

Global virtual meeting Input into the next programming phase Summary of key points

The Policy Forum on Development (PFD) virtually met Director General Koen Doens on 15 September. This global meeting was prepared by four virtual regional meetings in July that brought together PFD members from Europe and the Neighbourhood, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and Caribbean to discuss the EU programming. The objective of these regional sessions was to introduce recommendations of PFD member civil society and local authorities. The global meeting continued the regional dialogues with the aims to consolidate recommendations and key issues that PFD members would incorporate in EU programming, including the most relevant thematic areas, and how civil society and local authorities can be better included in dialogue around programming and in the implementation of EU priorities.

Key messages and issues

The PFD has turned virtual. This meeting was part of a series of virtual meetings, online consultations and structured written input around EU programming. The Director General welcomed the successful adoption of digital tools and mentioned that the “PFD 2.0” could become a virtual platform for policy dialogue.

PFD concerns within the framework of the EU’ priorities. PFD members agreed with the identified EU priorities: climate and environmental issues, migration, digitalization, economy and democratic values have been confirmed as their shared priorities. However, the members highlighted the importance of ensuring different perspectives and focus in dealing with those priorities. The challenge remains to address them through a multi-stakeholder approach, guaranteeing the involvement of local actors (from CSOs, to regional governments, to trade unions, etc.) and with a view to tackle the horizontal and vertical inequalities, exacerbated by the current health crisis.

People-centred. PFD members and the DG agreed that the focus should be on people: the increasingly distinctive European approach is people-centred, rights based, gender-oriented and geopolitical. In this approach, social sectors such as education acquire special relevance.

Economy that works for ordinary people. There was agreement on the objective to promote a social economy, sustainable micro and SMEs and inclusive businesses models. PFD members stressed that this approach should include support for decent job creation and social protection and reach the informal sector. In its recent Communication ‘Strategic Foresight – Charting the course towards a more resilient Europe’, the Commission explicitly states the “*need for new metrics to measure progress beyond GDP growth.*”



Concerns on the geographization and consultation processes. The DG explained the added value of geographization: the approach allows to better tailor EU support to local needs. He stressed the importance of shaping the programming at local level adopting a territorial approach and engaging more with CSOs and LAs in strengthened structured dialogues. He reassured the members that precise instructions would be given to Delegations ahead of the launch of the the Programming guidelines to ensure this objective. To make the Delegations accountable he proposed to report to PFD on the details of the consultation processes the EUDs will carry out. PFD members complemented his message stressing the important role that networks such as the FPAs, both of CSOs and LAs, cooperatives, trade unions, can play at local level to support the Commission to gather input for the current geographic programming. Local Authorities highlighted that increasing the roadmaps for Local Authorities and setting up Framework Partnerships Agreement at local level with the National Associations of Local Authorities will allow for important contributions into the Commission’s structured dialogue and consultation processes. PFD members suggested using its own model at country level to ensure this link between global and geographic programming and institutionalised multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Implementing modalities. PFD members expressed doubts on the development impact of the financing mechanisms such as the EFSD +’s guarantees and the blending instrument. The Director General praised the general PFD’s members’ openness, which should be shown also with respect to innovative financing, mechanisms, which are susceptible of providing support to SMEs, to new women led businesses. He invited PFD members to engage in an open dialogue on how to make these mechanisms work better for ordinary people.

Humanitarian-development nexus. The Director General clarified the importance of integrating the humanitarian-development nexus into programming, while the rapid response pillar remains exclusively for unforeseen emergencies.

Capitalizing on the diaspora. Diaspora’s role was highlighted not only for the importance of the remittances in the development processes (being this higher than any form of ODA and external investment) but for the role it could play, especially within Europe, in development cooperation.