CONCORD
European NGO confederation for relief and development
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AidWatch 2013

HISTORY IS MADE AS EU MEETS THE 0.7% AID TARGET IN 2015

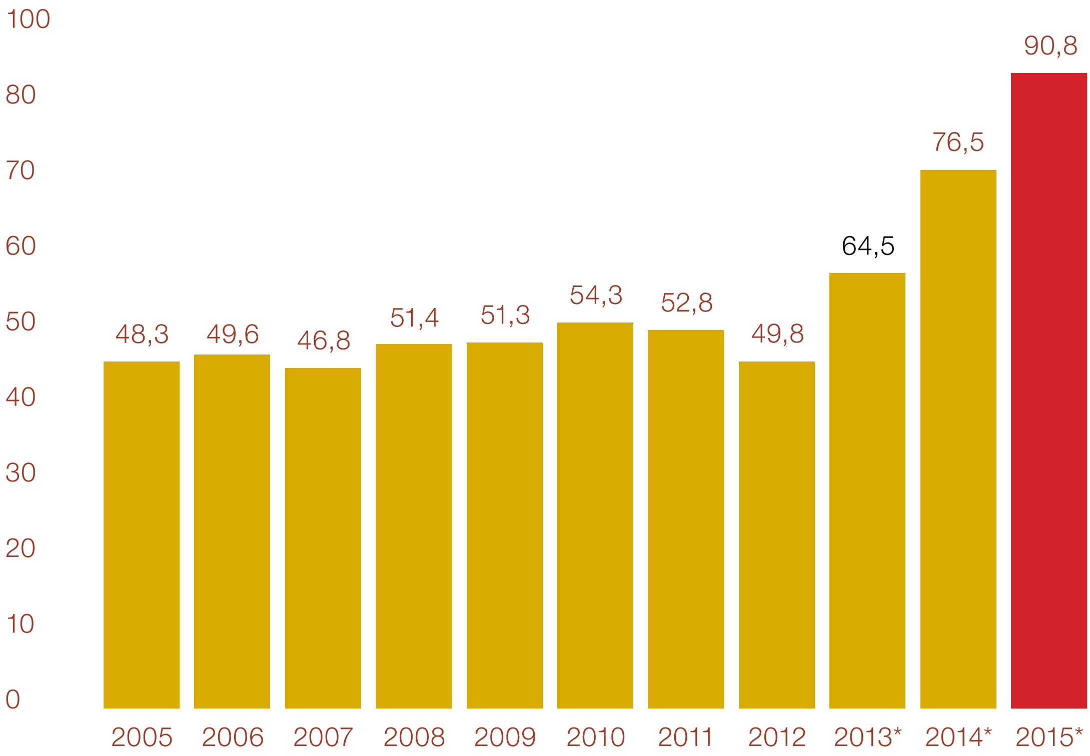
The news story that global development needs!

In 2015, the EU is setting an example for other donors to follow. It is delivering €90.8 billion in aid to developing countries and meeting its commitment to devote 0.7% of its GNI to official development assistance (ODA).

EU civil society welcomes the effort made by the EU to live up to the promise it made to the world's poorest and most marginalised people. Despite its economic difficulties, the EU and its member states have increased its aid by 85% over the 2012 level – an increase of €41.2 billion.[1] By fulfilling its promise, the EU demonstrates that it is truly committed to its international responsibilities and to achieving sustainable development for all. It is clear that the EU believes that a better world is possible – one that is free of poverty, that is more equal, and where everyone's rights are respected. This increase in EU aid will make a life-changing difference to millions of people around the world and help them pull themselves out of poverty.

The EU's political and economic effort is ultimately underpinned by the solidarity of European citizens and their confidence in aid as a tool for helping the poorest and most vulnerable. A 2012 survey showed that 85% of Europeans think it is important to support developing countries, while approximately 61% of EU citizens stated that the EU should meet its commitments.[2] Today, millions of citizens across Europe feel proud to be European.

Graph 1. EU aid in € billion at constant prices, 2011



Source: Calculations based on the 2012 preliminary ODA data published by the EC and OECD DAC in April 2013Brussels

1 See table in the Annex.
2 EC (2012) Solidarity that Spans the Globe: Europe ans and Development Aid. Special Eurobarometer 392.

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CONCORD is the sole European Confederation of Development and Relief NGOs. Its 27 national associations and 18 international networks represent over 1,800 NGOs which are supported by millions of citizens across Europe.

European AidWatch Initiative is a pan-European advocacy and campaigning network of NGOs which, since 2005, has monitored and made recommendations on the quality and quantity of aid provided by EU member states and the European Commission. The network carries out ongoing advocacy, research, media activities and campaigns on a wide range of aid-related issues throughout the year. More at: www.aidwatch.concordeurope.org.

