

EU Aid Explorer: An updated platform for EU Institutions and Member States

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1. Context and Objectives




DG DEVCO Unit A2 is in charge of Development Financing and Effectiveness, Relations with Member States. In the early 2010s, the Unit A2 has launched a project with the Joint Research Center (JRC), with the aim to develop an EU Aid Transparency website **EU Aid Explorer** that incorporates development cooperation projects financed by the European Commission as well as Member States.

The EU Aid Explorer proved to be an important tool for presenting and using cooperation data, but came up short of providing a highly reliable financial and visualization tool, particularly due to compatibility issues of the datasets and consistency issues with other DEVCO's financial reporting tools. Existing limitations have consequently prevented a wider use of this tool by key stakeholders and by the wider public.

DEVCO units A2 and R1 jointly decided to revamp the content and visualizations of the EU Aid Explorer, turning it into an interactive tool that is able to achieve the overreaching goal of aid transparency, but nevertheless remain aligned with the reporting strategy set up by unit R1.

EU Aid Explorer – Request for modifications	
EU Aid Explorer Tab	Type of visualizations
1. Improve the user experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build a user friendly, visual and intuitive new EU Aid Explorer that is accessible by the wider public with varying levels of knowledge of development finance.
2. Increase coherency of presented data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present an extensive, reliable and free from double counting set of development data for the EU and its Member States, based on data from the EC, IATI and the OECD (EDRIS and UN OCHA).
3. Align the product with the tooling strategy adopted DEVCO for reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build on DEVCO R1 expertise regarding creation of reporting model and interactive dashboards using Qlik technologies
4. Simplify and improve the maintenance of the website	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• By bringing back the system ownership to DEVCO, it is expected to increase the quality of the service provided and improve reactivity / adaptability in case of issues / changes

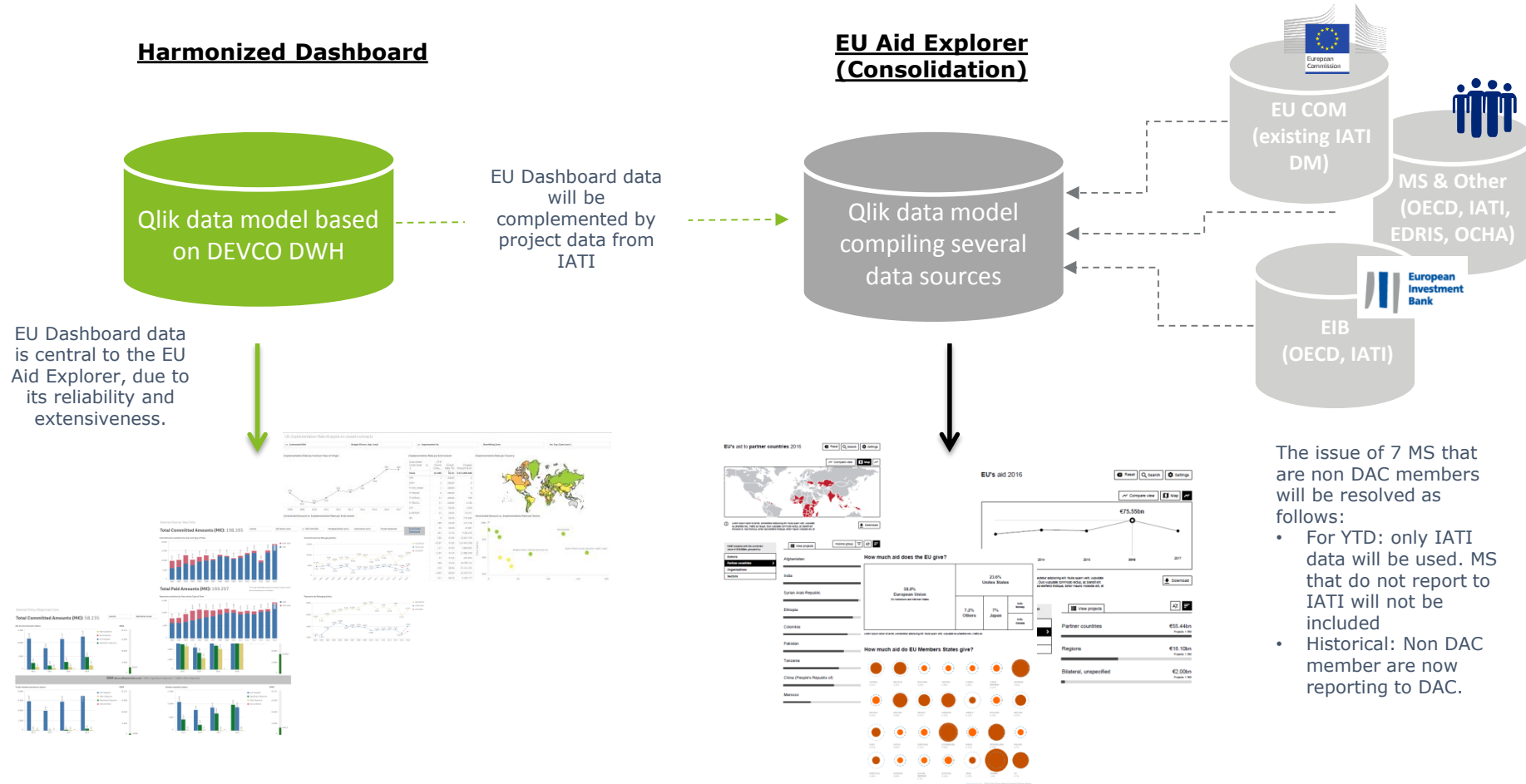
2. Donors in scope and related sources of information

European Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes activities of DEVCO, NEAR, FPI and ECHO (IATI and OECD) and other DGs (OECD) financed by heading 4 of annual budget and EDF• Data published on IATI differs from data published on OECD for two main reasons:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different standards & requirements (e.g. treatment of trust funds, treatment of administrative expenses, treatment of other DGs)• Current state of financial systems (e.g. treatments of activities outside CRIS)
EU Member States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Member states are publishing to EDRIS and UN OCHA (humanitarian aid)• For IATI and OECD, practices differs and four different types of Member States:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Publishers to OECD and IATI (12 – e.g. Belgium, France)○ Publishers only to OECD (9 – e.g. Luxembourg, Portugal)○ Publisher only to IATI (2 – Romania and Lithuania)○ Non-publishers (5 – e.g. Bulgaria and Croatia)
EIB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The EIB publishes its set of development finance data only to IATI and OECD.• The publication of EIB data to OECD is done via the institutional reporting sector of DEVCO R1. As such, any double counting with EC should be avoided but this needs to be confirmed.• At this point EIB does not publish any humanitarian finance data to EDRIS or UN OCHA
Other DAC Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are around 30 non-EU DAC members publishing to OECD;• OECD data for those donors should integrated in EU Aid Explorer from comparison purposes (at beneficiary and sectorial level). As such, no double-counting issue is foreseen;• Opportunity to publish links to the transparency website of those donors should be investigated

3. Future structure of Data Sources

The architecture of the revamped EU Aid Explorer will follow the combination of three data sets:

- **Harmonized Dashboard** (Year to date, Year N-1, Historical data)
- **IATI** (YTD of EU MS and EIB)
- **OECD** (Year N-1, replacing IATI data as soon as available and Historical data).

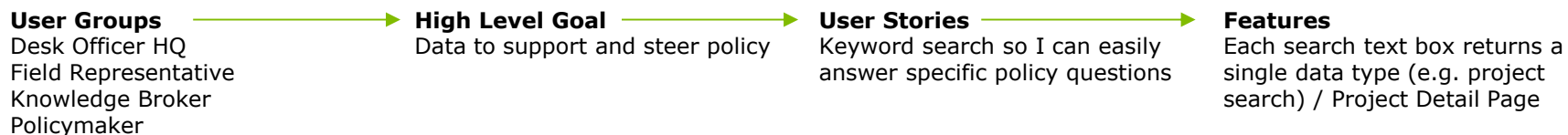


The issue of 7 MS that are non DAC members will be resolved as follows:

- For YTD: only IATI data will be used. MS that do not report to IATI will not be included
- Historical: Non DAC member are now reporting to DAC.

