU), a feature to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council adopted the regulation following EP approval post-negotiation, laying down the EU's new MFF for 2021–27[97] on 17 December 2020. Most of the sectoral EU funding programmes were adopted in 2021 and would apply retroactively from the beginning of 2021. In line with key mid-term observations of the 2014–20 external financing instruments,[98] proposed changes were aimed at increasing flexibility, coherence and performance. This would incorporate streamlining of instruments 'to simplify their operation and lessen overlaps or gaps between them' (Lilyanova, 2019),[99] the merger of fragmented development-cooperation funding instruments into one, integration of the EDF into the EU budget to strengthen transparency[100] and the creation of a new off-budget instrument to fund security- and defence-related actions.[101] A clear strategic geographic focus is also emerging on the Neighbourhood and Africa with cross-cutting priorities on migration, peace, security, SDGs and gender equality, with the changes envisaged as helping align EU actions to deepening commitments to the UN 2030 Agenda, the Paris Climate Agreement, the new Global Strategy, the European Consensus on Development and the European Neighbourhood Development (Lilyanova, 2019).

The most relevant change in the context of this discussion is the establishment of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI),[102] merging several EU external financing instruments, including the DCI, EIDHR and ENI and part of the EDF, IcSP and PI. The NDICI will be structured in three pillars:[103]

1. Geographic pillar (with 75 per cent of the instrument's resources), directly linked to SDGs, targeting the Neighbourhood, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and the Caribbean, and designed for actions to respond to not just one focus but several goals at the same time;[104]
2. Thematic pillar, a complementary programme, to be applied where no other funding applies, addressing human rights, civil society, democracy, peace and global challenges;

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[97]   See generally https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027_en.

[98]   EC, *Mid-Term Review Report of the External Financing Instruments* (European Commission 2017).

[99]   The new proposed instruments for EU external action included: the Neighbourhood Development & International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI); the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III); the Humanitarian Aid Instrument (HAI); the Common Foreign & Security Policy (CFSP); Cooperation with Overseas Countries & Territories, including Greenland (COCT); and the European Instrument for Nuclear Safety (EINS).

[100]   The EP gains democratic oversight over the EDF, which is expected to become more efficient, predictable and effective.

[101]   The European Peace Facility, an off-budget instrument to finance military operations.

[102]   *Regulation (EU) 2021/947*.

[103]   See generally https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/funding-and-technical-assistance/neighbourhood-development-and-international-cooperation-instrument-global-europe-ndici-global-europe_en.

[104]   Including enhanced partnership and dialogue, eradication of poverty, good governance, security, peace and stability, migration and mobility, human rights and democracy, inclusive economic growth, the rule of law, the environment and climate change, and human development.

3. Rapid response pillar, flexible and complementary to both the geographical and thematic pillars – it is not envisaged as requiring programming but will be provided as exceptional assistance in emergency situations.

Overall the NDICI seems overambitious, with its budget falling short in a context where human rights, democracy and equality face unprecedented pressure and where civil society is likely to be called upon to play a crucial role in helping the EU to achieve its external action objectives. Although external funding will increase, the budget allocated for human rights and democracy actions under the thematic pillar of the NDICI is almost the same as under the EIDHR, [105] with the overall focus on human rights significantly weakened and reduced to a cross-cutting issue across instruments. Almost all the instruments with direct and indirect human rights and minority programming have been merged, with the resonance human rights had under the DCI, ENI and EDF not mirrored in the new funding structure. Furthermore, while streamlined development funding may lead to better assessment of the impact of such funding, increasing its complementarity, it is difficult to know whether programming, monitoring and evaluation systems under the new instruments will adequately mainstream human rights and minority rights. On a more positive note, the heightened awareness of environmental needs addresses the climate crisis to some extent, but understanding how the human rights–climate interface can be successfully managed will be crucial to future sustainability and the achievement of the visions to which the EU is committed.

In the final analysis, as we hope this chapter has demonstrated, despite the troubled histories and controversies that attach to developing funding, the EU has, through the articulation of its priorities, and some attempt to reflect these adequately in its funding instruments and fund allocations, paid attention to issues of human rights and to minority protection. It needs to be noted that this push for values of inclusion has come in the face of contemporary internal adverse difficulties that challenge the agenda significantly in line with rising xenophobia in Member States, already reflected in the regression of national politics in this regard. The sharp rise in anti-immigration sentiment, growing LGBTQ+ aggression, Islamophobia, a febrile atmosphere of hate speech targeting ethnic and religious minorities, and the treatment of refugees stranded at the EU's borders have dominated politics in nearly every one of the Member States. The #BlackLivesMatter movement has shown that civil society support for a broader inclusive agenda remains high, even if not adequately reflected (yet) in the political space. The EU development support for human and minority rights is also particularly worth noting in the global context of the shrinking of civil space, the corresponding deterioration in US support for human rights under the Trump presidency, and the rise of majorities in key countries of growing global importance such as China and India (Castellino, 2020b). Overall questions may remain about the motivations of development funding in general, and as to whether it serves the giver or the receiver. Equally, the extent to which such funding prioritises needs as perceived at the receiving (rather than sending) end will also likely continue to be a valid question. The challenges ahead for development funding are only likely to grow. Estimates of the funding gap to achieve the SDGs appear beyond reach. The impact of the pandemic on gross domestic product is also likely to have dual dampening effects: increase the need at home dramatically, while shrinking the size of economies drastically. Yet cooperation

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[105]   EC, 'Strengthening human rights and democracy in the world: EU launches a €1.5 billion plan to promote universal values' (European Commission, December 2021).

and collaboration are likely to be key imperatives in combating the climate challenge posed, and irrespective of the moral imperative to promote human rights, these, and especially their availability to communities far from sites of power, will likely be a central feature of the extent to which European values that promote peace, stability and inclusion can build stable and prosperous societies.

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