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EU COMMITMENTS TO THE WORLD'S POOR ARE CLEARLY AT RISK

The reality of EU aid as it is now.

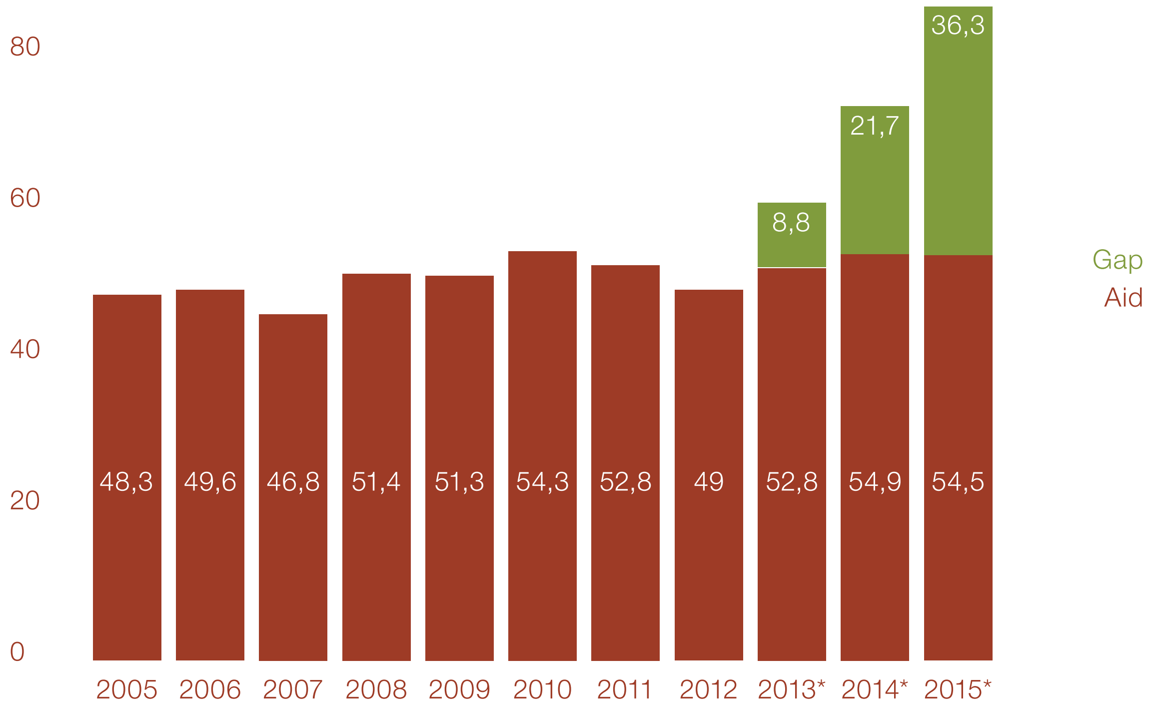
EU aid commitments are under threat. The preliminary data released by the OECD in April 2013 show that, after adjustments for inflation, barely any progress was made between 2005 and 2012. As shown in Graph 2, official development assistance (ODA) in 2012 was at approximately the same level as in 2005, the year the EU committed itself to spending 0.7% of its GNI on aid by 2015. This lack of progress is compounded by the fact that forward-looking ODA estimates provided by EU member states show that the picture is unlikely to improve in the coming years.

If the EU and its member states were to increase aid linearly between now and 2015, it would face a cumulative funding gap of €66.8 billion (see Graph 2). According to our projections based on the data provided by the EC, in 2015 alone, the member states are expected to be €36.3 billion short of the amount required to meet the 0.7% target.

These figures, however, are likely to be an underestimation. Detailed ODA data has not yet been released, so it is not possible to calculate the amount of inflated aid reported in the statistics.[3] In 2011, inflated aid accounted for 14% of total EU aid.[4] This means that the actual gap could be between 10 per cent and 15 per cent larger than the estimates presented above.

The figures in this report are expressed as constant prices. This means that they have been adjusted to remove the effect of inflation and make them truly comparable across years.

Graph 2. EU aid 2005-2015 including gap in achieving 0.7% aid by 2015 (in € billion at constant prices, 2011)



Source: Calculations based on the 2012 preliminary ODA data published by the EC and OECD DAC in April 2013

3 Inflated aid includes aid expenditure that does not entail a real transfer of resources to developing countries. According to the 2012 AidWatch methodology the following items are counted as inflated aid: student and refugee costs in donor countries, tied aid, debt relief and the interest on loans granted to developing countries.
4 AidWatch (2012) Aid We Can - invest more in global development. CONCORD, Brussels.