4. Visualising the data in the new EU Aid Explorer (1/2)

Following the recommendations from the user needs assessment, the revamped website will include visualisations that serve the needs of the defined user groups.



EU Aid Explorer			
Type of View	EU Aid Explorer Tab	(Features) Data Filters, Views and Search	(Features) Content and Visualisations
General View	EU's aid to partner countries year e.g. 2016	Reset, Search, Settings, Compare view, Map, Download, Sort A-Z, Sort by volume of provided aid, Sort by Income group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of aid received over the past years General Overview of projects grouped by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donors Partner countries Organizations Sectors Project view: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project ID, partner countries, regions, sectors, organizations, donor, documents
Project View	Projects	Summary, Documents (number), Transactions (number), Policy Markers, Results, Download project data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donor Implementing Partners Implementation (Starting date, Planned ending) Funding (Spent, Project budget) Principal objective Sectors Location Results Budget/Spending over the years
Sector View	EU's aid to partner countries for Sector Year e.g. Health 2016	Reset, Search, Settings, Compare view, Map, Download, Sort A-Z, Sort by volume of provided aid, Sort by Income group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of aid received over the past years Total number of projects per sector and total value of provided aid grouped by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donor Partner countries Organizations General summary of the sector Compare view of partner countries

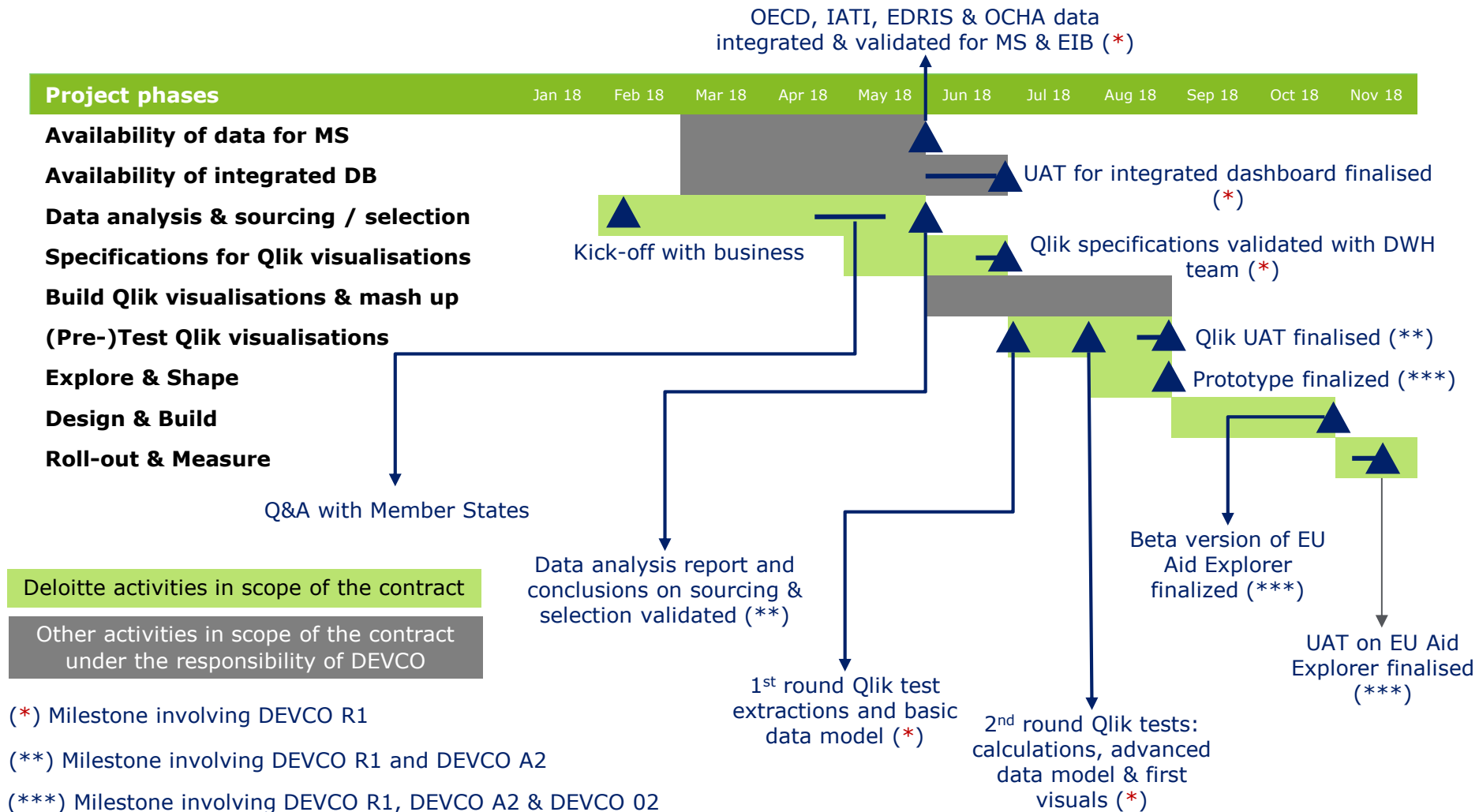
4. Visualising the data in the new EU Aid Explorer (2/2)

