

The EU Commitment to Joint Programming

- **2004:** [Ad Hoc Working Party on Harmonisation Report](#) - recommends a joint EU approach for programming aid and common implementation procedures.
- **2004:** [External Relations Council Meeting \(#2577\)](#) - underlines the need for joint planning, led by partner countries and focused on alignment with national development strategies.
- **2005:** [External Relations Council Meeting \(#2660\)](#) - commits to division of labour and complementarity at the country level in the context of joint, multi-annual programming based on partner countries' development strategies.
- **2005:** [External Relations Council Meeting \(#2691\)](#) - highlights the need for EU Member States (MS) and the European Commission to increase their participation in joint multi-annual programming based on partner countries' development strategies, preferably led by the partner countries themselves. States that there should be donor-wide engagement.
- **2005:** [EU Consensus on Development](#) - sets out a common aim and principles for EU MS and European Commission development work. Commits to working towards joint multi-annual programming based on partner countries' strategies and budget processes with each donor focusing on the area where they have a comparative advantage.
- **2006:** [Delivering More, Better, Faster](#) - emphasises the need to review rules and procedures, recognising these are often the main constraints to better coordination. Proposes common analysis of country needs followed by the establishment of a joint multi-annual programming framework. States that the framework should be compatible with existing national documents and cycles and open to other donors.
- **2006:** [Common Framework for Drafting Country Strategy Papers and Joint-Multi Annual Planning](#) - sets out a path towards joint programming by the European Commission and EU MS, including other donors where possible. Lays down common principles that should be followed in all strategies, based on the European Consensus on Development. Proposes a Framework (an update of that produced in 2000) that aims to enable donors to gradually align their activities to the partner country's multi-annual programming cycle and national strategy.
- **2006:** [Establishment of pilot countries](#) - identification of 14 pilot countries by the European Commission and EU MS for the implementation of joint EU strategies, namely Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Kenya, Mali, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.
- **2006:** [External Relations Council Meeting \(#2723\)](#) - underlines that joint multi-annual programming must be aligned with partner countries' strategies and budget cycles and that the latter, supported by the EU, should be the leading force in the preparation, coordination and monitoring of joint programming. Urges EU MS to ensure flexibility in their own procedures in order to meet the alignment principle and states that joint EU programming should include donor-wide participation to the maximum extent possible.
- **2007:** [EU Code of Conduct on Division of Labour](#) – suggests that EU donors limit themselves to three sectors per country and to five donors per sector. Commits to increase their participation in joint multi-annual programming based on partner countries' development strategies and proposes special efforts to synchronise programming schedules with partner countries' national planning and budget cycles.
- **2008:** [EU Fast Track Initiative on Division of Labour](#) - commits to drive forward implementation of the Code of Conduct in 30 priority countries.
- **2009:** [Lisbon Treaty](#) – states that the European Union has the competence to carry out a common policy in the field of development cooperation.
- **2009:** [Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness](#) – commits to accelerating the implementation of joint programming, based on partner countries' development strategies. Highlights the role of joint programming in implementing division of labour commitments. Proposes that Joint Assistance Strategies are developed in all EU FTI countries and that a

number of countries be identified where the EU will work to implement joint programming with the aim to be fully operational by 2014. Says to include other donors and build on existing processes where possible.

- **2010: Letter from all European Development DGs to all European Ambassadors in partner countries:** “we will increase the participation in joint multi-annual programming based on partner countries' development strategies and use EU joint programming as a pragmatic tool to advance division of labour. To this end, we will identify a selected number of countries where the EU will work to implement joint programming with the aim to be fully operational by 2014.” “The Commission will present a proposal to the Council by 2011 for progressive synchronisation of EU and national programming cycles at the partner country level”. A study was subsequently commissioned and completed in 2011.¹
- **2011: EU Informal Meeting of Development Ministers** - reaches consensus on the need for a single, comprehensive, joint EU programming document per partner country from 2014 on and for synchronising programming cycles with partner countries.
- **2011: EU DGs Meeting** - agrees priority countries for joint programming and asks for subsequent verification from EU MS' representatives in-country.
- **2011: EU Common Position for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan** - commits to take forward joint programming at the country level saying donors should “move from individual country strategies towards partner country-led joint assistance strategies”. Commits to align with national priorities and planning cycles. Says the core elements of joint programming are: joint analysis and response to the national plan, identification of priority sectors, division of labour, and indicative financial allocations per sector and donor. States that joint programming should substitute individual country strategies but still allow the development of bilateral implementation plans by donors.
- **2012: Letter from Three Commissioners to all EU Development Ministers** – states that there is “broad convergence of views on joint programming, coupled with a strong willingness...to take its implementation forward”. Recommends to do it at partner country level and to synchronise cycles with the country. Advises shared analysis of the national strategy, identification of priorities, and agreement on division of labour and funding. Non-EU donors to be included where possible. Promises that Brussels will only “adopt the part of the joint cooperation response relevant to the EU, not the aspects pertaining to MS' interventions.” Proposes pilots in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Laos, Mali, Moldova, Rwanda, Tunisia and Ukraine, with European donors' in-country representatives asked to comment on feasibility. Other country suggestions welcomed.
- **2012: New EU Development Policy, “An Agenda for Change”** – commits to “Joint EU and MS response strategies based on partners' own development strategies” including “a sectoral division of labour and financial allocations per sector and donor” plus “a common EU results reporting framework”, synchronised to the strategy cycle of the partner country. Limits EU bilateral development cooperation (i.e. that provided by EU institutions) to a maximum of three sectors per country. “The EU and MS should follow the document when devising their bilateral implementation plans”. Participation open to other donors.
- **2012: Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions (#3166)** - endorses the Agenda for Change and commits to “concrete progress in joint multi annual programming starting in 2012”.
- **2012: New EU Programming Guidelines** – affirm that joint programming documents (with analysis, approach, division of labour and indicative financial allocations, synchronised to partner country cycles) should be prepared under the supervision of HoMs in partner countries and that European donors' HQs should only be asked to comment on their country's contribution rather than the whole document. Each donor should then prepare a bilateral implementation plan (in the EU institutions case, the MIP) setting out how they will implement their agreed contribution to the joint programme. Confirm that, from 2014 on, the EU can programme for different lengths of time in different countries, thereby allowing progressive synchronisation. Reaffirm the three sector rule for EU institutions.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/documents/report-joint-multi-annual-programming_en.pdf