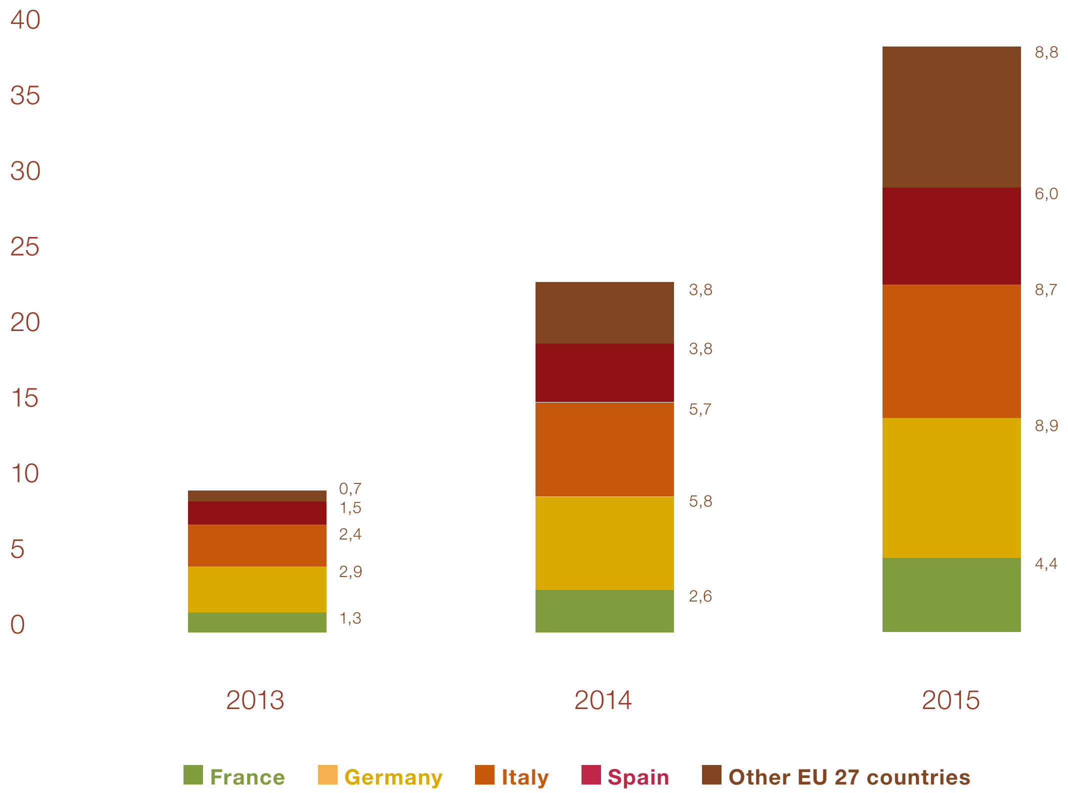
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Since aid commitments are expressed as a percentage of GNI, the volume of ODA required by each EU member state in order to reach the target is closely linked to the size of its economy. Differences in the size of member states' economies therefore have a major impact on the distribution of the aid gap.

Approximately 80% of the total aid gap between 2013 and 2015 is due to four EU member states, while the remaining 20% is split between the remaining twenty-three (see Graph 4). These countries are Germany (26% of the total gap), Italy (24%), Spain (17%) and France (12%).[5]

Although Germany and France are not the worst performers in relative terms, they are the two biggest EU economies and therefore account for a significant proportion of the overall aid flows. Both Italy and Spain are also sizable economies and have also cut their aid levels sharply since the onset of the economic and financial crisis: they currently have some of the lowest aid levels of the EU-15 countries (0.13% and 0.15% of their GNI, respectively).

Graph 3. Distribution of the aid gap 2013-2015 in € billion at constant prices, 2011



Source: Calculations based on the 2012 preliminary ODA data published by the EC and OECD DAC in April 2013

5 The exact figures for the remaining 23 EU member states are given in the annex.

EUROPEAN AID MATTERS

EU and its member states aid represents 53% of the global aid flows recorded by the OECD and European Commission.[6] Its contribution to fighting poverty and inequality is extremely important for developing countries and poor communities across the world. For example, over the last ten years, aid managed by the European Commission:[7]

> Gave more than 31 million people access to safe drinking water for the first time.
> Stopped 24 million from going hungry.
> Gave more than 9 million children access to primary education.
> Equipped 2.1 million rural people with modern energy services.
> Helped protect more than 1.5 million hectares of forest.
> Vaccinated more than 5 million children against measles.
> Provided anti-retroviral combination therapy for 750,000 people.
> Supported 58 election observation missions.

The impact of EU aid is much greater than these figures suggest, as aid directly managed by the European Commission represents only about a quarter of all aid from EU member states.

