



Online information session on the Global Gateway 6 Key principles and introducing the agenda of the Annual Platform meeting 18 November 2025

Summary report

The online session started with a presentation from Erica Gerretsen, Director of INTPA G - Human Development, Migration, Governance and Peace, with a general update on the Global Gateway implementation, followed by a detailed explanation of the 6 key principles of the strategy, and its application through a “360° approach”. The presentation was followed by an open exchange with the members of the CSO-LA Advisory Platform on Global Gateway.

The presentation and discussion focussed on the following topics:

- Update on Global Gateway Strategy and Investment figures
- The systemic application of the six key principles of the Global Gateway through a 360-degree approach
- Local ownership, private sector engagement, and civil society roles
- Climate, biodiversity, and just transition integration
- EU support in fragile and complex contexts
- Gender equality in Global Gateway
- Agenda of the forthcoming Global Gateway Civil Society and Local Authorities Advisory Platform Meeting

The main points of the presentation and discussions can be summarised as follows:

Update on Global Gateway strategy and Investment Figures

The Global Gateway strategy has successfully mobilised over €306 billion in investments across key sectors, surpassing its initial target of €300 billion. Consequently, the goal has been expanded to €400 billion by 2027, reflecting strong momentum in European development partnerships. The Global Gateway is delivered through a Team Europe approach, which brings together the EU and EU Member States with their financial and development institutions. It also seeks to mobilise the private sector to leverage investments for a transformational impact.

Erica Gerretsen emphasised that the strategy aims to create value-based, mutual interest partnerships that align the interests of partner countries with those of the EU and European companies. The approach integrates five key investment pillars: health, education and research, digital, transport, energy and climate, tailored regionally from Sub-Saharan Africa to Eastern Europe.

The successful mobilisation of investments supports resilience and domestic economic development while bridging financing gaps unmet by traditional official development assistance to achieve the SDGs. Erica Gerretsen highlighted the importance of the Team Europe format, promoting collaboration among EU institutions, Member States, local authorities, and civil society to maximise the strategy's impact.

The systemic application of the six key principles of the Global Gateway through a 360-degree approach

The Global Gateway strategy applies a 360° approach built around six key principles to ensure investments meet high standards and long-term sustainability: equal partnerships, good governance and transparency, green and clean investments, democratic values and high standards, catalysing private sector investment, and security-focused design (see inner circle in Figure 1).

Eight enabling dimensions support these principles, including consultations with CSOs and local authorities, skills and education, rule of law, gender equality, just environmental and climate transition, and regulatory reforms to create a sustainable investment environment (see outer circle in Figure 1).

Figure 1: Global Gateway key principles and enabling dimensions



The strategy encourages European companies to partner with local firms, promoting joint ventures that leverage local knowledge and capacity, thus avoiding isolated foreign investments.

The approach mandates accompanying measures alongside investments, emphasising local skills development and vocational training to ensure investments translate into meaningful local employment. For example, the Global Gateway flagship project on the Lobito corridor mobilises over €2 billion of investments not only in hard infrastructure of rail and road connectivity, but also in soft connectivity (trade facilitation, technical & vocational education, sustainable agriculture value chains, critical raw materials value chains, renewable energy, biodiversity & climate adaptation) as well as in inclusive and sustainable growth (focusing on local jobs, women & youth inclusion, small-holder farmers, SME access, eco-tourism, critical raw materials with value-addition rather than pure extraction), improving transport, boosting local economies, and creating lasting benefits for communities along the way.

This framework prevents harm to local populations and supports positive social, environmental, and economic outcomes, ensuring investments are inclusive and sustainable.

Local ownership, private sector engagement, and civil society roles

Local ownership and inclusion of local private sector actors, like small enterprises and cooperatives, are critical to the Global Gateway's success, with 84% of local authorities consulted on investments affecting their territories, explained Erica Gerretsen.

Initiatives like the Investing in Young Businesses in Africa (IYBA) program provide startup support and financial tools to scale local companies, fostering ecosystem development around larger investments.

Civil society organisations play a key role, including promoting inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue, involving communities in decision-making, preventing conflicts, providing technical assistance to SMEs, acting as watchdogs, and ensuring social impact due diligence. Recognising that the change needs to happen at the local level, all EUDs have been asked to reflect the 360° approach of Global Gateway investments in the Civil Society Roadmaps, and to meet regularly with Local Authorities and civil society concerned or impacted by Global Gateway investments.

Some participants stressed the need for funding lines accessible to smaller cities, local communities and local entrepreneurs to support the 360° approach and mitigate social rejection risks of large projects.

Climate, biodiversity, and just transition integration

Climate action and biodiversity protection are embedded in the Global Gateway via spending targets aligned with NDICI Global Europe and specific biodiversity safeguards, though stakeholders called for stronger explicit integration and local voice in these domains. Erica

Gerretsen confirmed that, applying the EU inequality marker, 62% of financed actions positively impact inequalities, and the gender equality target remains at 85% of projects rated G-I or G-II for high standards.

Local communities and authorities are expected to contribute knowledge about biodiversity impacts, feeding into country-level dialogues coordinated by EU delegations to mitigate risks and ensure safeguards.

The approach includes ongoing work in just transition contexts like South Africa, combining energy transition with social measures to avoid leaving vulnerable groups behind.

Foundations and philanthropic organisations expressed readiness to engage through grant and investment capital to support social enterprises and local job creation, especially in care economy sectors.

EU support in fragile and complex contexts

Erica Gerretsen pointed out that Global Gateway is part of what the EU does on development, but it is not everything the EU does. Most of the support to fragile and conflict contexts remain outside the Global Gateway strategy. Nevertheless, Global Gateway initiatives adapt to some fragile contexts by focusing on enabling environments and small-scale infrastructure investments, with ongoing engagement in about two-thirds of fragile countries under this approach. Examples include water management projects in Haiti and support for women-led organisations in Afghanistan, demonstrating flexibility beyond large infrastructure. Public funds are leveraged to de-risk investments in low-income and fragile countries, encouraging development finance institutions to invest despite higher risks.

Gender equality in Global Gateway

Gender equality is a mandatory standard embedded in all projects, with attention to risks like gender-based violence and labour exploitation during implementation. The European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development explicitly prioritise gender equality within their lending objectives supporting Global Gateway projects.

Agenda of the forthcoming Global Gateway Civil Society and Local Authorities Advisory Platform Meeting

The PFD TA updated on the forthcoming Annual Platform Meeting on December 1st, which will feature direct interaction with Commissioner Síkela, focusing on sharing good practices and CSO and local authority roles in the rollout of the Global Gateway. The meeting will be hybrid, allowing Brussels-based and online participation, with interpretation in English, French, and Spanish.

Civil society and local authorities will present concrete examples of their involvement in Global Gateway implementation, feeding into continued dialogue post-meeting. Follow-up reports and conversations will maintain momentum beyond the meeting, strengthening the Advisory Platform as a dynamic space for feedback and collaboration.