We understand that the final decisions about which features suggested by different user groups will be implemented, lies with the DEVCO Unit A2.

EU Aid Explorer – Future visualizations

Type of View	EU Aid Explorer Tab	Browsing, Filtering, Sorting and Search Options	Type of visualizations
Country View	EU's aid to Country Year e.g. Afghanistan 2016	Reset, Search, Settings, Compare view, Map, Download, Sort A-Z, Sort by volume of provided aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of aid received over the past years Total number of projects in Country and total value of provided aid grouped by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donor Organizations Sectors General Introduction of country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short description Human Development Index Gross Domestic Product (GDP) World's aid (ODA) of GDI EU's part of total aid (ODA) Income group Resources (Link to country page on EC website, link to EC DG strategy document)
Institutional View	EU Institution Year e.g. International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO)'s aid to partner countries 2016	Reset, Search, Settings, Compare view, Map, Download, Sort A-Z, Sort by volume of provided aid, Sort by Income group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of aid received over the past years Total number of projects per sector and total value of provided aid grouped by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner countries Organizations Sectors General summary of the Institution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources (Link to EC website, link to EC DG strategy document) Compare view of donors
EU Aid Global View	EU's aid Year e.g. 2016	Reset, Search, Settings, Compare view, Map, Download, Sort A-Z, Sort by volume of provided aid, Source, Sort by Income Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donor view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much aid does the EU give? How much aid do EU Member States give? Beneficiaries view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where does the EU give aid? Sectors view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is EU aid spent on? Trend view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has happened to aid spending in the last 10 years?

5. Project timeline



6. Main challenges

Attention point	Description	Mitigating actions
1. Uncertainty about MS data structure and ability to entirely eliminate double-counting	DG DEVCO will investigate structure of the MS data set comparing records from different sources (IATI, OECD) to ensure elimination of duplicated records. In this context, the DAC correspondents of respective Member States will be contacted in order to provide required clarifications.	If automated approach to identify activities generating double counting appears to be impossible to define, several actions might be taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking simplifying assumptions that might eliminate more activities than only those generating double counting • Accepting the double-counting, documenting the issue and notifying to the respective Member State for changes
2. Data availability to complete all user requirements	'Usability and Architecture Study: EU Aid Explorer' designed an ideal graphical model. Current data completeness, availability and coherence with regards to those requirements must be further investigated	If certain data visualization appear to be not feasible due to data available, several actions might be taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of alternative data visualisations providing similar insights • Notification of the issue and document of business requirements for future information system to close the gap