Although there is significant room for improvement, **EU aid is among the most effective** in the world and therefore has a greater impact for every euro invested. Data from the 2011 Paris Monitoring Survey show that EU member states have made more progress towards the Paris aid effectiveness targets than other donor countries, but less than developing countries themselves.[8] The EU has also put in place a number of policies designed to bring EU aid closer to these targets, though **they still have to demonstrate that they can deliver results.**

In times of crisis, aid matters more than ever. Although the growth rate of many developing countries remains positive, it is very often negative or close to zero when adjusted for the population growth rate. Across the world, the economic crisis and austerity programmes continue to affect developing countries disproportionately, and EU aid has helped to ensure that many vital services and goods are still available.

In Mozambique, for example, general budget support has increased people's access to antiretroviral drugs and other medication and has ensured that each district has a doctor.[9] In Uganda, budget support has boosted the government's increase in tax revenue from natural resources.[10] The European Union Food Facility (EUFF) is another example of how EU aid can contribute to the sustainable development of vulnerable communities. The Facility, with total funding of €1 billion, has not only provided immediate relief for hundreds of thousands of farmers, but has also helped to increase their income, improve their resilience to future food price spikes and integrate them collectively into their local and regional economies.[11]

6 Based on calculations made by the author from the preliminary aid figures released by the OECD and the European Commission in April 2013. See Methodology section for further information.
7 DFID (2011) Multilateral Aid Review. Ensuring maximum value for money for UK aid through multilateral organisations. Department for International Development; ONE (2012) The 2012 Data Report; DFID (2012) Annual Report and Accounts 2011-2012. Department for International Development; EC (2010) EU Contribution to the Millennium Development Goals. Some key results from European Commission programmes. EC, Brussels.
8 OECD (2011) Aid Effectiveness 2005-2010. Progress in Implementing the Paris Declaration. OECD, Paris
9 ICAI (2012) DFID's Oversight of the EU's Aid to Low-Income Countries. The Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI).
10 Ibid.
11 Magrath, J. (2012) Effective ways of linking relief and rural development: Oxfam's experience of implementing programmes using EU Food Facility funds. Oxfam Case Study, Oxfam GB.

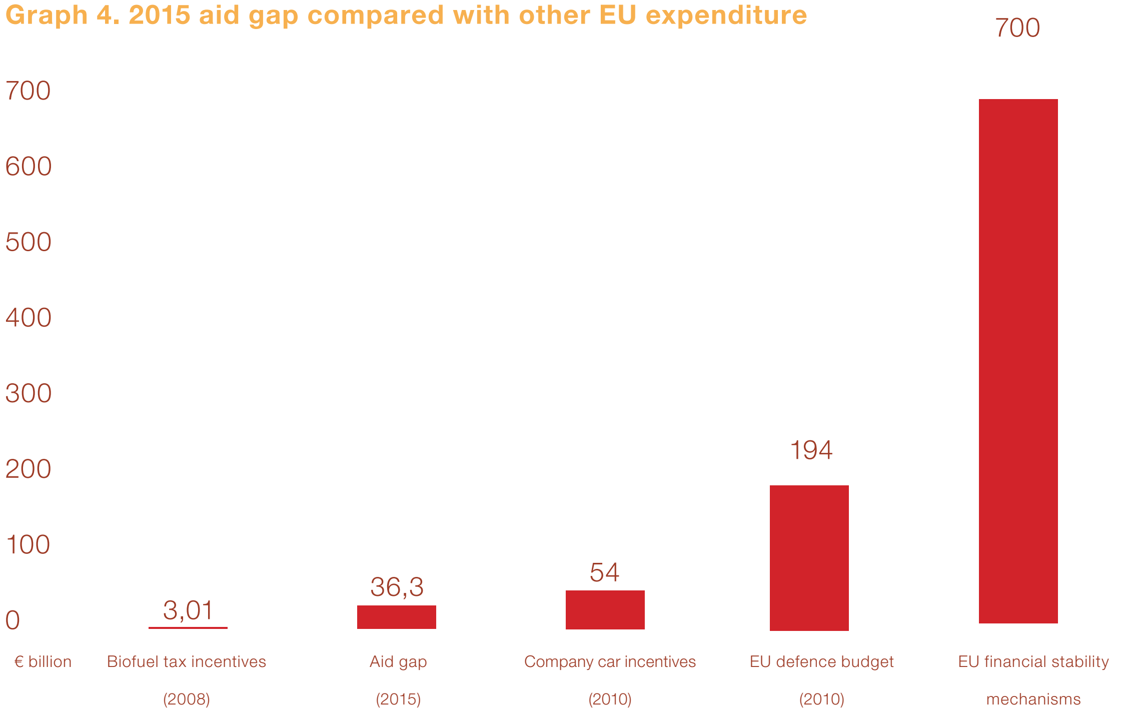
THE EU CAN MEET ITS TARGET BY 2015

The EU can meet its target to deliver 0.7% of its GNI in aid by 2015. At € 36.3 billion, the projected aid gap based on the data provided by the EC in the year 2015 is not insurmountable. The EU can find sufficient resources provided there is enough political will.

The EU currently spends billions of euros every year on subsidies that are hardly compatible with long-term sustainable economic growth. As shown in Graph 5, the total aid gap is significantly smaller than the subsidies extended to company cars in European countries in 2010. These subsidies simply give companies an advantage over EU citizens when it comes to purchasing cars, and they fail to promote sustainable behaviour such as the use of public transport. Although no data is available for all EU member states, the aid gap is often comparable to existing fossil fuel subsidies. For example, this is the case of Germany (€7.2 billion a year in subsidies), Spain (€2.6 billion), UK (€4.5 billion), France (€2.6 billion), Hungary (€224 million) and Poland (€332 million).[12] Tax incentives provided for biodiesel, which represents an important food security risk to developing countries, could also help to bridge nearly one-tenth of the aid gap in 2015.

As shown in the graph, the EU also devotes a significant amount of money to the defence budget of EU member states. A significant amount of these funds is spent on weapons and other materials without much practical use. For example, the nuclear deterrent costs of France are just over €3 billion a year (approximately 10 per cent of the total defence budget).[13] The EU's financial stability mechanisms created during the banking crisis – to bail out banks in trouble, among other things – have a combined lending power of €700 billion.[14] They have been capitalised with a total of €80 billion in contributions from member states.

Graph 4. 2015 aid gap compared with other EU expenditure



Source: Based on the author's calculations and the following sources: Oxfam (2012) The Hunger Grains: The fight is on. Time to scrap EU biofuel mandates. Oxfam Briefing Paper 161; Copenhagen Economics (2010) Company Car Taxation. EC, Taxation Papers. Working Paper No. 22; European Defence Agency. Defence data portal, available at: http://www.eda.europa.eu/info-hub/defence-data-portal/EDA/year/2010; ESM (2013) Frequently Asked Questions on the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). ESM, Luxembourg

12 Buckle, E. (2012) Fossil fuel subsidies and government support in 24 OECD countries. Summary for decision-makers. The Greens, European Free Allia

13 See the following article from the French newspaper Le Monde: http://decodeurs.blog.lemonde.fr/2012/06/05/cout-de-la-dissuasion-nucleaire-quand-jean-vincent-place-exagere/

14 ESM (2013) Frequently Asked Questions on the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). ESM, Luxembourg.

HOW TO DO IT

Meeting the EU target is a matter of political will. From a financial perspective, there is no doubt that it will require a significant, coordinated effort by EU member states, but the figures presented above show that European budgets do offer some flexibility. Denmark, Sweden, Luxembourg and the Netherlands all met the 0.7% target years ago, and still remain among the top aid donors. These countries show how political will, rather than the crisis, is the main determinant of aid levels. Similarly, the United Kingdom, which recently announced it will join the 0.7% club in 2013,[15] shows that with sufficient political commitment it is possible to meet aid targets in spite of the crisis.

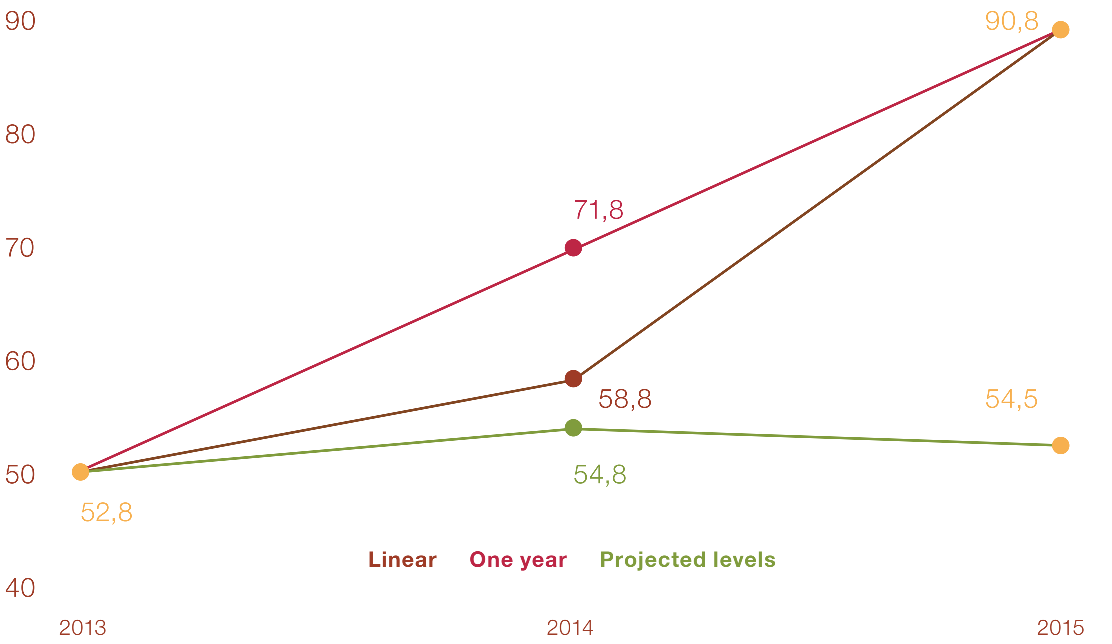
In order to meet the EU's target of 0.7%, there are two main potential scenarios (see Graph 6). Calculations in previous sections use 2012 as the base year. However, it is important to acknowledge that, at the time of this publication, it is very difficult for EU and its member states to change their 2013 budgets substantially in order to increase aid levels. In order to be more realistic, the following calculations use 2013 as the base year. As a consequence, there is a difference between the cumulative gap presented in previous sections (€66.8 billion), and the cumulative gap of the linear model discussed below.

Linear: the EU increases aid linearly in order to meet the 2015 target. This is the most demanding option, with a total increase up to 2015 of €53.2 billion comparing with the aid levels projected by the EC. In practice, this option requires a significant increase in 2014 aid levels (and a similar effort in 2015). Given the resources required in the first year, and the time usually needed by governments for making adjustments to budgets, the large increase required in 2014 could make it difficult to ensure that all aid is delivered effectively. The challenge is greater for countries where a significant increase in volume is required and lesser for those countries that are closer to their targets. This option therefore seems appropriate for countries that are relatively close to their targets, but could be more demanding for other countries. The need to increase aid budgets substantially in 2014 is also difficult in terms of planning, as countries have only a limited window of opportunity in which to make all necessary arrangements.

One-year: the EU increases aid by an additional €36.3 billion in 2015 to the projected aid level by the EC. It is very difficult to ensure that such a large and sudden increase in aid flows in a single year is adequately managed without having invested in the human and administrative infrastructure required to implement, monitor and evaluate the additional aid funds.

15 See the following press release by the UK-based organisation, Bond: http://www.ukan.org.uk/press-release-ukan-and-bond-welcome-0-7-budget-commitment/

Graph 5. Different scenarios for meeting the 0.7% target (in € billion at constant prices, 2011)



Source: Calculations based on the 2012 preliminary ODA data published by the EC and OECD DAC in April 2013

At the political level, the whole of the EU would have to re-commit to the target, design a strategy for increasing aid levels accordingly, and coordinate its implementation. Although the contribution of each individual country is linked to the size of its economy, every euro counts. In addition, the Lisbon Treaty states that "the Union and the Member States shall comply with the commitments and take account of the objectives they have approved in the context of the United Nations and other competent international organisations".[16] Several Council Conclusions also contain language and commitments in this regard.

Increasing EU aid is not only about quantity. The EU should ensure that the distribution of new aid flows is equitable and has maximum impact on development, fostering human rights and fighting inequality. In particular, the EU should:

Select partner countries on the basis of their development needs rather than on the EU's political and economic interests. The EU remains heavily focused on countries where it has strong economic and political interests. For example, Afghanistan, India and China are all among the top five recipient countries for EU aid.[17] Furthermore, in 2011, a group of ten such countries (Afghanistan, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Morocco, Pakistan, Serbia, Tunisia and Turkey) received ODA amounting to approximately half of all the aid the EU allocated to the 51 sub-Saharan countries.[18]

Prioritise the implementation of the aid and development-effectiveness agenda: research conducted by AidWatch has shown that EU member states still have to make significant improvements in terms of coordination, harmonisation, transparency and a number of other key principles.[19] It is extremely important to continue to progress with the implementation of the Busan agenda.

16 See Article 208 of the Lisbon Treaty.
17 Calculations by the author based on 2011 gross disbursement figures extracted from the OECD DAC online database.
18 ibid.
19 AidWatch (2012) Making sense of EU development cooperation effectiveness. CONCORD AidWatch Special Report on the post-Busan development effectiveness agenda. CONCORD, Brussels.

HOW NOT TO DO IT

Given the pressure to deliver on its commitments, and the existing economic constraints, the EU might be inclined to report an increasing amount of inflated aid as part of its official ODA figures. In addition, emerging global flows that might have an impact on development – such as climate finance or support for private sector development – have led some actors to request a revision of the existing definition of ODA so that new types of flows can be reported as aid.[20]

While tracking other financial flows to partner countries is important, in meeting the 0.7% target EU member states need to continue playing by the rules of the game. It is real aid that will maximise the long-term impact on developing countries, those living in poverty, and ultimately the European citizens. Trying to meet the target by 'cooking the aid books' would not help to tackle global poverty and would be fundamentally self-defeating in the long term. The lack of progress would eventually mean that the need for aid would continue for much longer. In the meantime, the endgame would have been pushed even further into the future, denying millions of people a decent life and undermining European commitments to sustainable development.

EU member states need to be especially careful about the following elements:

Inflated aid: the current definition of ODA includes expenditure which does not entail a genuine transfer of resources to developing countries. According to the AidWatch methodology, the following items should not be counted as ODA: student and refugee costs in developed countries, debt relief, tied aid and interest on loans.[21]

Climate finance: a number of European countries have made commitments to deliver a certain amount of climate finance, such as the Fast Start Finance or the USD 100 billion by 2020. AidWatch has already demonstrated that funds provided as part of the Fast Start Finance have also been reported as ODA at least in Denmark, Sweden and Finland.[22] These funds should not compromise aid for other development priorities and should be additional to the 0.7% pledge. The EU should therefore agree on a joint definition of climate finance additionality and ensure that these funds are tracked and reported on separately from ODA disbursements.

Support for the private sector: some European donors are increasingly inclined to use ODA funds to support the private sector through blending mechanisms, public-private partnerships (PPPs) or catalytic finance such as guarantees, equity investments, and loans. This is being translated into mounting pressure to weaken the definition of ODA so that more types of support for the private sector can be reported beyond the existing limits: concessionality and restrictions on the types of intermediaries that can be used to support the private sector. However, there is no clear evidence of the contribution these types of flows make to development or poverty eradication, and a number of research reports have raised important concerns about the fact that they seem to be better at supporting companies from developed and emerging economies than low-income countries and poor communities.[23]

Military spending: a very limited amount of expenditure on peace and military operations is currently reportable as ODA (e.g. using the military to deliver humanitarian assistance in the event of a natural disaster). The ODA definition should not be broadened because there are simply no answers to the questions about whether and when wars can be justified and what kind of activities could be included. In addition, including military costs would simply inflate aid figures disproportionately in a number of countries: for example, the war in Afghanistan is estimated to have cost the UK some €23.4 billion.[24]

20 ECDPM (2012) Reporting on Development: ODA and Financing for Development. European Centre for Development Policy Management, Brussels.
21 AidWatch (2012) Aid We Can - invest more in global development. CONCORD, Brussels.
22 Ibid
23 Eurodad (2012) Public Private Profit for Public Good? Can investing in private companies deliver for the poor? Eurodad, Brussels.
24 Kirkup, J. (2012) "Afghan war will cost British taxpayers £20 billion by time mission is complete." The Telegraph, 19 May 2012.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The EU can and should meet its aid target. EU aid supports millions of households and makes a substantial and long-term contribution to the fight against poverty and inequality. Aid is not simply a matter of a funding commitment: it is also a moral and human rights obligation that affects the future of millions of people. The Lisbon Treaty makes it very clear that the primary objective of EU aid is "the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty."[25] Millions of poor, vulnerable and marginalised people across the world cannot afford any more delays.

The money is there. Significant amounts of the EU and member states' budgets are going into questionable expenditure such as subsidies for fossil fuels. These types of expenditure are often inconsistent with long term sustainable development goals and therefore contradict the commitment of member states to make all EU policies coherent with internationally agreed development goals.

European citizens want it. They believe in development assistance as a tool for making the world a better place. The majority of Europeans also believe that the EU should meet its aid targets.

European leaders' political will is the missing element. AidWatch calls on the European Institutions and Member States to deliver on their commitment to provide 0.7% of their GNI in aid by 2015. The following recommendations should guide them in this process:

Design and agree on a roadmap with clear responsibilities and targets for each member state. In particular, the EU should:

> Include in the roadmap a clear scenario and objectives for both 2014 and 2015.
> Increase aid by tapping resources from budget lines that support policies that undermine or are inconsistent with sustainable development goals. The EU should start by mapping out current budgets to identify these kinds of expenditure. Some potential options include subsidies for biofuel and fossil fuels.

Ensure that the distribution of aid flows is equitable and has the maximum impact on development. In particular, the EU should:

> Select partner countries on the basis of their development needs rather than on the EU's own political and economic interests. The EU remains heavily focused on countries where it has strong economic and political interests, such as Afghanistan, Brazil, China and India.
> Prioritise the implementation of the aid and development-effectiveness agenda. EU member states still have to make significant improvements in terms of coordination, harmonisation, transparency and a number of other key principles.

Meet the target with genuine aid resources and avoid changes in the definition of ODA that would allow for artificial increases in reported aid levels. In particular, the EU should:

> Avoid including expenditure that, in the AidWatch methodology, is regarded as inflated aid: student and refugee costs in developed countries, debt relief, tied aid and interest on loans.

25 Lisbon Treaty, Article 208.

> Do not report as ODA money provided pursuant to member states' commitments to provide additional climate finance. The EU should agree on a joint definition of additionality and ensure that these funds are tracked and reported on separately from ODA disbursements.
> Prevent the revision of the official definition of ODA to allow for the reporting of additional types of flows which do not have a demonstrated developmental impact. This is the case with public support for the private sector and military spending, which are currently not reportable under OECD DAC rules.

METHODOLOGY

Aid estimates are based on the preliminary data available in the OECD DAC online database. The database was last accessed on 10 April 2013. Where necessary, the data has been complemented with the preliminary data released by the European Commission on 3 April 2013.[26] Future aid levels are based on the projections published by the European Commission.[27]

Economic growth projections are based on the European economic forecast - winter 2013, released on February 2013. As the Commission does not provide growth estimates for 2015, 2014 growth estimates have been used as a proxy for economic growth in 2015. Please note that this is a conservative way in which to estimate aid levels, as most commentators agree that growth should continue to recover in 2015. Indeed by using a growth estimate that is lower than the likely growth rate, we are underestimating aid values.

All figures in the report are constant prices. This means that they have been adjusted to remove the effect of inflation, in order to make figures from different years truly comparable. In estimating constant prices, 2011 has been used as a reference year. The official exchange rates and deflators provided by the OECD DAC have been used in the calculations, and where no OECD deflators were available (some EU-12 countries), the GDP deflators calculated by Eurostat have been used.

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26 EC (2013) Publication of preliminary data on Official Development Assistance, 2012. EC, Brussels.
27 Ibid.

	Aid (€m constant 2011)		Increase (%)	Funding gap		
	2013	2015 (0,7% target)		2013	2014	2015
Austria	848.4	2221.9	161.9%	-	436.1	952.3
Belgium	1756.0	2698.1	53.7%	137.2	430.4	0.0
Denmark	2070.6	-	-	-	-	-
Finland	1006.7	1370.3	36.1%	51.0	180.5	332.8
France	9194.9	14663.1	59.5%	1295.4	2621.9	4398.9
Germany	10062.3	19464.4	93.4%	2850.8	5815.7	8898.0
Greece	253.6	1292.1	409.5%	346.6	715.6	1089.1
Ireland	618.6	950.5	53.7%	95.3	221.4	353.1
Italy	2030.2	10822.8	433.1%	2434.7	5675.2	8194.4
Luxembourg	323.0	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	4263.6	-	-	-	-	-
Portugal	442.3	1136.6	157.0%	181.1	397.3	633.2
Spain	1511.0	7269.4	381.1%	1465.0	3777.5	6023.2
Sweden	3891.4	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	9732.0	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	27.9	130.6	368.5%	20.3	49.1	79.1
Cyprus	19.8	52.4	164.9%	3.2	12.7	25.4
Czech Republic	172.6	496.3	187.5%	86.9	191.9	315.8
Estonia	16.9	57.5	239.7%	11.8	22.9	34.9
Hungary	93.0	316.9	240.8%	71.8	145.4	220.9
Latvia	15.5	71.1	357.6%	18.5	36.5	56.0
Lithuania	38.6	115.8	200.2%	21.8	48.5	73.7
Malta	13.6	20.3	49.1%	2.6	1.0	0.0
Poland	337.0	1266.2	275.8%	73.5	375.4	690.7
Romania	108.8	412.9	279.5%	99.3	203.5	300.3
Slovak Republic	59.7	242.8	306.6%	55.6	114.4	176.6
Slovenia	44.0	113.0	156.6%	22.5	41.9	68.5
EU-27*	49.0	90,8	85.5%	8.8	21.7	36.3

* For greater accuracy, figures are based on EU GNI projections. Figures do not necessarily tally with those for individual EU member states.

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NW Handicap International
NP Hungary : HAND
NW IPPF European Network
NW Islamic Relief Worldwide
NP Ireland: Dochas
NP Italy: CONCORD Italia
NP Latvia: Lapas
NP 'LU' Lithuanian development NGO umbrella
NP Luxembourg: Cercle
NP Malta: SKOP
NP Netherlands: Partos
NW Oxfam International
NW Plan International
NP Poland: Grupa Zagranica
NP Portugal: Plataforma ONGD
NP Romania: FOND
NW Save the Children International
NP Slovakia: MVRO
NP Slovenia: SLOGA
NW Solidar
NP Spain: CoNgDe
NP CONCORD Sweden
NW Terres des hommes FI
NP United Kingdom: BOND
AW World Vision International
AS World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

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